



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Davis College

Landscape Architecture

May 16, 2024

Re: Letter of Support for Dr. Muntazar Monsur – Davis College Outreach and Engagement Award

Dear Davis College Outreach and Engagement Award Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for Dr. Muntazar Monsur, a distinguished faculty member in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Texas Tech University (TTU), for the Davis College Outreach and Engagement Award. Having worked with Dr. Monsur for two years, I can confidently attest to his exceptional contributions to outreach and engagement.

When considering the criteria for this award, Dr. Monsur's work exceeds the award criteria in several key areas:

Engaged Teaching and Service Learning: In Spring 2023, Dr. Monsur taught LARC 6416 (Landscape for Learning), where his class explored nature-based learning landscapes for young children. Collaborating with TTU's Early Head Start program, they gathered feedback from teachers and caregivers. Students also partnered with the Early Learning Centers of Lubbock (ELCL), which used student designs to raise funds for new playgrounds at two centers.

Engaged Research: Dr. Monsur leads two USDA-funded research projects totaling \$600,000. One project investigates the health benefits of hands-on gardening for preschoolers by installing raised bed gardens in eight Lubbock County childcare centers serving low-income families. The other project uses Interactive Virtual Tours (IVTs) to educate childcare professionals about creating healthy outdoor environments. His team created and disseminated eight IVTs of childcare centers in Texas, Colorado, and North Carolina.

Community Impact: Dr. Monsur's students' design visualizations helped ELCL raise almost \$40,000. He continues to assist ELCL in fundraising and collaborates with Environmental Landscape Solutions (ELS) on building a nature-based playground. His teaching has also led to the redesign of the Child Development Research Center (CDRC) Outdoor Play and Learning Environment (on the TTU campus), transforming it into a natural, engaging space for children's play and learning. This project has received funding from TTU Facilities Allocation Council (FAC) and is being used by CDRC for further fundraising efforts.

Scholarship Excellence: Dr. Monsur's engaged scholarship is reflected in various forms, including publications in top journals, presentations at TTU's Engaged Scholarship Symposium, and the creation of IVTs and educational videos. His work showcases a blend of academic rigor and practical application, benefiting both the academic community and the broader public.

Outreach Through Media: The IVTs on healthy childcare environments created by Dr. Monsur's team have garnered thousands of views nationwide. He has delivered invited talks, such as at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Virtual Lecture Series, where he spoke on designing effective childhood outdoor environments. His work was also featured in the Landscape Architecture Magazine article titled "Log In To Log Off," enhancing the reputation of the Davis College. The article is available here: [Log In To Log Off](#).

Other Contributions: Dr. Monsur is a member of the inaugural cohort of the Texas Tech Faculty Fellows Mentoring Program in Engaged Scholarship and serves on the Provost's Tenure and Promotion Engaged Scholar Committee.

In conclusion, Dr. Monsur has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to advancing the field of landscape architecture through exemplary outreach and engagement. His remarkable achievements and contributions make him a deserving candidate for the Davis College Outreach and Engagement Award. Dr. Monsur's ongoing dedication to research excellence and community engagement will continue to bring honor to Texas Tech University.

Sincerely,

Leehu Loon, ASLA, PLA
Chair and Professor
Department of Landscape Architecture
Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources
Texas Tech University