

Sally Campbell
Final Story Pitch Project
June 1, 2022

I chose to do my final project on the student-organized entity, Save the Urban Farm. The University of Oregon's Urban Farm operates under the Department of Landscape Architecture. It has been in operation since 1976, and the Urban Farm class has been popular amongst students ever since.

I chose Save the Urban Farm because the UO has plans for the next phase of the Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact, which includes construction around and within the bounds of the Urban Farm. These plans have upset many members of the UO and Eugene community who value the Urban Farm for a variety of reasons, especially students. Being a part of the UO community, I know many people who see the Urban Farm as a beloved place and have shared testimonials of all the positives it brought to them in their college experience.

I was moved by the sense of community and level of unity that I saw after personally attending the Save the Urban Farm Fest on May 6, 2022. The number of students, staff, alumni, and Eugene community members who value the space and fear seeing the Knight campus developments encroach on or near it is large.

Save the Urban Farm has become a powerful movement. It obtains newsworthy characteristics for the noise it is creating, its relevance in a time of environmental crisis, and the dramatic division it has created amongst UO community members. In testimonies, there is an appeal to emotion that also would be interesting in a story. The critical aspect that makes for a newsworthy story is the power of students banding together to fight back against the UO.

The group of students has created two platforms for Save the Urban Farm, a website and an Instagram page. On both platforms, resources, events and updates are being shared.

This is a real and current event with great resources and people to use for stories. I have been hearing and seeing about it all over campus and amongst people I know. With it constantly showing up around me, it sparked the idea to use it for my final project/presentation.

<https://www.savetheurbanfarm.com/>

Media Communications Brief

Media Pitch Concept: Students fight back on Knight Campus Expansion plans that take over Urban Farm territory

Background: The University of Oregon Urban Farm has been recognized as the university's outdoor classroom since 1976, operating under the Department of Landscape Architecture. A part of the Urban Farm, referred to as the “Back 40,” currently inhabits a garden and fruit orchard, created and maintained by students. In the latest variation of construction plans, the Back 40 would become the staging area for the Knight Campus Expansion. If the current expansion plans are executed it would result in a loss of a variety of fruit trees, hedgerows, and 3,200 square feet of garden beds and soil. Roughly 45% of the Urban Farm space would be displaced. Students have created Save the Urban Farm to oppose this placement of the staging area, and UO staff, alumni and Eugene community members are showing their support.

Media Opportunity: The Urban Farm has become a beloved part of many student and staff experiences at the UO. The number of students coming together to protect this place is large and powerful. Showcasing the noise the expansion plans have created, its relevance during a time of global environmental crisis, and the appeal to emotion through a humanistic element are all characteristics that would make for an appealing story.

Targeted Media Outlets and Journalists: Each of these journalists cover topics the Urban Farm story obtains. They all work for localized Eugene media outlets, reaching audiences relevant to the story.

- Tatiana Parafiniuk-Talesnick—causes reporter for the Register-Guard, (541)-485-1234
- Adam Duvernay—environment and politics reporter for the Register-Guard, aduvernay@registerguard.com, (302)-319-1855
- Rachael McDonald—News Director at KLCC-FM, mcdonaldr@lanecc.edu, (541)-463-6009

Coverage Report

- “Growing Support for the Urban Farm” by Gavin Gamez from *The Daily Emerald*. “ASUO looks to pass a resolution ensuring student voices are heard in decision making surrounding the Urban Farm...”

Story to Tell:

- **Angle:** Students are capable of so much more than they are often thought to be and aren't afraid to push back at the university on certain things. The work being put in because of how much the students care is admirable, powerful, and newsworthy

- **Spokesperson:** Grace Youngblood, student creator of savetheurbanfarm.com, and Harper Keeler, Director of Urban Farm
- **Tone:** Serious, feature-oriented, urgent
- **Content:** This communications brief will first be supported by a news release on the Save the Urban Farm motion made through student initiatives. Then, an email pitch to the targeted outlets and journalists suggesting a feature story on UO senior Grace Youngblood, who created Savetheurbanfarm.com—a website for information, action to be taken, and testimonials from individuals who have experiences with the Urban Farm.

Targeted Outcome: Bring awareness and attention to what would be lost and how many people would be impacted by the Urban Farm replacement to help grow the number of people trying to save it. Showcase the Urban Farm and all the initiatives taken to protect it.

Email Pitch to Adam Duvernay at The Register-Gaurd

Adam,

I have an idea for a story that may be of interest to you. The University of Oregon's Urban Farm, operated under the Department of Landscape Architecture is at risk of destruction due to plans for the next Knight Campus expansion, creating an uproar, especially from students.

The UO Urban Farm has been operating since 1976 and is currently under the direction of Harper Keeler. It is home to garden beds, fruit orchards, 40+-year-old trees and a community of people who dedicate their time and energy to the upkeeping of the garden. In the current iteration of the second phase of the Phil and Penny Knight Expansion, large portions of the Urban Farm would be displaced by a staging area for the expansion construction.

A number of landscape architecture, and other, students have banded together to oppose the projected location of the staging area. Several resources and events are underway, all made possible by UO students, under the movement name, Save the Urban Farm.

UO Senior Grace Youngblood created savetheurbanfarm.com, a website that serves as an informational platform to share what the Urban Farm is, what is at risk in the Knight expansion, and testimonials from those who wish to share what the Urban Farm means to them. A feature story on Youngblood would be a great way to cover who and what is at risk while adding an emotional appeal through the humanistic element Youngblood could bring to the story.

I have attached the site created by Youngblood for you to look through below. If this is of interest to you or you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. My personal line is (503)-453-4191.

<https://www.savetheurbanfarm.com/partners>

Best,
Sally Campbell

News Release



June 1, 2022

For More Information, Contact:

Sally Campbell, 541-666-6666

Communications Director, Department of Landscape Architecture

Knight Campus expansion plans threaten 45% of UO Urban Farm

The University of Oregon has shared execution plans for the second phase of the Phil and Penny Knight expansion entails the destruction and displacement of the school's primary outdoor classroom.

Operating under the Department of Landscape Architecture, the UO Urban Farm has been around since 1976. It is a place of community, learning, teaching, and a home to acres of grown food. The second phase of the Knight Campus development would encroach on this space to build a staging space for the construction of Accelerating Scientific Impact, beginning in 2023.

The Urban Farm has a space referred to as the “Back 40” developed in the 90s after an increased interest in the Urban Farming course. The Back 40 consists of garden space and a fruit orchard, made and upkeeped by students. It is also the portion of the Urban Farm where the Knight Campus Expansion plans to build its staging area.

If the Knight Campus plans are executed in the space they are currently iterated to, the construction would result in a loss of 32 fruit trees of different varieties, an alder tree, a birch tree, various hedgerows, and 3,200 square feet of raised garden beds and healthy soil—all of which have been cared for since the early 90s.

Students, staff, alumni of UO and Eugene community members are working to save the Urban Farm through student-made websites sharing testimonials, rallies and festivals, student forums, and the spread of informational resources and petitions.

A public Instagram page going by the handle @savetheurbanfarm describes itself as a “cross-department coalition of UO students aiming to prevent the knight campus from harming the Urban Farm.” On the page, followers can find information on upcoming and past events, links to informational sources, testimonials and news stories on the matter. More information can be accessed on savetheurbanfarm.com.