

Tree Crew is Busy in 2017!

Mike Burdzinski, has been working at Stanford since 1996. He started as a gardener/arborist, and has worked his way up in Grounds over the years. He is now the Tree Program Supervisor. He is also known as “Bob Jr.” since was appointed Tree Supervisor when veteran arborist Bob Garner retired in 2010.

Mike started working with plants in Illinois with his dad when just a kid, working in the garden. He loved doing anything with his dad and taking care of the garden played a big role in his life. His mom said, “Go to school, and take anything” and his early interests led to Horticulture and Agriculture school. When asked if he would take a different career path if he had the chance to do it all over again he replied, “Nope, I love what I do.”

Mike applied for his first job at Stanford when there were three Stanford listings in the newspaper that he felt he could apply for, athletics, gardener and the tree crew. Mike accepted the job at Grounds on the tree crew as a climber. Mike likes that he works at a place where trees are the theme and the campus variety keeps him interested.

A typical work day for Mike would be (in this order), see who is working that day, check for tree emergencies on campus, dispatch his crew to usually 3-4 work sites, conduits consultation calls, goes to meetings and of course, focuses on tree health. His crew of nine (who he loves and feels are the best crew he could ask for) are responsible for planting smaller trees, pruning, tree removal and basic tree maintenance.

“In this last big storm, we lost 10 trees out of about 30,000 on campus. Great odds!”



In drought years, the roots become dehydrated. When the rains come, the tree’s roots cannot support the heavy weight above and over they go. Even though the odds of losing a tree are low, it still is hard to see a massive oak like the one at Tresidder, photo above, fail.

You might have notice that Stanford moves and protects trees during construction projects to either replant on the site or relocate them. When trees are transplanted on campus we have a 75% success rate. Much of that success is due to the Tree Crew's work.

In Mike's spare time outside of work, he likes to ride his bike and go to various parks to look at trees (naturally). Also, he enjoys walks with his 6 years old Chihuahua, Parker.

On days when it is pouring Mike said, "Days like this I think, I should have gone into computer science and then I think, nah, I love what I do. Another great day on the farm."

### **The Tree Crew 2017**

Back Row, left to right - Sergio Larios, Pedro Torres, Marlon Hernandez, Francisco Nunez, Luis Mello , Valente Sals ,Jose Perez



Front Row, left to right -Randy Middleton, Ramon Nava, Mike Burdzinski