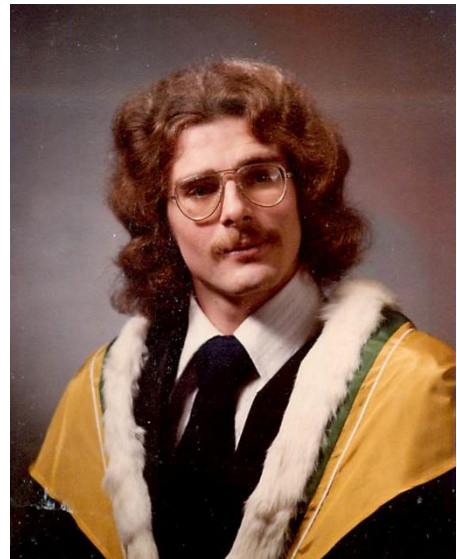


Michael David Evans, AALA, CSLA, BLA Toronto 1974

The CSLA thanks Michael Evans for submitting this story.

I grew up in Richmond Hill north of Toronto in the suburbs. I went to an open house at the U of T in my last year of High School then Grade 13 and was introduced to Landscape Architecture. I applied to Guelph and Toronto in Landscape architecture and at the Toronto Island Airport to become a helicopter pilot. I got accepted at Guelph and in helicopter training before high school ended, I had to wait until July to be accepted at Toronto, which was closer to home, so I enrolled. There were 17 students in my first year in 1969. I started suffering from mononucleosis that first year, but I carried on. The Professors were amazing, inspiring and characters including Ed Fife, Gerry Englar, Frank Milus and Dick Strong.

Years flew by and during third- and fourth-year summer I worked for Alberta Provincial Parks and fell in love with the prairies and mountains. Only 10 of us originals graduated in 1974. My first year of full employment was with Milus Tress Barron in Edmonton, one of the first consulting firms in the Edmonton area, and I learned how to design, render presentation drawings by hand, write specifications and do site inspections. My second employment year was back with Alberta Provincial Parks, I got to travel Alberta from top to bottom, east to west, designing campgrounds, day use areas and trails. In August 1976 with all of two years and two months of experience working with other landscape architects and landscape technicians, I founded Earthscape Limited, a Landscape Architecture Consulting firm in Edmonton, I had several partners: one a land use planner and one who provided start up funding. From the start and with some luck, Earthscape always had projects underway, keeping the doors open. Earthscape Limited became Earthscape Consultants in 1978 and has operated as such until the present day. I am working on our final project to be planted in June 2026, and final inspection will be a year later.



Michael's Graduation Photo, 1974

Gary Browning became a partner in the early 1980's, Randy Gibson and Ron Heaslip worked as associates and Garth Bell worked in the early 1980's before he became program head at NAIT Landscape Architecture. Since 2008 Garth retired from NAIT and it has been the two of us.

What a great career I have experienced. I was a partner in a Canadian Golf Course Architecture Firm with Dave Bennett, A.S.G.C.A. of Austin, Texas for ten years until 1988. I was a contract landscape technologist instructor at NAIT (Northern Alberta Institute of Technology) from 1997–2008 and taught golf course planning and design for two weeks each year from 1998 to 2004 at Selkirk College, Nelson, B.C. I have been a guest lecturer at The University of Alberta and Grant MacEwen Community College.

My life partner and I have traveled extensively, and I have researched major public plaza spaces, parks, sports parks and streetscapes in 88 countries around the world. I have become an avid landscape photographer and multi-media artist and have visited five of the world's major waterfalls. I have been involved in major tourism/resort projects in the Cayman Islands; Tianmu and Chongqing, China; Guam and Utah of the United States; and in Canada in Newfoundland, Alberta, and British Columbia. I have been very fortunate to be involved in the formalization design of the Virginia Falls campground and trail network at Nahanni National Park in the Northwest Territories. Earthscape has been involved in more than 700 projects from single-family residential gardens to hundred-million-dollar sports stadiums. Earthscape Consultants had satellite offices in Calgary and Lethbridge during the 1980's. Our office has retired drafting tables, drafting pens, Letraset, mylars, colour markers and tracing paper and has kept up with ACAD and ADOBE photoshop since the 1980's.

I have designed and in many cases been able to oversee construction of hundreds of sports fields including multi-use diamonds, baseball specific diamonds, soccer, rugby, football, lacrosse, beach volleyball, tennis courts, mini-golf and lawn bowling. Many sports fields have been basic; some have been irrigated natural turf and nine have been artificial turf with full lighting and sound systems. I have also been involved in master planning of hundreds of golf courses; most golf course plans do not get constructed. I have designed and, in some projects, I have overseen the construction of more than twenty golf course and golf course redevelopments projects from British Columbia to Newfoundland across Canada and internationally from the Caribbean to the South Pacific.

I have worked on a variety of projects with eight Alberta First Nations; all of these have involved stakeholder and local council input.

I have always been a leader in understanding and the application of new products and technologies including site fixtures, play equipment, irrigation, led lighting, geotextiles, geogrids, geo cells, artificial turf, pavers, pond membranes, geothermal heating, naturalization planting/seeding, green roofs and solar panels.

I have been involved in natural history and cultural history interpretation projects. Earthscape was the Prime Consultants for Gateway Park, Edmonton based on the oil theme. I have been involved in oil discovery and exploration projects at Bitumount (The First Oil Sand Site) and Nisku; forestry related projects in Hinton, Smoky Lake and Whitecourt; agriculture in Lethbridge and Red Deer; early settlement in Medicine Hat, wildlife at Red Deer's Kerry Wood Nature Centre, John Janzen Nature Centre Pond Redevelopment, three Edmonton Valley Zoo projects and Bonnyville Wetland.

Earthscape was the prime consultant for the Guam Micronesian Cultural Centre, Grafton Utah Ghost Town Redevelopment Plan, The Edmonton Telephone Telephone Interpretive Centre, and Fort Edmonton Park Master Plan Update in the 1980's. Earthscape designed, tendered and inspected the modernization of The Tropical

Pavilion of the Muttart Conservatory in Edmonton and the Cretaceous Interior Garden at the Royal Tyrell Museum in Drumheller. Earthscape has recently been involved in the current Nature's Backyard Project at the Edmonton Valley Zoo.

I have been involved as an organizer in every CSLA Congress in Alberta since 1974 and I was Treasurer for the 40th IFLA Congress in Calgary in 2003 and was AALA President that same year. I was one of several CSLA members involved in the 2015 update of the National Master Specifications. I was a member involved in the CSLA Urban Tree Canopy Committee in the early 2020's. I was also a member of the CSLA 90th Anniversary Committee, which also involved coordinating and documenting the early history of the AALA through soliciting input from Pat Butler, Bob Gibbs and Marie Kipen. I have served as an executive on the Town of Stony Recreation Board and the Jackfish Lake Management Association. I was a member of the Edmonton River Valley Alliance Community Engagement Committee in 2019-2020 representing Parkland County.

I received CSLA and AALA Lifetime Membership 2024, which I am very proud to have received, and which tops off more than 50 years as a landscape architect.



Michael received CSLA Lifetime Membership alongside Doug Carlyle in 2024