

Through our diverse efforts, we, the  
Chicago Botanic Garden volunteers, will do  
our best to maintain...

the gardens,  
plant collections  
and education and resource programs  
of the Garden.

Additionally,  
we will promote the  
concepts and appreciation of...

botany,  
gardening  
and conservation  
to all gardening visitors.



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For more information, log on to our website at  
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# **Chicago Botanic Garden: Volunteer Handbook**

The Chicago Botanic Garden belongs to the people of Cook County and metropolitan Chicago. As a living museum, it seeks to express its mission fully – in collections, education, research, urban agriculture and conservation – for all its visitors and throughout its community. The Garden must be viewed as a resource as well as an end in itself, and as a repository of knowledge to be disseminated as broadly as possible. The Garden's collections and professional expertise are dedicated to serving the needs of its community and to improving the quality of life for its citizens. It will be an institution relevant to the lives of the diverse population of metropolitan Chicago. In expressing the human relationship to the natural world, the Garden will not forget its service to people and the community.

## **The Chicago Botanic Garden ... Chicagoland's Living Museum**

The Chicago Botanic Garden, popularly referred to as "The Garden," consists of 385 acres of islands, lakes and gardens built and managed by the Chicago Horticultural Society on land owned and supported by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. From the beginning, the Garden has been committed to teaching "not only gardening, but also conservation of all natural resources, the love and protection of natural beauty, and a deep personal interest in the outdoors."

## **The Garden's mission, as adopted by the Board of Directors of the Chicago Horticultural Society, is:**

**"We cultivate the power of plants to sustain and enrich life."**

The site in Glencoe was originally a low, marshy area along the Skokie River north of the Skokie Lagoons. For three years, starting in 1965 when the Chicago Horticultural Society began developing the land, earth was moved and water diverted to create landscaped hills, lakes, and islands that are not only picturesque but also provide wind protection and a variety of exposures. Development of the site and its lake system also resulted in increased water storage for flood control.

Landscape architect Geoffrey Rausch at the firm of Simonds & Simonds created the Garden in harmony with the nearby Skokie Lagoons. Planting began in the late 1960's, and the Garden opened to the public in 1972.

More than one million visitors from all over the world are drawn to the Garden each year. It is open every day of the year from 8 a.m. until sunset; and summer hours are from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. (first Monday in June through Labor Day).

## Welcome to the Chicago Botanic Garden

We believe:

Beautiful gardens and natural environments are **fundamentally important** to the mental and physical well-being of all people.

We believe:

People live **better, healthier, and more satisfying lives** when they can create, care for, and enjoy gardens.

We believe:

The future of life on Earth depends on the degree to which humans **understand, value, and protect plants** and the healthy habitats on which they depend.

The Chicago Botanic Garden's extensive collections of more than 11,000 kinds of plants, beautiful displays, educational programs and rapidly expanding research efforts have made it one of the preeminent gardens in North America.

It takes many dedicated people to maintain excellence in an institution as large as ours, and the efforts of volunteers can be seen everywhere on the front lines and behind the scenes ... in our native habitats and our greenhouses, in our research labs, gardens, offices, library, classrooms, urban agriculture farms, offsite endangered plant monitoring and at events. Volunteer enthusiasm and dedication inspire our Board, staff and visitors alike. We couldn't achieve what we do without our volunteers.

The Chicago Botanic Garden is a wonderful place to make a contribution to our community, form new friendships, learn many things and have fun. In 2019, more than one million visitors were touched by volunteer activities at the Garden. The smiles of children as they plant seeds, the look of understanding on the faces of Plant Information Service inquirers, the sounds of wonder and amazement from the visitors as they walk through the Garden attest to the fulfillment of our mission ... ***We cultivate the power of plants to sustain and enrich life.***

Our volunteers are in the thick of this effort. They are a very important part of the Garden and will continue to be even more essential as we greet new opportunities in the years ahead.

So, welcome to our family! We hope we will meet and hear from each of you.

Jean Franczyk  
President and CEO

Fred Spicer  
Executive Vice-President and Garden Director

## **How Is the Garden Governed and Operated?**

The Garden is operated by the Chicago Horticultural Society, a not-for-profit organization with more than 53,000 members. The Society is governed by an elected Board of Directors (each serving three-year terms) and by officers who are elected annually.

The Society's president is responsible for all Garden operations. Six individuals have served in this capacity: Louis Martin (1967-1976), Roy Mecklenberg (1977-1984), Roy L. Taylor (1985-1994), Barbara Whitney Carr (1995-2007), Sophia Shaw (August 2007-February 5, 2016), and Jean Franczyk (April 4, 2016-).

The Garden's administrative team headed by the CEO includes the Executive Vice President and Garden Director, the Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration and CFO, Executive Vice-President External Affairs, Vice Presidents representing Science, Learning and Engagement, Visitor Experience and Business Development, Human Resources, and four Associate Vice Presidents representing Corporate and Foundation Relations, Windy City Harvest, Development and Visitor Events and Programs. These officers oversee more than 270 year-round staff, plus additional seasonal, part-time and resource employees and interns during peak seasons. Extensive support for the Garden is provided by more than 1,200 volunteers, Corporate Partnership volunteers, the Woman's Board and The Guild. Volunteer team leaders assist staff supervisors with scheduling and training new volunteers, preparing team supplies, communicating with volunteer teams as needed and planning volunteer team recognition events.

