

Cultivating a greener community



2014

Inspiring appreciation and improvement of our environment through horticulture, education & conservation



ANNUAL REPORT



Table of Contents

2 President & Executive Director
Letter of Thanks

Growth Reports

- 3** Public Landscapes
- 4** Tree Program
- 5** Urban Agriculture
- 6** Adult Education
- 7** Environmental & Social Justice

Thanks to Contributors

- 8** Annual Giving Campaign
- 10** Program Funders
- 11** In Kind Giving Supporters
- 12** Rare Plant Auction®
- 13** Volunteers
- 13** Planned & Tribute Gifts
- 14** Capital Campaign (2010-2014)
- 15** Financial Overview
- 16** Staff & Leadership

With the exception of the Capital Campaign, all gifts listed in this report were received between Oct. 1, 2013 and Sept. 30, 2014. If omissions or inaccuracies are found, contact Joe Matassino: jmatassino@thedch.org or 302-658-6262 x103.

Dear friends,

For all of you who remember the taste of a fresh tomato plucked right from the vine, the feeling of walking in the cool shade beneath a leafy tree, or the joy of watching a plant thrive under your care, these are some of the simple experiences yet magical qualities of gardening we impart to many of our program participants.

There are larger stories too: providing fresh produce in neighborhoods where it is difficult to get; improving air quality in neighborhoods with street trees; providing horticulture skills training; keeping stormwater out of Wilmington’s sewer overflow.

Thank you for your support this year. 2014 was a challenge with the dual focus of completing the Capital Campaign while delivering important programs.

Thanks to you, our donors, the Board of Directors embarked on Phase I of the Capital Campaign for Green Renovations and Expansion, and so, for half the year, staff have been sharing the building with carpenters, roofers, electricians, plumbers and others who are busy improving and expanding our headquarters so we can teach more, collaborate more, demonstrate the green technology that we practice throughout the city and now have the opportunity to showcase onsite.

We also welcomed new staff this year, including Bonnie Swan, Education Manager; Jeff Long, Assistant Urban Farmer; Helen Anderson, then Sarah Casalvera as Administrative Assistant; and Steve Draper, our first Business Manager. Congratulations also, to existing staff who were promoted, including Lenny Wilson, Associate Director of Development; Martha Stephens, Assistant Director of Programs; and Adrienne Spencer, Urban Farmer.

We hope you will enjoy reading about some of our program milestones and achievements in this report. Then come join us: it’s a vibrant place.

Gratefully,
Andrew Bunting
Board President

Pam Sapko
Executive Director

PUBLIC LANDSCAPES

Beautifying municipal and community spaces with plants and practices that improve air and water quality, and reduce stormwater runoff

Attractive community and municipal gateways and focal points for residents and visitors play an important role in community building and local economies. To that end, TheDCH supports communities and organizations through numerous public, private and business grants and gifts. For example, we:

- ✓ Provided consultation, design, and beautification support for numerous urban public spaces in the City of Wilmington, including: Hill Road, Brandywine Zoo, Columbus Monument, and Rodney Square
- ✓ Assisted the City of Wilmington Public Works Department and other stakeholder entities with the beautification of public corridors throughout the region, including the Kennett Pike, 11th Street, and Martin Luther King Blvd.
- ✓ Provided design and installation expertise for a streetscape project at the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation

In many cases, the renovations improved the environment by removing aggressive or harmful invasive species and sometimes, like in the case of the Brandywine Zoo, experts provided other valuable consultation, like animal-friendly plant choices.

NOTEWORTHY: Thanks to Crystal Trust, underwriter for a 2014 Isuzu HD NPR Gas Crew truck. This workhorse transports 7 workers, carries more tools, is more flexible with side and rear gates, and a lift for easy loading.

AWARD: Delaware Nursery and Landscape Association Award for the Brandywine Pumping Station 103 E 16th St. (designed, installed, and maintained by TheDCH through a City of Wilmington Public Works contract.)

"Collaborating with TheDCH has been an important part of making our block feel like a community. I really like having an organization that values native landscaping and understands the importance of partnering with neighbors."

- David Jezyk, Ed. D.
New Castle County Vocational
& Technical School District



✓ Done!

- 1 Streetscape installed at Hill Road in Wilmington
- 2 Major median plantings at Rts. 13 & 40
- 120 Improved urban block faces with 31 streetscapes
- 160 Planted 4,050 annuals & perennials in urban sidewalk containers

TREE PROGRAM

Increasing the tree canopy and educating people about the environmental, fiscal and community benefits of trees



"Thank you for your efforts to make Wilmington a greener city filled with trees. Our residents and community really appreciate it."

- Adele Meehan
Union Park Gardens

Trees clean the air, cool urban streets, reduce erosion, beautify neighborhoods, and provide habitat for beneficial wildlife. From an environmental and social perspective, trees are a great asset. And so increasing the tree canopy in Delaware, especially its urban areas, is a priority.

