

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

the
GARDENS
on Spring Creek



Take Root. Grow. Flourish.



FROM THE DIRECTOR **MICHELLE PROVAŽNIK**

In 2016, we took major steps forward to completing the Gardens on Spring Creek.

- We secured approval for the completion of five acres of new gardens by the City of Fort Collins Planning and Zoning Board and City Council.
- With the help of the Friends Board, we raised \$500,000 from the community to achieve the matching challenge grants from Bohemian Foundation and Woodward Charitable Trust
- Construction documents were approved by the City of Fort Collins Planning department.

Vision: To be a world-class botanic garden that is community oriented, educational, experiential, and sustainable.

Mission: To enrich the lives of people and foster environmental stewardship through horticulture.

These major accomplishments secure a bright future for The Gardens – five acres of new, beautiful gardens, expanded plant collection and habitat, innovative education programs for youth and adults, and original cultural experiences through music, sculpture and the arts.

We are eager and excited to break ground on Phase 1 of our Cultivating Community Capital Campaign in 2017 – bringing our vision to life from the ground up.



FRIENDS OF THE GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK

The Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek is the non-profit partner of the Gardens on Spring Creek, a City of Fort Collins facility. The Friends is a member-based organization led by a volunteer board of directors. Its mission is to cultivate a world-class botanic garden through fundraising and advocacy. Over the years, their support and hard work have been essential to establishing and growing The Gardens. In 2016, the Friends Board was instrumental in securing additional funding for capital expansion of our gardens, increasing membership, and securing donations and grants for current operations.

Many thanks to the 2016 Board of Directors: Randy Morgan, Dulcie Willis, Jessica Hunter, Jeffrey Cullers, Roger Warren, Jesse Eastman, Marcia Petrun and Nathaniel Budd. We wish to extend extra thanks to Randy Morgan who continued serving as capital campaign chairman and Board President.

VOLUNTEERS

Gardens volunteers continue to astound and impress – not only in the quantity of the hours donated, but in the quality of work performed. This year, 679 volunteers donated 8,991 hours of time – equal to \$232,367 or almost five full-time employees. This is a 10.5% increase over 2015. Volunteers are essential to beautiful gardens, a stellar plant sale, outstanding youth and adult education programs, and exceptional community and fundraising events.

Several local companies provided volunteers to help with many Gardens projects and events. They include: Associates in Family Medicine, City of Fort Collins – various departments, Headwaters Realty, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Intel, Kaiser Permanente, New Belgium Brewing, OtterBox, and Security Service Credit Union. Thank you to these local businesses for their support and to all of our

Eagle Scout Emmett BeAney and his team.



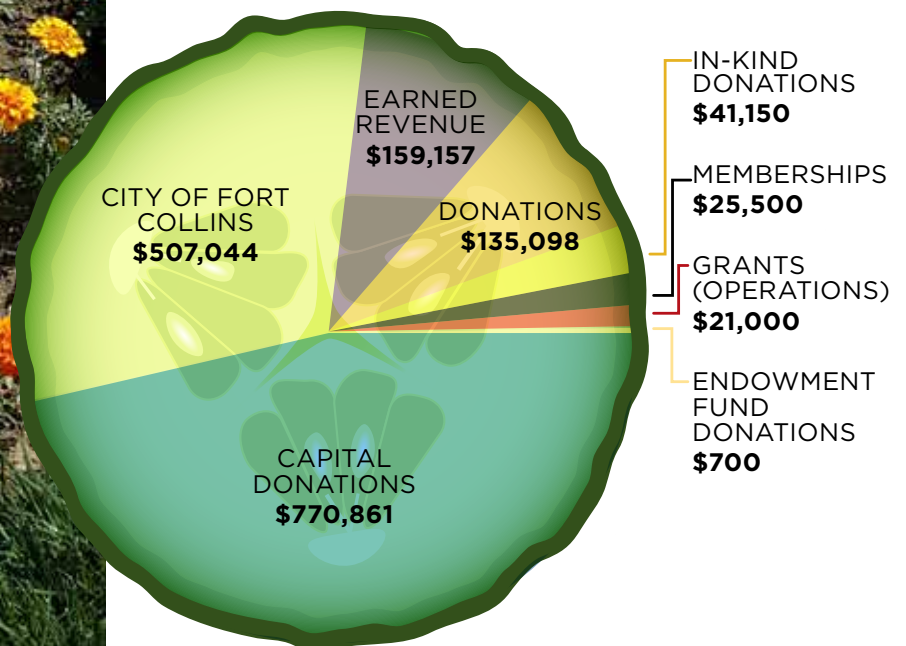


EDUCATION

The heart of our mission to enrich the lives of people and to foster environmental stewardship through horticulture is found in our education programs.