## **Where Do the Necessary Funds Come From?**

The Forest Preserves of Cook County, which owns the land on which the Garden is located, provides approximately 40% of the Garden's operating income. The remaining operating income is generated through public programs, endowment income, grants, private contributions, parking fees and membership dues.

Primary funding for research, design, development and construction costs associated with building the Chicago Botanic Garden and its individual gardens and facilities comes from private contributions to the Chicago Horticultural Society. Investment income and grants from public and private agencies are important sources of revenue.

Dues from the Society's 53,000+ members help to support the Garden. In return, members receive many benefits including free parking; discounts on gift shop purchases, tram tours and classes; and invitations to member events. Members also receive *Keep Growing*, the Garden's member magazine and program guide, and may also borrow books, CDs, DVD's and videos from the Lenhardt Library.

However, the greatest benefit of membership is the sense of being a vital part of the Garden community. This is why many members also choose to become Garden volunteers.

## What Does the Chicago Botanic Garden Include?

Onsite, the Garden is home for diverse horticultural collections. The Garden's offsite programs include Windy City Harvest urban agriculture, Horticultural Therapy and Plants of Concern. Onsite the Garden includes:

### *The Collections*

More than 2.6 million plants representing more than 11,000 varieties (taxa) are displayed in major collections in the Regenstein Center Greenhouses as well as the Farwell Landscape, Aquatic, Graham Bulb, Native Plant, Dwarf Conifer, Malott Japanese, Krasberg Rose, Waterfall, Heritage, English Walled, Sensory, Circle, Buehler Enabling, Lavin Plant Evaluation, Esplanade, Evening Island, Regenstein Fruit & Vegetable Garden, Rainwater Glen, Entry Gardens, Grunsfeld Children's Growing Garden and Nature Play Garden. Native habitat collections include Mary Mix McDonald Woods, six different native prairie plant collections located primarily at the southern part of the Garden, and aquatic species in the lakes and along the Skokie River. The collections also include materials for the Lenhardt Library, Nancy Poole Rich Herbarium and exhibits.

### *Visitor Center, Regenstein Center and Regenstein Learning Campus*

The Visitor Center serves as an inviting point of entry into the Garden. It features the Bloom Cart, Garden View Café, Garden Shop, Membership and Information Desks, Lakeside Room and the Boyer Room. Workshops and symposia are offered through the School of the Chicago Botanic Garden. Each year, people of all abilities participate in dozens of classes, camps, youth and family programs, tours and workshops. Additional educational opportunities include plant society shows, art exhibits, special events, library reference collections, free tours and demonstrations. Plant Information Service is located in the Regenstein Center adjacent to the Lenhardt Library. The popular tram tours offer narrated rides around the Garden with stops to view areas of seasonal interest. Summer evening concerts are also popular and well attended. The Regenstein Learning Campus opened in September, 2016. Classes offered there include a new nature pre-school, elementary and high school programs, teacher training and adult wellness programs. The beautiful Butterflies & Blooms exhibit is also located there. Offsite community programs foster the teaching of science and gardening-related disciplines to educate far beyond the Garden's boundaries in schools, libraries, community gardens, human services and health agencies. Horticultural therapy programs and training classes for teachers are long-term commitments in the community.

### *The Negaunee Plant Conservation Science Center*

Research has focused on the evaluation and introduction of ornamental plants for the Chicago area. The scope of this program has expanded to include plant conservation biology with the study of native plants and their habitats as well as plant breeding. In 1995, the Horticulture Center was dedicated to serve as a focal point for the Garden's research projects. In 2009, the opening of the new Plant Conservation Science Center confirmed the Garden's role as a world leader in plant conservation science. A 38,000 square foot laboratory building designed to earn a gold LEED rating from the U.S. Green Building Council, the Plant Science Center offers expanded research facilities, dynamic exhibitions, a 16,000 square foot green roof garden, and is open to the public. Efforts to select and introduce superior landscape plants for the Chicagoland area are carried out by Chicagoland Grows, a cooperative venture with The Morton Arboretum and the Ornamental Growers Association of Northern Illinois. Endangered plants are monitored by Garden volunteers at many offsite locations. In this way, the entire Garden is a living laboratory.

### *The Kris Jarantoski Campus*

Named in honor of former Executive Vice President and Director Kris Jarantoski, campus features include 55,000 square feet of energy efficient greenhouses with an orchidarium, 150,000 feet of new outdoor nursery space and new bonsai studios. A serpentine landscape design by Peter Wirtz will unite the entire south campus.

## Highlights of the Garden's History

Founded in **1890**, the Chicago Horticultural Society's mission was "the encouragement and promotion of the practice of horticulture in all its branches and the fostering of an increased love of it among the people." From its inception, the Society carried out a substantial number of horticultural programs, courses and exhibits in the Chicago area, including sponsorship of the annual Chicago Flower and Garden Show. But the Society's greatest dream was to develop a major botanic garden for the Chicago area.

