



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS

MISSION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens enriches life by nourishing and sharing the beauty of gardens, the joy of gardening, the knowledge of plants, and the diversity of our world. Olbrich Botanical Gardens is dedicated to the creation, conservation, and interpretation of gardens and plant collections hardy to the American Midwest or native to the world's tropical forests for study, enjoyment, and public benefit.

VISION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens will be a locally treasured and globally renowned source of beauty and education celebrating the importance of plants in a sustainable world.

VALUES

Olbrich Botanical Gardens is a place where:

- Gardens, facilities, and programs serve people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.
- Relationships with staff, volunteers, and friends are conducted with the highest integrity, respect, and consideration.
- Excellence is the standard and service is exemplary.
- Public and private partnerships are essential.
- The community is served and the region is celebrated.
- Contributions are made to global solutions.
- The joy, diversity, wonder, and beauty of plants can be shared by everyone.

Dear Friends of Olbrich Botanical Gardens,

Helen Keller once said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Such a simple statement has profound impact when it's truly taken to heart. At Olbrich Botanical Gardens, we wholeheartedly believe in Helen's message. Alone, we would only be able to provide a fraction of our programs to the community. Together, with you and because of you – our members, donors, partners, and community members – we are able to do so much more.

2017 was perhaps our most successful year yet. We broke attendance records and welcomed more than 325,000 visitors to the gardens this year, evidence that more people than ever before are utilizing our programs, exhibits, facilities, outdoor gardens, and Bolz Conservatory.

We are in the midst of our Rooted & Growing Capital Campaign, raising money for a new Learning Center and Greenhouses. Education has long been an integral part of our mission - a part that we are striving to make more valuable and visible each year. In 2017, we taught 4,333 local and regional K-5 students about botany, ecology, and tropical ecosystems during our *Explorer School Programs*. Even more importantly, through the generosity of sponsoring community organizations, 376 students, teachers, and parents from eligible schools in the Madison Metropolitan School District attended these *Explorer School Programs* free of charge through a scholarship program.

This past year, visitors also interacted with our gardens and conservatory like never before. More than 20 pieces dotted the landscape as part of the *Zoethica* exhibit – a bioinspired art and science exhibition and partnership with the UW-Madison Arts Institute. Visitors were transported to Thailand during Thai Fest in September and learned about Thai culture through displays, presentations, and dance performances under the Thai Pavilion. Students from the Goodman Community Center's Seed to Table program gained hands-on experience with urban agriculture, culinary arts, and food preservation, as they sowed, planted, and harvested heirloom lettuce plants at Olbrich for distribution through area food pantries and meal programs.

During all of these inspiring programs, exhibits, and events, you were right here beside our staff, volunteers, and community partners. These things happened because of you - because of your financial contributions, because of the time you gave, because you care about Madison's public garden, and because you, too, believe that together we can do more.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



Bill White
Olbrich Botanical Society Board President



Roberta Sladky
Executive Director

2017 BY THE NUMBERS



325,530
visitors in 2017



More than
6,600
member
households

We planted:

18,639 annuals
1,380 bulbs
3,262 perennials
6,000 ornamental grasses
128 shrubs
101 trees



2,085 lbs of produce

donated to food pantries from the
Children's Kitchen Garden



67,688 items sold

in Olbrich's Growing Gifts Shop

60 children and 23 adults

participated in Little
Sprouts Gardening



91 Explorer School Program sessions

for a total of **4,333 participants**



176 Young and
High School Writers
Camp participants



1/2 mile of extension cords

& 20 timers were used to power GLEAM



25,800 people

learned about
conservation efforts and the life cycle
of butterflies during the Blooming
Butterflies exhibit



More than

27,000

volunteer

hours logged in 2017



More than **25,000**

plants grown

from seed in Olbrich's
greenhouses



67 volunteers gave **20+ years of**

service to the gardens

6 Head Start Classrooms

attended summer
programming



REVIEWING A FINANCIALLY HEALTHY YEAR for the Olbrich Botanical Society

Olbrich Botanical Society (OBS) is committed to effective financial management and transparency to achieve the Gardens' mission. We changed our annual report format to better display our financial year. The **Statement of Financial Position** in the *sidebar* includes both the Olbrich Botanical Society and the Olbrich Botanical Society Foundation (OBSF). The **income** and **expenses** listed *below* are only the OBS operating numbers with the endowment (OBSF) noted.

