New York City Urban Soils Institute

Your one-stop shop for all your urban soils needs

Shino Tanikawa
Executive Director,
New York City Soil & Water Conservation District
A Little Bit About NYC

- 305 square miles
- ~70% impervious cover
- >550 miles of waterfront
- 8.5 million residents
Urban Conservation

- Habitat restoration
- Parks
- Green infrastructure
- Community gardens
- Urban agriculture
- Brownfields
NEEDS

• Increase in interactions with soils
• Large gap between the needs and resources
• Requests for analytical services, data, information, and more
• Lack of coordinated effort & knowledge
• Lack of expertise and human resources
Our Vision

Soils and the life they support are built into all urban development and to incorporate the development of urban soils into the legacy landscapes that urban centers hope to preserve and sustain.
Mission

To advance the scientific understanding and promote the sustainable use of urban soils through education, conservation, and research for diverse audiences.
Four Division of USI

- Soil Testing & TA
- Education & Outreach
- Data Depository
- Research
Long Term Goals

- Premier institution for all urban soils resources in NYC
- The center for urban soil research in the world
- A model for other urban centers
First Years

• Committed resources from the founding partners
• Assignment of full time SWCD employee as Director
• Prioritize a few divisions
• Grants and Contracts
Current Service

• Analytical lab facilities at Brooklyn College
• Soil testing and interpretation
• On-site technical assistance
• Workshops & supplemental courses
• Data interpretation
• Internship program
Soil Testing

- XRF Test for Pb, As, Cu, Zn
- pH
- Soil textural classifications
- Total soluble salts
- Organic content
- NPK
- Test packages for multiple parameters
Clients

- Community & home gardeners
- City agencies: DEP, Parks, Planning
- Non-profit organization: Brooklyn Botanic Garden
- Housing agencies: NYCHA
- Private developers
In the Works

• Formal internship and job training program
• Larger and more diverse customer base
• Lab infrastructure upgrade
• Lab technician
• More resources – people & money
In the Works

- Urban Soils Workshops
- Information Dissemination System and Online Resources
- Soils Interpretation Service
- Urban Soils Symposium
- Soils Exhibits
- Urban soils courses for CUNY and Continuing Ed
NYCSWCD
Shino Tanikawa, Shino@nycswcd.net
Tatiana Morin, Tatiana@usi.nyc

USDA - NRCS
Richard Shaw, Richard.Shaw@nj.usda.gov

Brooklyn College, ESAC
Joshua Cheng, ZCheng@brooklyn.cuny.edu

Gaia Institute
Paul Mankiewicz, paul@thegaiainstitute.org