In the early **1960s**, the Society began the process of turning that dream into reality. In **1963**, the Illinois General Assembly passed "An Act Concerning Botanic Gardens in Forest Preserve Districts," enabling the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to contract with the Chicago Horticultural Society for the creation of a botanic garden. The following year, the Forest Preserve District and the Society agreed that the Society would raise \$1 million before January 1, **1966**, to create a botanic garden. The funding drive was a success, with "good faith" money subscribed well ahead of the deadline. In **1965**, the Society and the Forest Preserve District signed a renewable agreement to establish and maintain a botanic garden at the north end of Cook County, east of Edens Expressway. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on September 26, and construction began under the direction of landscape architect John O. Simonds. In **1972**, the Chicago Botanic Garden opened to the public, and the children's summer vegetable garden project began. The Regenstein Center, designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes, was dedicated in **1976**. The **1980s** saw the emergence of the Garden as we know it today. The Pullman Evaluation Garden and the Japanese Garden, Sansho-En, were dedicated in 1982, followed by the Nielsen Heritage Garden (designed by Geoffrey Rausch, with the Linnaeus sculpture by Robert Berks), the Ellen Thorne Smith Naturalistic Garden, the Edna Kanaley Graham Bulb Garden, and the Kresge Aquatic Garden in 1983. In 1985 came the dedication of the Regenstein Fruit & Vegetable Garden and the Krasberg Rose Garden. The carillon was dedicated in memory of Theodore C. Butz in 1986, and the Nancy Race Educational Greenhouses and the Bacon Sensory Garden were dedicated in 1987. In 1988 the Waterfall Garden in memory of James Brown IV and the Dwarf Conifer Garden supported by the Woman's Board were dedicated.

Work continued in the **1990s** with the English Walled Garden designed by John Brookes and dedicated by HRH Princess Margaret in **1991**. The Dixon Prairie, one of six native prairie environments in the Garden, was dedicated in **1993**, followed in **1994** by the dedication of the Visitors' Center. Additions to the Horticulture Building, construction and maintenance facilities were built. Throughout the **1980s** and **'90s** many educational outreach programs for Chicago schools, libraries and community gardens were initiated. Horticultural therapy programs, teacher services and environmental studies expanded. In **1995** the Rice Plant Resource Center was completed for plant research and evaluation projects, and the School of the Chicago Botanic Garden was developed to advance adult learning opportunities. Renovation of the Fruit & Vegetable Garden in **1997** expanded programs for gardeners. The Circle Garden added a showcase for annuals in **1998**. The Buehler Enabling Garden, dedicated in **1999**, and designed for people of all abilities. This completed the connection of gardens south of the Regenstein Center. The new century included the opening of the Botanic Garden Center, currently named the Barbara Carr Administrative Center, and Spider Island in **2001**, and Evening Island in **2002**. Also included are newer gardens such as the Crescent Garden, the Esplanade, and in **2006** the renovation of the Regenstein Center. In **2009** the Rice Plant Conservation Science Center opened and provides laboratories for plant conservation research including the Dixon Tall Grass Prairie Seed Bank and the Rainwater Glen. On June 4, **2011** the Trellis Bridge opened on World Environment Day, creating a path from Evening Island to the Science Center. In June **2012**, Butterflies & Blooms, the Children's Growing Garden and the Kleinman Family Cove opened to further support youth education programs. In September **2016**, the dream of a new education campus was realized with the opening of the Regenstein Learning Campus and Nature Play Garden. In January **2018**, our Plant Production operations moved into the new Kris S. Jarantoski Campus offices and Robert F. Finke Greenhouses.

## **VOLUNTEERS — Vitally Important Members of the Garden Community...**

As a volunteer, you are important to the Garden. Through your volunteer activities and dependable support, the Garden is able to provide an ever-increasing range of activities and programs to members and visitors. We could not offer so much every day without you!

More than 2,000 volunteers, including onsite, offsite and corporate partner volunteers, typically contribute approximately 100,000+ service hours to the Garden. You will find volunteers almost everywhere – providing plant information, guiding a tour through the Regenstein Center Greenhouses (from children's field trips to public walking tours), teaching workshops to tots as well as serious gardeners, preparing mailings, composing on computers, registering class participants, planting, weeding, propagating plants or assisting visitors at busy events. Each summer you will meet young interns from colleges and seasonal staff who share your interests. Enthusiastic corporate partner and group volunteers provide important support in a variety of areas year round. Volunteers are an extension of the staff and are goodwill ambassadors within the Garden and in the community. Representatives provide information for the *Grounds Cover* volunteer newsletter and support functions for all volunteer events.

### **...and Proud Representatives of Garden Philosophy**

The Garden's philosophy is based on helping each person feel a sense of importance, dignity and respect as an individual. This is accomplished through policies, programs and procedures.

We believe in these principles:

- All Garden staff and volunteers are charged with a singular responsibility: "to make ours the best of all gardens, to strive for '5-Star Customer Service' and excellence in all we do to serve our visitors which includes the diverse population of metropolitan Chicago."
- We will operate with the expectation that all Garden staff and volunteers are responsible and that a high standard of performance is individually satisfying.
- Opportunities for individual growth and development will be provided through specially designed programs. Self-development will be encouraged and supported.
- There will be no discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, marital status, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran or military status. The Title IX policy has been provided to you.
- In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, Chicago Botanic Garden does not discriminate in its programs or activities, including in employment or admissions. Please call (847) 835-8264 to contact our Title IX Coordinator should you have questions or concerns.
- The working environment will be as informal, relaxed and flexible as is practical and professional.
- Open communication with respect to business matters, attitudes, suggestions, problems and complaints will be encouraged and facilitated. Practice kindness at all times.
- Please visit our website to learn about the Garden's strategic plan at:  
[strategicplan.chicagobotanic.org](http://strategicplan.chicagobotanic.org)



## **Welcome to the Garden and to Exploring Your New Volunteer Opportunity!**

As you commit to the Chicago Botanic Garden volunteer program, we hope you are looking forward to the opportunity to learn and to contribute your time and abilities to an institution you enjoy visiting and supporting as a member. As you share time as a Garden volunteer, you will realize that your greatest reward is a deep sense of association and meaningful accomplishment. As staff and volunteers, we learn from each other. Together, we build a synergy that allows us to accomplish things we never thought we could do.

