

October 22, 2020

The West Virginia Division of Forestry and Natural Resources (FNR) seeks to hire a BIPOC faculty member who will contribute to the mission of a natural resources within FNR. The incumbent will move forward our agenda of pointedly increasing diversity, equity and inclusion within the Division and WVU community, and create an environment that will encourage further diversity at WVU in the future. WVU is located one hour from Pittsburgh and 3.5 hours from Washington DC.

Accordingly, our mission is to hire a faculty member who will devote energy to connecting the state of West Virginia (and particularly north-central West Virginia) to the Washington-Baltimore and Pittsburgh urban regions. Outdoor recreation is one of the critical components of this nexus, as is energy, transportation, sustainability and human rights (i.e., alleviating racism problems, more opportunities for women, unfettered access to WV's natural resources). This hire would focus on the rural-urban nexus by leveraging our natural resources and high-tech potential with the eastern seaboard and Appalachia—acknowledging the Washington-Baltimore megalopolis and the Pittsburgh metro areas as the “core urban” areas and WV as the “core rural setting.”

We seek to capitalize on two recent transformative investments in West Virginia and at West Virginia University. The \$25 million donation by Brad and Alys Smith will invest in the rural amenities of West Virginia to allow high-tech and other career employees to work remotely and recreate in the state. The faculty member will seek to conduct research on WV natural resources, with an emphasis on trails, rivers, climbing, and the leisure experiences sought by today's professional employees. WVU, and particularly the Division of Forestry and Natural Resources, will play a critical role in attaining these high-quality recreation settings and amenities, through planning, management, designing tailored economic solutions. The second transformative investment, the \$500 million investment in the Elon Musk/Richard Branson Hyperloop Certification Center effort, will result in an opportunity to hire a vast number of high tech workers to the state. A critical goal is ensuring BIPOC persons are welcomed to West Virginia and that they remain in the state because of the outdoor recreation amenities and the diversity these career workers will bring.

The framework for this effort is in research and teaching on natural resources, broadly defined as water, energy (post-fossil fuel energy), transportation, ecological (including our lands and waters), and the cultural—thus representing the four pillars of sustainability. Ecological, social, economic, and cultural.

The following research, teaching and service streams have been identified. However, there is great flexibility that will allow the faculty member to tailor a research position that builds on their previous research:

- How can we leverage our recent transformational investments into building an inclusive community within WVU and West Virginia?
- What is the relationship between rural amenities and personal physical and mental health?
- How can greenspaces (urban and rural) lead to equity and inclusion, and support social justice?
- How can we attain a greater level of sustainability (economically, socially, environmentally, and culturally)?
- What is the link between climate change and injustice for people of color?

WVU is a land grant university with an active spousal hire program, and a stated goal of ensuring this faculty member has every opportunity to succeed in the tenure process. Please contact me directly at the email/phone number below for more detailed information about this unique opportunity.

Sincerely,



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