Tree plantings bring people together and to build a sense of community by improving it through trees. This year, TheDCH held and/or coordinated volunteer tree planting events at DelCastle High School, Moyer Academy and Riverview Cemetery.

The Tree Program also continued to put trees in the hands of residents through TheDCH low cost Spring and Fall Bare Root tree sales, Trees for Bellefonte and City of Wilmington Low Cost Tree Sales, and promoting the Arbor Day Foundation and Delmarva Power free tree giveaway. The Trees for Bellefonte sale was the third in a series of town-wide efforts made possible by Delmarva Power.

A robust tree canopy means caring for them too. TheDCH continued its work of inspecting, pruning, removing and replanting trees throughout the City of Wilmington's low-income neighborhoods, including coordinating \$100,000 of hazardous tree remediation and replacement in the public right of way.

Educating and inspiring people to advocate and care for trees is at the core of the Tree Program, and this year, numerous outreach events were held, including: three NeighborWoods Celebrations in October, four tree pruning and education events through ACTrees and a TD Tree Care Grant, an Arbor Day Celebration at St. Anthony's School, and a "Big Tree Tour" at the Wilmington-Brandywine Cemetery.

NOTEWORTHY: Thanks to TheDCH beekeeping outreach, 10 Purple Robe Black Locusts with wisteria-like blooms were sold to local beekeepers. The tree's dense clusters of fragrant blossoms are extremely attractive to bees, and the honey produced from the tree is highly sought-after.



✓ **Done!**

750 Trees planted

252 Trees (& seedlings) sold or distributed

145 Kids & adults trained in 21 tree events & workshops

1,104 Trees cared for (inspected, watered, pruned, & removed)



URBAN AGRICULTURE

Increasing food security in neighborhoods that need it

The Urban Farm at 12th & Brandywine in Wilmington is the flagship of Urban Ag's efforts to increase access to healthy food in neighborhoods where it is scarce. Activities on the farm – powered by your financial support and volunteerism -- included weekly market days, and expanding "100% Fresh" marketing in the farm's food shed.

The Urban Farm also aims to inspire and educate neighbors, children and special populations, like a group of students with emotional and behavioral issues, who visited the farm and engaged their five senses, picking and smelling fresh herbs, sampling blackberries, planting beans, and discovering how worms help break down garden waste in compost.

Building a social change movement requires a lot of research and coordination of background activities. To that end, the Urban Ag staff was engaged in numerous committees and organizations, including:

- ✓ Leadership for the Delaware Urban Farm and Food Coalition
- ✓ Participated in the DEUFFC's Political Economy Committee, which was instrumental in drafting a water usage framework for the City of Wilmington for community gardeners
- ✓ Helped create an interactive map of all known NCCo community gardens for and urban farms
- ✓ Began a 2-year research study of the local food system data and gaps with funding from a Specialty Crop Block Grant
- ✓ Provided support for Wilmington's Healthy Corner Stores Initiative

NOTEWORTHY: Urban Agriculture Manager Tara Tracy represented TheDCH at the 16th Annual National Value Added Agricultural Conference and the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development What Works Conference, and was the co-presenter of a poster entitled, "Kale Chips Rock! Delaware Urban Farm and Food Coalition Helps Delawareans Eat and Grow Healthy."

"Many thanks for the new growing beds at Shearman Street Intergenerational Community Garden. We appreciate the care that was taken with the project. I have already planted pole beans, zucchini, and cucumbers, and we have people waiting in line for the other three beds."

- Alice Davis
Shearman Street gardener

✓ Done!

- 1 Renovated Shearman Street Intergenerational Garden, replacing eight raised garden beds
- 30 Community Gardens supported with expertise & technical assistance
- 1,412 Pounds of produce sold in the food shed (grown at the Urban Farm in Wilmington)



ADULT EDUCATION

Lectures, workshops, day trips, tours & excursions for the education, enjoyment and appreciation of gardening and the environment

✓ Done!

- 41 Classes & Offsite Trips
- 345 Gardeners, crafters & artists improved their knowledge and skill through workshops & lectures
- 153 Members & their guests visited regional gardens
- 103 Garden enthusiasts travelled to gardens in the US and abroad



You love to learn about gardening through lectures, hands-on workshops, day trips and excursions, and this year, TheDCH leadership restructured and fine-tuned the adult education programming to align it with your interests and TheDCH mission.

You asked for more excursions, we made two trips to Cuba, and to western New York for the nation's largest city garden tour: Garden Walk Buffalo. Your interest in sustainability led to the "Ask an Expert Plant Clinic" on beneficial insects and companion planting, and a new series, "Your Garden: Nature's Way," a four-season workshop series packed with information to take home and use.

Building renovations spurred a new offsite garden tour series: Learning from Great Gardens, featuring tours of the private gardens of some of the region's foremost horticulturists. Both new series met with instant interest; many of the events sold out.