Your volunteer experience can lead you in unexpected directions. Once you are “on the job,” you may find opportunities to make your own unique contribution.

We welcome your participation and appreciate your contribution as a volunteer. The volunteer spirit is part of our tradition from the past, part of our strength in the present and part of our hope for the future.

We look forward to working with you. Begin now by completing and returning a volunteer application.

Thank you!

Stacy Stoldt  
Director, Volunteer Administration and Engagement

## How You Benefit as a Volunteer

The most important benefit of being a Garden volunteer is the opportunity to learn and to grow as an individual. Volunteers receive “hands-on” experience and the benefit of associating with professionals in research, horticulture and education. Through your volunteer activities you will share with others who have compatible interests and hobbies, and experience the satisfaction of accomplishing significant objectives together. You also will enjoy the beautiful setting and your association with friendly companions – other volunteers, staff and visitors. Garden volunteers also receive:

- Opportunities to meet with fellow volunteers for team trainings, workshops, tours, field trips, evaluation, planning and socialization. Invitations to attend the annual meeting with the Garden CEO and Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement, Garden volunteer team updates, professional lectures, an annual volunteer recognition reception with awards in June, a potluck holiday gathering in December and a special reception for those with 20 or more years of service. Volunteer meetings and events are currently on hold due to COVID-19 precautions.
- Communication with staff and volunteers through the *Grounds Cover* online volunteer newsletter.
- **After completing 30 service hours:** 20% discount from Garden View Café, 10% discount in the Garden Shop, admission for you and four guests to the Garden Railroad, Grand and Bright Encounters tram tours, Butterflies & Blooms and select new events/exhibits when identified as a Garden volunteer by wearing your volunteer photo ID.
- Free parking in the visitor parking lots (#2-6) on your day of volunteer service at the Garden.
- The Garden purchases Volunteer Accident Insurance (Coverage is excess over any other Medical Insurance available to the volunteer) and General Liability for volunteers when they are serving on behalf of the Garden.
- Tax deductions for transportation costs to and from volunteer assignments or for out-of-pocket expenses as a Garden volunteer.
- A Garden membership, awarded in June to volunteers who served more than **150 hours** in the previous calendar year.
- Orientation materials about the Garden and volunteer program are provided prior to volunteer placement confirmation.
- Specific training required for some services is provided for volunteers in education, horticulture and public programs.

## Your Responsibilities as a Volunteer

Your responsibilities are, in many respects, the same as staff responsibilities, including...

- All volunteers accepted to a team are required to complete a criminal background screening. Forms will be sent to each volunteer after acceptance to a volunteer team via e-mail. Completed forms must be returned to the Volunteer Services Director of Administration and Engagement or Coordinator within 5 business days.
- **Required: Check in with your staff supervisor. Record your total hours, rounded up to the nearest half-hour, on the Excel spreadsheet (provided) for the appropriate service area.** Do not include or record hours for travel to and from your service. Please be dependable. Notify your supervisor if you are unable to perform your assigned duties. Please do not come in if you are sick. Extended absence due to illness requires a doctor's release prior to returning to volunteer service.
- Follow all Garden and Volunteer Services policies and procedures. Firearms are not permitted at any time. Park in designated staff areas as directed. Driving is not allowed on service roads without permission.
- Volunteers must walk to assigned volunteer service locations, or use their own personal assistive device as needed on garden paths for traveling to and from volunteer service locations.
- Communicate with all visitors, vendors and Garden staff in a friendly, courteous manner as a representative of the Garden. Refer inquiries to the Information Desk or appropriate staff when you do not have the correct information.
- Use of cell phones for personal calls is not allowed while volunteering. Harassment, profanity or aggressive behavior is not permitted at any time. Friends and family of a volunteer should not visit with the volunteer while on duty.
- Maintain a neat and clean personal appearance in keeping with your particular duties. Chewing gum is not permitted while on duty. Wear your volunteer photo ID.
- All Garden issued volunteer ID's must be returned to Judy Cashen when you no longer volunteer.
- Keep informed about Garden activities by reviewing the website, reading Garden publications and the volunteer newsletter.
- Computer use is allowed with supervisor or Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement approval only. The computer use policy agreement signature page will be kept on file. Consider confidential all Garden records, files, personal information, meetings and conversations. A signed Volunteer Acknowledgement Form will be kept on file.
- Recognize the value of a job well done – to yourself, the Garden and the community.