In previous years, our adult and youth education programs operated separately. We changed strategies this year, creating a comprehensive program under one Education Coordinator. Ashley Young was hired just in time for Spring Break Camp – diving right in. Under her guidance, education program attendance increased 13% over 2015 – primarily driven by an increase in Adult Programs and School Tours.

FUNDING 2016



HORTICULTURE

This year brought two partnership garden projects for our Horticulture Team. Kelly Kellow worked with USDA staff to create a pollinator garden at the entrance of one of their buildings across the street from The Gardens. This beautiful garden increases pollinator habitat while educating the public about the role of pollinators.

Another project was the partial renovation of the Xeriscape Garden at City Hall. Gardens staff worked with Utilities and Parks Department teams to re-design and renovate sections of the garden that were filled with junipers.

The Spring Plant Sale was another resounding success – the biggest sale to date. The addition of the High Plains Environmental Center as a partner added many new native plants to the sale. Many thanks to our partners at the Horticulture Departments of Colorado State University and Front Range Community College and the many volunteers who make the event happen!

COMMUNITY GARDEN OUTREACH PROGRAM

After a successful application by neighbors of Rolland Moore Park, a new community garden with 20 plots opened in the park during the summer. The Gardens now manages 7 community gardens across Fort Collins with a total of 127 plots – allowing even more residents access to growing their own food.

Plant it Forward had a record year with a total of 53,532 pounds of garden fresh produce being donated to the Food Bank for Larimer County – exceeding our goal by nearly 20,000 pounds! This total included 6,756 pounds from the Garden of Eatin’.

VISITATION 2006-2016





SPECIAL EVENTS

Rain, snow and frigid temperatures did not deter Gardens visitors from two of our biggest events – Garden of Lights and the Spring Plant Sale. Fortunately, the sun shone bright for the Urban Homestead Tour and Halloween Enchanted Garden – generating their biggest attendance to date.

Garden of Lights, Halloween Enchanted Garden and the Spring Plant Sale continue to be the largest community events. In total, net revenue from special events was \$205,871 which directly supports horticulture, education and community programs.

We changed up Garden a’Fare Wine Dinner this year, by turning it into a progressive dinner format around The Gardens. A new partnership with Blue Skies Winery was a terrific new addition. There was a lot of positive feedback about the change while simplifying event logistics.

NoCo Bloom

The Gardens was a primary partner in the launch of *NoCo Bloom* in partnership with CSU Hort, CSU Extension and the City of Fort Collins. This free publication, created in-house, is published four times a year and provides an important source of local gardening content and education along with a comprehensive community gardening event calendar—filling an information gap in our community.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Americorps/Reading Corps — assist with youth programs and special events

Audubon Rockies — Nature's Harvest Fest, Habitat Hero programs and guest teacher in youth programs, grant proposals

Boy Scouts of America — host eagle scout projects

Boys and Girls Club — STEAMfest, education programs and volunteer opportunities

City of Fort Collins departments — work with Utilities to present the High Plains Landscape Workshop, CSU Water Festival and other classes; work with the Parks Department's Botanical Team and Safety Committee; partnered with Parks, Park Planning, and Neighborhood Services to build community gardens in parks; co-host school field trips, camp programming and planned Nature's Harvest Fest with the Natural Areas Department, work with Wellness Team on classes for City employees

Branch Out Cider — Grant support

Colorado Parks and Wildlife — Nature's Harvest Fest

Colorado State University — Departments of Horticulture; Entomology; Human Development and Family Studies; School of Business Marketing Department; Occupational Therapy; Natural Resources; Gillette Entomology Club - partner on events, grant proposals, host internships; Service Learning, and Key Cluster, SLiCE, Silver Wings, Wellness, CSU Net Impact, club volunteer opportunities for students, and *NoCo Bloom* partner