✓ Done!

- 5 Enrolled in the **Return to Work Green Jobs** training program, bringing the total to 44 since inception
- 40 Preschoolers served through **The Secret Garden**
- 20 Children served in the **Clarence Fraim Boys & Girls Garden Club**
- 24 Teens served in the **Horticulture and Environmental Leadership Program**
- 12 Teen interns served in **Wilmington's Green Jobs Program**
- 30 Students served in field trips to **Point Lookout**
- 12 Women served through the **Baylor Women's Correctional Institution Garden Club**



ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Horticulture training, life skills and inspiration for underserved populations

We believe that tomorrow's leaders in underserved communities rise from within when they are engaged and equipped with skills to address important issues that directly impact their lives, like food security, air and water quality, and neighborhood cohesion through greening projects. That is what TheDCH Environmental and Social Justice Education programs aim to do. This year, your volunteering, financial contribution and program participation has made and will continue to make a difference in communities that are ripe for positive change.

Here's one example: one morning, a woman driving by TheDCH stopped her car and got out to chat with staff members in the garden and thank TheDCH for helping her through a tough time in her life. Becky had recently been released from Baylor Women's Correctional Institution after serving a sentence related to long-term drug and alcohol abuse. At one of the lowest points in her confinement, working with flowers in a floral design program of TheDCH, staffed by dedicated Garden Club of Wilmington volunteers, made a huge difference to her then, and after she was released. Today, Becky is 15 months sober and working towards Nurse's Aide certification.

Located in Wilmington's Hilltop neighborhood, the Secret Garden is an enchanting outdoor classroom for Ministry of Caring preschoolers. This year, through generous financial support and labor of volunteers and Challenge Program participants, renovations at the Secret Garden – including raised beds, 4-season chalkboard, grading and mulch – were completed. Other life enhancing opportunities this year:

- ✓ Weekly garden sessions with summer and after-school youth at Clarence Fraim Boys and Girls Garden Club. In the club children plant, tend and harvest the raised bed garden, and prepare and sample food from the fresh produce. They also learned about the environment through interactive projects like decorating a rain barrel.
- ✓ The Horticulture and Environmental Leadership Program for academically successful middle school students from low income families connected youth to nature and provided training and environmental stewardship in two, 3-week sessions that took them to meadows, streams, marshland, forest, rock climbing, canoeing and more.
- ✓ Return to Work Green Jobs Training for ex-offenders: participants got 600 hours of on-the-job training in Urban Agriculture, Urban Forestry, and Public Landscaping, often benefitting under served neighborhoods.
- ✓ Baylor Women's Correctional Institution gardening program for incarcerated women, in partnership with the Garden Club of Wilmington, delivered weekly garden programming.

AWARD: Arbor Day Foundation National Award for Education Innovation recognizing the Return to Work Green Jobs program. Return to Work also got national exposure on WHYY's syndicated You Bet Your Garden with Mike McGrath.

AWARD: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Garden & Greening Blue Ribbon Award for TheDCH Secret Garden in Wilmington's Hilltop neighborhood.



"I feel particularly good to be able to support the work that TheDCH does with ex-offenders. This is very, very worthwhile."

- Alice Reilly

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Mt. Cuba Center
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RareFind Nursery
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Formed to recognize donors who have included TheDCH in their long term financial plans or estate plans.

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**Deceased*

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Volunteerism is a powerful component of bringing TheDCH mission to bear in the communities we serve.

This year, **512** volunteers donated **3,876** hours to events, community programs, fund raisers, and to fill important administrative, development and leadership roles, a **\$78,644** contribution. Our volunteer base includes a broad range of ages from youth to seniors, as well as diverse experience levels, socio-economic status and ethnicities.



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Capital Campaign Gifts & Pledges

JANUARY 1, 2010 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

\$100,000 or more

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In-kind

BBC Tavern and Grill
 City of Wilmington
 Dupont
 GreenRoots Landscaping, LLC
 Service Unlimited
 WSFS Bank

Financial Overview

Revenue

\$495,408 Fund Raising
\$76,218 Endowment
\$93,053 Community Gardens
\$345,153 Education
\$190,829 Public Landscapes
\$126,751 Environmental Projects
\$263,305 Tree Program
\$33,911 Misc. Income

\$1,624,628 Total Revenue

Expenses

\$292,899 Administration
\$314,695 Fund Raising
\$54,432 Facilities
\$94,584 Community Gardens
\$373,074 Education
\$121,628 Public Landscapes
\$81,573 Environmental Projects
\$291,743 Tree Program
\$71,112 Depreciation Expense

\$1,695,740 Total Expense
(\$71,112) Less Depreciation

\$1,624,628 Total Expense
(less depreciation)

Membership
 1,193 Total Members
 125 New Members

1810 N Dupont Street
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