*One of your most important responsibilities is to communicate.* Kindly and privately discuss suggestions, comments or concerns with your supervisor and/or the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING VOLUNTEER SERVICES

The following policies and procedures are similar to the Garden's staff policies and procedures. Procedures for volunteer conduct at the Garden are continuously being reviewed and revised to meet changing needs of both the volunteer and the Garden. **Title IX, Anti-Harassment, Anti-Retaliation Policies are a separate handout with this manual.**

Definition – A volunteer is an individual who offers to provide a service of his/her own free will for which there is no financial compensation. Service is scheduled on a regular basis for assigned duties under the supervision of a Garden staff member. **Minimum age for volunteer service is 16 years of age.**

Recruitment and referral – Volunteers are recruited to fill specific assignments. All interested persons or referrals are directed to Volunteer Services for placement. Prospective volunteers are required to review orientation materials, complete a volunteer application and background screening. Appropriate placement matches the skills, ability, interests and availability of the volunteer with specific jobs requested to support Garden programs and projects. It is not always possible to place all interested individuals in our program. Applications are kept on file for one year.

Placement – As a general rule, volunteers are asked to make a one-year commitment to serve the Garden one-half day per week for a minimum of 30 hours annually. Placement in Volunteer Services varies, depending upon the service area, skill, ability, attitude, commitment, day or time available and season of the year. Volunteers must walk to assigned volunteer service locations, or use their own personal assistive device as needed on garden paths for traveling to and from volunteer service locations.

Volunteer opportunities are fulfilled from requests submitted by staff to fill both short- and long-term volunteer needs. Some opportunities are featured in the volunteer newsletter. Initial placement is considered temporary for a trial period to develop consensus between paid and unpaid staff involved regarding the suitability of the placement. It is not always possible to place applicants due to a variety of circumstances, including seasonal assignment, staff supervisor training and team capacity constraints. Friends and family of a volunteer should not visit with the volunteer while on duty.

Commitment – After successful completion of one season in one service area, volunteers may serve more than one-half day per week in more than one service area. Volunteers are not expected or encouraged to make volunteer commitments in multiple service areas or on a daily basis. Volunteers must dependably arrive on time for assignments and stay for the entire shift. Volunteers who repeatedly cancel service without prior notice, are frequently tardy or leave early may be terminated.

Volunteer Meetings and Events – Attendance at volunteer meetings and events is by invitation only and exclusively for currently active volunteers. Volunteer nametags/photo ID's are required for entry. Guests including family members or friends are not permitted without approval from the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement at least one week in advance. For our safety, Security will be onsite and called for all unauthorized attendees.

No solicitation or marketing of products or services is allowed – Volunteers may not sell products, services or promote personal businesses at any time. Any fundraising is exclusively to support the Chicago Botanic Garden and must be authorized in advance by the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement.

Termination – Volunteers may be terminated by mutual consent between the volunteer and his or her supervisor, or by the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement when the service is not suitable, not needed, or not up to standard including excessive tardiness, leaving early and frequent absence. Harassment of any kind, theft, alcohol or drug use while on duty, insubordination, threatening language, firearm possession, profanity, acts of aggression, fraud and breach of confidentiality may result in immediate termination. Computer use is allowed with supervisor approval and computer use policy agreement signature page on file. Garden radios are for authorized use only with permission from Garden staff supervisors or in case of an emergency. Failure to follow Garden policies will result in termination.

Reporting Injuries and Emergencies Onsite – If a volunteer is injured in the course of the volunteer's service at the Garden, it is important that they advise their supervisor, or any staff person, and seek medical care if needed. An incident form will need to be completed by the volunteer with their supervisor or volunteer director. Volunteers are required to submit an emergency contact name and phone number as part of their volunteer service record in case an emergency situation should arise. Dial **8321**, used only to summon emergency help from within the Garden. Security can also be contacted by radio from the information desks, gatehouse, tram and many staff including horticulture, custodial and event

staff. For emergency assistance from outside the Garden, dial **9-911**. Be prepared to provide your name and exact location within the Garden and to describe the nature of the emergency and the type of assistance required. **Volunteer injuries should be reported immediately whether or not medical assistance is needed.**

Safety is a primary concern for all Garden staff. Volunteers are expected to use good common sense and judgment not only for personal safety but also to protect others. Remind others and report potential unsafe conditions or practices to avoid accidents or injury. Be sure to immediately notify Security and fill out an Incident Report for all (even minor) accidents or injuries. When appropriate, all safety precautions due to COVID-19, or any other pandemic related issues must be followed. Requirements include wearing a face mask covering nose and mouth, social distancing of at least six feet and frequent hand cleaning by washing or sanitizer.

Use of cell phones (including texting, checking email, taking photos and playing games) and other electronic devices is not permitted while volunteering unless it is required for your volunteer assignment. Become familiar with the Garden App.

Free parking is provided in the visitor parking lots for volunteers when they serve at the Garden. Parking is permitted in lots 2 through 6. Driving is not permitted on service roads without permission. As a general rule, volunteer parking at the Regenstein Center is limited to people with disabilities. If you need to park in that lot please request permission at the Gatehouse. Please note: Once designated parking spaces are filled, you may drop off people with disabilities or deliveries, but must return to the visitor parking lots to park your car.

Garden property, including books, plants, tools and all materials, may not be removed without permission from your supervisor or the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement. Even items removed from trashcans can provoke inquiry and concern from staff, other volunteers and visitors. Personal property, including items such as eyeglasses, clothing, vehicles, tools and equipment, is not the responsibility of the Garden. The owner is responsible for repairs or replacement in case of damage, loss or theft. If you feel personal property has been stolen, file a report with Security, but the Garden will not be held liable. Please lock up your belongings and leave valuables at home.