EarthBeat Dance — Youth programming

FC Rotaract — Rotary volunteers assist with events

Food Bank for Larimer County — 6,756 pounds of produce grown at The Gardens was donated to the Food Bank; 53,532 pounds donated by local gardeners through Plant it Forward

Fort Collins Museum of Discovery — Youth programs and Halloween Enchanted Garden

Front Range Community College — Spring Plant Sale partnership with Horticulture Department; Environmental Education Department — youth programs; intern host; volunteer site for service learning projects

Garden Clubs — including the Northern Colorado Railroad Gardeners, Northern Colorado Daylily Club, Rocky Mountain Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, and Colorado Dahlia Society

Girl Scouts of Colorado — complete service learning projects as part of scout badge programs

High Plains Environmental Center — partner on education programs and Spring Plant Sale

Larimer County Cooperative Extension — co-host Twilight Garden Series, High Plains Landscape Workshop, and provide Master Gardeners to teach classes, tours, and *NoCo Bloom* partner

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources — co-sponsor Nature's Harvest Fest

Larimer County Workforce Center — host internships

Larimer County Conservation Corps — AgriCorps projects in the Garden of Eatin'

Let's Move! Museums and Gardens — part of a national campaign to prevent childhood obesity through gardening and cooking programs

Loveland Youth Gardeners — cohost the NoCo Urban Homestead Tour fundraiser

National Charity League — mother/daughter volunteers assist with youth programs, garden projects and special events throughout the year

Northern Colorado Beekeepers Association — youth programs and special events

Otero Corp. — serve as host site for volunteers

Plant Select® — host a Plant Select® demonstration site

Poudre School District — host school field trips and service learning projects; provide community garden plots for Linton Elementary Schools

Regional botanic gardens — collaborated with staff of regional botanic gardens including Denver Botanic Gardens, Cheyenne Botanic Garden, and Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, Montrose Botanic Garden

Rocky Mountain Raptor Program — Nature's Harvest Fest

Rocky Mountain Bird Conservancy — grant proposals

United Way — volunteer site for Make a Difference Day. United Way helped with volunteer recruitment/pairing assistance for The Gardens

U.S. Forest Service — Tree Trunks, Kids-to-Work education programming

Volunteers of America — host site for the RSVP program

Wildlands Restoration Volunteers — youth programming



CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

The Gardens on Spring Creek and the Friends of the Garden Board are grateful to the many local businesses and foundations that provide in-kind services and cash donations to our organization. Their support is critical to the success of our special events and overall operations. Corporate and Foundation supporters in 2016 included:

Ace Hardware of Fort Collins
Associates in Family Medicine
Black Bottle Brewing
Bohemian Foundation
Brent & Becky's Bulbs
City of Fort Collins, Fort Fund
City of Fort Collins, Utilities
Coloradoan
Colorado Gardener
Colorado State University Extension
Colorado State University Horticulture
and Landscape Architecture
ColorPro Printing
Crunchy Grocer
Earthborn Landscape Design
Ed Carroll Motors
Equinox Brewing
Eye Center of Northern Colorado
Fiona's Deli
Fort Collins Nursery
Fort Collins Tours
Fossil Creek Nursery
Fox and The Crow
Gallegos Sanitation
Garden Art Landscaping
Garden Thyme
Harlequin's Gardens
Horse & Dragon Brewery
Jax Fish House
Kaiser Permanente
King Soopers
KUNC FM



LaPorte Avenue Nursery
Lost Prairie Winery
Madwire Media
Mainline
Miramont Lifestyle Center
Moot House
Music City Hot Chicken
Northern Colorado Daylily Club
Odell Brewing Company
OtterCares
Outpost Sunsport
Pioneer Sand Co.
Poudre Pet & Feed Supply
Restaurant 415
Savory Spice Shop
Screen Door Studios
Seasonal Soups
Spoons Soups and Salads
Starbucks Coffee Company
Summit Lawn and Hardscape
Swingle
Target
The Cooking Studio
The Kitchen
Urban Overalls
Vincent's Heavenly Pies & Pasta
Walmart
Wilbur's Total Beverage
Wild Birds Unlimited
Zak George Landscaping
Zebulon Solutions
Zwei Brewing