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The Daily Update

'The Right to Bear Farms'

News Release Archive

Posted on Friday, January 24, 2014

Student Contributors

Former Undersecretary of Agriculture Gus Schumacher, who is known for his lifelong efforts to improve access to fresh local food in underserved communities, will present the first on-campus lecture of the spring President's Forum Series. Schumacher is currently executive vice president and cofounder of Wholesome Wave, a nonprofit agency which helps community groups find affordable fresh food. His President's Forum lecture, "The Right to Bear Farms - Agriculture, Nutrition and America's Health," will be held on Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7:30 p.m. in the Geneva Room of the Warren Hunting Smith Library.



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Uniting consumers with farmers has been Schumacher's mission since he was first appointed commissioner of food and agriculture for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts nearly three decades ago. As commissioner, Schumacher initiated farmers' market coupon programs for seniors and low-income families with children and then went on to expand the programs nationally when he served as undersecretary of agriculture for farm and foreign agricultural services at the USDA from 1997 to 2001. There he oversaw the Farm Service Agency, the Foreign Agricultural Service, and the Risk Management Agency and grew those programs nationally.

Wholesome Wave is known for its Double Value Coupon Program, which allows recipients to double the value of their federal food benefits at farmers' markets, as well as the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program that is in place at two New York City hospitals, in which doctors prescribe farmers' market vouchers for patients with diabetes or obesity problems.

Prior to his appointment as undersecretary, Schumacher served as administrator of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, worked as a senior agri-lender for the World Bank, and served as president of the Commodity Credit Corporation. Schumacher also was a member of the 21st Century Sustainable Agricultural Task Force of the National Academy of Sciences.

Currently, Schumacher also serves as the contributing agricultural editor of *Food Arts* magazine and is on the Board of GrainPro, LLC of Concord, Mass. Most recently his lifelong commitment to uniting consumers with farmers was recognized with a James Beard Leadership Foundation Award in 2013. Additionally, he was presented the 20th Anniversary Food Arts award for outstanding service to the American food and farming systems in 2008.

Schumacher holds a degree in economics from Harvard College and studied at the London School of Economics.

Established in the winter of 2000 by President Mark D. Gearan, the President's Forum Series is designed to bring a variety of speakers to the HWS community to share their knowledge and ideas with students, faculty and staff of the Colleges, as well as with interested community members. The most recent guest of the President's Forum was Former Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, the first woman in American history to serve in both houses of a state legislature and both houses of Congress. Snowe spoke at a President's Forum Series event in Boston on Jan. 23.

Other upcoming guests for the spring semester include: Todd S. Purdum, senior writer at *POLITICO* and a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*, who will continue the series on campus on Monday, Feb. 24. Purdum was formerly with *The New York Times*, where he worked for 23 years covering politics from City Hall to the White House.

The Colleges will then host Charles Merwin "Trey" Grayson III, the director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard Kennedy School, on Thursday, March 6; Chris Marvin,

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