All concepts or products, including but not restricted to such items as photographs, drawings or manuscripts created by or resulting from work performed as a Garden volunteer, will become the property of the Chicago Horticultural Society unless specifically released. You may be asked to sign an additional release form to meet legal requirements. Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses required to perform Garden volunteer service is authorized by the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement. Prior approval for expenses is required and documented receipts are needed for reimbursements.

Garden access is permitted in public areas only during public hours. Volunteers are not permitted to work outside on the grounds or work/visit in non-public areas without prior authorization and staff supervision. Approval from a staff director is needed for exceptions. Appointments with staff members should be scheduled in advance. **Computer use is not allowed without supervisor approval and computer use policy agreement signature page on file. Computer use is approved for Garden projects only.** When no longer volunteering, Garden issued ID's must be returned to Judy Cashen.

Smoking, the use of tobacco products and vaping is not permitted at any time at the Garden, or in any Garden vehicle. This is for reasons of safety and health and to protect collections. Chewing gum is not permitted while on duty.

Publicity ideas are submitted to the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement for approval and distribution by the Communications Department. Volunteers are encouraged to submit suggestions, media contacts and ideas for Garden publicity to the Garden's Public Relations department, but are asked **to NOT contact the media directly** as a Garden representative. Approval from the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement is also needed to represent the Garden as a volunteer. **Notifications sent to Garden volunteers may not be shared publicly or through Social Media. Personal publicity is not permitted.** Employment opportunities and applications for staff positions are posted on the web site for consideration. The Garden does not offer financial compensation to volunteers who perform similar work provided by a Garden staff member.

Additional policies and procedures are outlined in department guidelines, team trainings and descriptions for specific volunteer services, communicated in the *Grounds Cover* newsletter or at volunteer meetings. If a matter involving a volunteer is not covered by written volunteer policies, staff policies will be followed. Failure to follow Garden policies, safety procedures and guidelines will result in termination.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *How do I become a volunteer?*

Information regarding volunteer services is posted on the website. Prospective volunteers complete an application to indicate interest, availability, experience and preference for service. Current volunteer opportunities are matched with your qualifications and with the Garden's current needs. Please note that it is not always possible to immediately place volunteers due to seasonal requirements and scheduled training requirements. In several service areas, you will learn on the job from fellow volunteers and your staff supervisor. Specific training is offered and required for some service areas.

### *What should I wear?*

It depends on the volunteer area that you are working in. Volunteers wear sturdy work clothes in the display gardens, extra-sturdy clothes in the natural areas, and business casual office wear at the information desks and in offices. Check your volunteer team description for advice about what to wear, as well as information on where to report and the name, phone number and e-mail address of your staff supervisor. Walking tour guide and event volunteer attire is black or khaki pants and a white collared shirt, with an event apron.

### *What if I can't be there on time or on a scheduled day?*

Notify your staff supervisor or volunteer team leader, preferably in writing via email, with as much in advance as possible. Depending on your assignment, we may ask you to help us find a substitute.

### *What does the staff expect of me?*

Expectations for volunteers are similar to expectations for a new employee. We expect you to do your best to live up to the Garden's philosophy and policies, and just as important, we hope you will enjoy your volunteer time at the Garden and feel that your volunteer work is helping you grow as a person. Above all, we expect all volunteers to be dependable, helpful, friendly and kind at all times. We encourage you to communicate with us privately when you have concerns and when you have ideas for ways you can contribute and benefit more as a volunteer.

*What if I want to change something about the way my volunteer assignment is done?* Privately talk it over with your staff supervisor. Often volunteers' ideas can be implemented — but not without the approval of the staff.

*What should I do if I don't like my assignment?* Try not to judge too soon. Keep in mind that all new volunteer assignments are temporary. You will begin with a one- to two-month trial period, during which both you and your supervisor will evaluate the situation. At the end of that period a decision will be made by mutual consent whether the assignment should be continued for the rest of the season or year. If the assignment is not appropriate, contact the Director of Volunteer Administration and Engagement to explore other options.

### *Whom do I contact in case of an injury or emergency?*

If a volunteer is injured in the course of the volunteer's service onsite at the Garden, it is important that they advise their supervisor, or any staff person, and seek medical care if needed. An incident form will need to be completed by the volunteer with their supervisor or volunteer director. Volunteers are required to submit an emergency contact name and phone number as part of their volunteer service record in case an emergency situation should arise. **8321** is used only to summon emergency help from within the Garden from a Garden extension. If you have an EMERGENCY you can call 847-835-8321. Security can also be contacted by radio. Security personnel receive first aid and CPR training and have first aid supplies. Report all accidents and injuries, even minor cuts or bee stings. For extreme emergencies that require help from outside the Garden (medical, fire, police), **dial 9-911**. Be prepared to provide your name and exact location within the Garden and to describe the nature of the emergency and the type of assistance required. **Volunteer injuries should be reported immediately whether or not medical assistance is needed.**

## **CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

The Garden's aim is to serve broadly with excellence offering a very wide range of opportunities for volunteer service. Volunteer interests, skills, abilities and availability guide initial placement for orientation and training in a specific service area, usually one-half day each week on weekdays and twice each month on weekends. Opportunities to use specific talents and to staff special events are listed in the *Grounds Cover* online volunteer newsletter.

