

Dr. Mary Beth Adams, research soil scientist with the USDA Forest Service, was invited to present the address at West Virginia University's Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design 2019 commencement, on May 10, 2019 at the WVU Coliseum. Dr. Adams, originally from Seymour, Indiana, earned a BS (1980) and MS (1982) in Forestry from Purdue University, and a Ph.D. in Soil Science and Forestry from North Carolina State University in 1986. Her research interests include understanding how water and nutrients move through forest ecosystems in response to various stressors, and using that understanding to sustain the productivity of forests. She borrowed the words of legendary baseball player Yogi Berra, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it!", to remind the Class of 2019 to not retreat in the face of uncertainty, to keep moving, and to bring someone along with you as you "take that fork in the road."

Much of Dr. Adams' research has been conducted on the Fernow Experimental Forest near Parsons, West Virginia, where she served as a research project leader and scientist in charge for more than 20 years. She specializes in large, long-term experiments, and has published more than 150 scientific articles. Dr. Adams is sought after to serve on graduate committees and WVU and other institutions, has served on numerous advisory committees, and has been an editor for several significant journal volumes and books.

She is an active member of the Soil Science Society of America, Society of American Foresters, Ecological Society of America, The Association for Women in Science, and has been honored as a Fellow of the Soil Science Society of America, A Distinguished Alumnus of Purdue University's College of Agriculture, and an Inspiring Woman for Outstanding Scientific Achievement and for Outstanding Mentoring by the Northern Research Station of the Forest Service.