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### **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

These programs attract volunteers who enjoy learning and sharing information with the public. Most require specific training and practice during the first year to become proficient in program preparation. Plant Information Service volunteers must be certified master gardeners with the University of Illinois Extension Service. See page 15 for details.

### **THE REGENSTEIN LEARNING CENTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Volunteers commit to an ongoing training schedule and should enjoy teaching children. This requires homework and practice during the first year to become proficient in program preparation and presentations for children, families and teachers. See page 16 for details.

### **HORTICULTURE, LIVING PLANT DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH**

Horticulture volunteers help grow and maintain plants in our gardens, natural areas and greenhouses. Most work outside one weekday morning from April through November with staff supervision to prepare soil, plant, weed, prune, and deadhead. It's physically demanding work that continues in winter unless the weather is extreme. Living Plant Documentation volunteers document the collection and Research volunteers assist our scientists. See page 17 for details.

### **VISITOR SERVICES AND EXHIBITS**

Volunteers enjoy working with people to assist with directions, sharing information and providing 5-star customer service. Volunteers assist in visitor services locations one-half day each week and services may include Regenstein Center and Learning Center information desks, Garden Greeters and Walking Tour Guides. Volunteers staff seasonal exhibits as needed. See page 18 for specifics.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

The Garden sponsors large events that may require volunteer support to set up supplies, assist visitors, staff activities and provide programs. Volunteers are encouraged to sign up for specific dates. Special event volunteers select dates, often on evenings or weekends to participate monthly or 12 times/year. Events such as The Orchid Show in February and March, , Bulb Festival in October and Lightscape in November/December may require volunteer support. See page 19 for details.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Opportunity	Time of Year	Training	Commitment	Activity
Lenhardt Library-closed	Year-round	Previous library experience is required. On the job orientation to the collection and computer catalogue.	1/2 day/week Wed. – Sun.	Assist visitors, organize collections of books, videos, periodicals and catalogues
Plant Information Service	Year-round	University of Illinois master gardener training held at the Garden Jan. – March every other year. Ongoing advanced training scheduled.	1/2 day/week for minimum of two years.	Answer questions from visitors, by phone and computer, use references and respond accurately, professionally to inquiries
Continuing Education	Year-round	Office and computer skills, event registration experience	As scheduled	Assist with data entry. Provide information as needed to program attendees.
Enabling Garden/ Horticultural Therapy	May – Oct.	Seasonal meetings	1/2 day/week	Provide demos, tours and info, manage plants
Off-Site Community Programs including Green Youth Farms	Various	Depends upon the program	Depends upon the program	Many opportunities at off-site locations in Cook and Lake County
Garden Offices	Year-round	Office and computer experience required	½ day per week	Answer questions from visitors, by phone and computer, use references and respond accurately, professionally to inquiries

### The Regenstein Learning Campus

Opportunity	Time of Year	Training	Commitment	Activity
School Programs Instructor	Sept.-June	Comfort with children & with leading a class. Will train on curricula and teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 days/ month Monday-Friday 9-12:30</li> <li>• Monthly volunteer meetings</li> </ul>	Instruct school field trip groups of up to 30 children in grades pre K-High School
School Programs Instructor Assistant	Sept.-June	Comfort with groups of children. Will train on curricula and teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 days/ month Monday-Friday 9-12:30</li> <li>• Monthly volunteer meetings</li> </ul>	Assist lead instructors to provide activities for school field trip groups of up to 30 children in grades pre K-High School
Special Needs Program Instructor	May-Nov	Experience working with physically and/or mentally impaired students. Comfort with children & with leading a class. Will train on curricula and teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 days/ month Monday-Friday 9-12:30</li> <li>• Monthly volunteer meetings</li> </ul>	Instruct school field trip groups of up to 15 special needs children in grades pre K-High School
Special Needs Instructor Assistant	May-Nov	Comfort with special needs individuals. Will train on curricula and teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 days/ month Monday-Friday 9-12:30</li> <li>• Monthly volunteer meetings</li> </ul>	Assist lead instructors to provide activities for school field trip groups of up to 30 children in grades pre K-High School
School Walking Tours (Also see Visitor Services Opportunities)	Sept-Nov. April-June	Comfort with children & with leading a class. Will train on curricula and teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 days/ month Monday-Friday 9-12:30</li> <li>• Monthly volunteer meetings</li> </ul>	Lead 30 minute walking tours for school groups to the English Walled Garden, Fruit & Veg or Japanese Island
Camp CBG	May-August	Comfort with groups of children. Will train on all other aspects	1 week, consecutive M-F, June 15-August 14 9 am-12 pm 12- 3 pm	Assist certified teachers with summer camp instruction, groups of 15 children ages 2-12
Scouts Programs Instructor	Sept-Dec March-May Weekday afternoons	Comfort with children & with leading a class. Will train on curricula and teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 days/ month Monday-Friday 3-6 pm</li> <li>• Monthly volunteer meetings</li> </ul>	Instruct groups of up to 25 boy and girl scouts on badge-based outdoor programs. Ages 4-12
Teacher Programs	Year-round <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sept-May Saturdays</li> <li>• June-August weekdays</li> </ul>	Comfort with groups of adults in class setting Will train on all other duties.	As needed 2 Saturdays/month 2 weekdays/month	Help organize and prepare for teacher professional development workshops
Instructor Assistant	Year round	Comfort with groups of children and outdoor activities. Will train on all other aspects	Weekdays	Assist instructors with outdoor education programs, ages 3-5

## HORTICULTURE, COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH

Opportunity	Time of Year	Training	Commitment	Activity
Regenstein Center Greenhouse-closed	Year-round	Train on the job, follow directions, be able to stoop, kneel and bend	1/2 day/week Mon. – Fri. morning	Maintain Regenstein Center plant collections
Plant Production Greenhouses and Nursery-closed	Year-round	Learn by doing, must follow directions, work as part of a team. Standing and lifting required	1/2 day/week Mon. – Fri. 8:30 am-noon	Sow seeds, transplant, monitor, stake, trim plants and wash pots. Work indoors and outdoors.
Collections and Living Plant Documentation	Year-round	Knowledge of plants and the CBG helpful	1/2 day/week	Prepare labels, map plants and enter data
Herbarium-closed	Year-round	Background in plant science or botanical art	1/2 day/week	Organize, label and paste plant specimens
Research	Year-round	Background in plant science or lab experience	1/2 day/week	Varies upon depth of experience and season
Weekend Horticulture Team-	Year-round	Gardening experience, physical stamina to work outside	Weekend rotation	Maintain plant collections, water containers and assist in greenhouses
McDonald Wood and Brown Nature Reserve	Activities vary with the seasons	Stamina to work outside, specific plant knowledge to identify and monitor species.	Seasonally Tues. or Thurs. morning or afternoon	Volunteer projects change with the seasons
North Gardens – Bulb, Esplanade Native Plant; Rose & Heritage, Dwarf Conifer, Home Landscape, Railroad, Entry, Nature Play and Children’s Growing Garden	Year-round	Gardening experience helpful; ability to bend, stoop, kneel and work outside	1/2 day/week 9 am-noon or as designated by staff supervisor	Maintain plant collections and assist visitors.
South Gardens – Evaluation, Japanese, English Walled, Circle and Sensory Gardens, Evening Island, Berm Gardens	Year-round	Gardening experience helpful; ability to bend, stoop, kneel and work outside	1/2 day/week 9 am- noon or as designated by staff supervisor	Maintain plant collections and assist visitors.

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## VISITOR SERVICES AND EXHIBITS

Opportunity	Time of Year	Training	Commitment	Activity
Regenstein Center and Learning Center Information Desk	Year-round	Knowledge of CBG; detailed training provided	4 hour shift/week	Welcome visitors and provide directions, information
Membership Desk and Membership Operations	Year-round	Learn member benefits, promotions and assist with data entry as needed in computer database	4 hour shift/week Mon. – Fri. Twice a month Sat. – Sun.	Promote sales, services and events, and assist current and prospective members. Data entry as needed.
Garden Greeters	Year-round	Knowledge of CBG; train with experienced volunteers and staff	4 hour shift/week	Greet, direct and inform visitors.
Railroad Garden	May – Oct.	Orientation and training prior to volunteering	4 hour shift/week	Greet, direct and inform visitors. Clean tracks and set up trains. Troubleshoot trains and provide repairs as needed.
Walking Tour Guides	Spring – Fall	Monthly training	Weekdays Morning and afternoon shift	Sign up for scheduled adult walking tours and free public tours
Japanese, English Walled, Fruit & Vegetable Garden	May – Oct.	Spring team training, winter opportunities in Arid Greenhouse	11 a.m.-4 p.m. Wed.-Sun. Three-four times per month	Greet visitors and share Garden information.
Butterflies & Blooms	Memorial Day through Labor Day	Orientation and training prior to volunteering	Three shifts per month through the season	Welcome guests and share exhibit information

### No recruitment for 2021 SPECIAL EVENTS

Opportunity	Time of Year	Training	Commitment	Activity
The Orchid Show and plant sale	Mid-Feb through March	Orientation required prior to event	Shifts vary	Greet visitors and answer questions
Garden Railroad	May 11 – Oct.	Required spring training	3-4 hours	Welcome and assist visitors.
Fruit & Vegetable Festivals	June, Aug., Sept.	Orientation	5 hours	Welcome and assist visitors.
Tuesday Morning Music	June – Aug.	Orientation before first concert	Tuesday/Thursday morning	Assist visitors, staff activities
Summer Evening Events	June – Aug.	Orientation before event	Evening start time varies	Assist visitors, staff activities
Art Festival	June/July	Orientation before event	As scheduled	Assist visitors, staff activities
Kite Festival	August	Orientation before event	As scheduled	Assist visitors, staff activities
Japanese Garden Festivals	May and August	Orientation before event	As scheduled	Greet and direct visitors, assist with family activities
American Craft Exposition	September	Orientation required	As scheduled	Greet visitors and answer questions
Bulb Sale	October	Orientation before event	3-4 hours	Package bulbs, set up, assist sales and cashier lines.
Fall Bulb Festival	October	Orientation before event	As scheduled	Welcome and direct visitors.
Spooky Pooch Parade	October	Orientation before event	As scheduled	Welcome, direct attendees along parade route.
Night of 1,000 Jack o' Lanterns	October	Orientation required	Evenings	Assist with guests and activities.
Roadside Flower Sale	May – October	Learn by working with others as part of a team.	Wed. mornings; annual sale in October	Collect and dry plants. Assist with classes and sale.
Lightscape	November – January	Orientation	4.5 hour shift for outdoor light show evening exhibit	Assist outdoors, support visitors and programs.

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## NOTES