Program expenses include education, garden maintenance, events, exhibitions, and outreach. The Olbrich Botanical Society fully funds education, events, exhibitions, and outreach and assists with garden maintenance and volunteer support and management in partnership with the City of Madison. Programs are 76.6% of the OBS budget.

Supporting expenses include the costs of administration, fundraising, and membership recruitment and retention. Supporting expenses make up 23.4% of the OBS budget.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$614,242
Unconditional promises to give	\$5,900
Due from City of Madison	\$8,071
Inventories	\$106,243
Prepaid expenses	\$17,608
Beneficial interest in assets held by Madison Community Foundation	\$91,748
Investments	\$7,520,573
Cash restricted for capital campaign	\$366,561
Certificates of deposit restricted for capital campaign	\$2,707,753
Unconditional promises to give for capital campaign, net of discount	\$1,156,946
Interest receivable restricted for capital campaign	\$9,810
Total assets	\$12,605,455

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$93,411
Deferred revenue	\$1,588
Total liabilities	\$94,999

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	\$6,745,071
Temporarily restricted	\$5,502,580
Permanently restricted	\$262,805
Total net assets	\$12,510,456
Total liabilities and net assets	\$12,605,455

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

Contributions	\$337,789
Satisfaction of purpose and time restrictions	(\$124,241)
Change in temporarily restricted net assets	\$213,548
Change in net assets	\$1,124,979

Consolidated Statement of Activities

REVENUE - UNRESTRICTED

Net Gift Shop Sales	\$54,431
Contributions	\$816,078
Membership Dues	\$369,958
Education Programs	\$81,279
Events & Exhibitions	\$533,565
Investment Income	\$860,562
Miscellaneous	\$13,541
Total Unrestricted Revenue	\$2,729,414

EXPENSES – PROGRAM SERVICES

Education	\$303,923
Garden Maintenance (indoor and outdoor)	\$416,677
Events and Exhibitions	\$337,384
Outreach, Public Relations & Marketing	\$421,909
Volunteer Program Support	\$6,991
Total Program Services Expenses	\$1,486,884

EXPENSES – SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

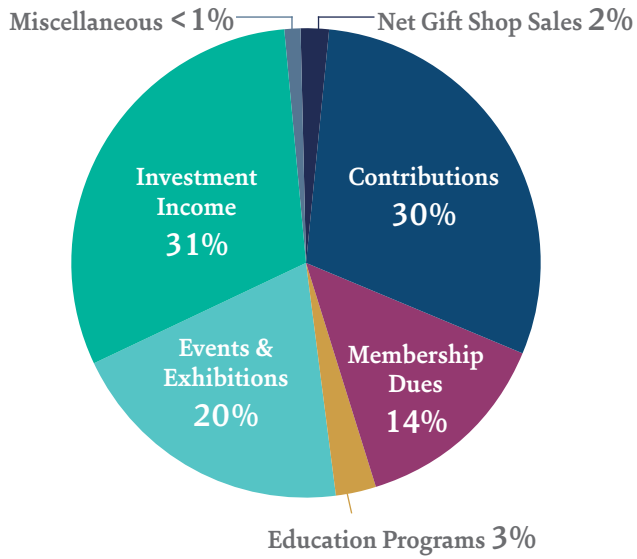
Management & General	\$116,243
Fundraising & Development	\$238,817
Membership Development	\$100,280
Total Supporting Activities Expenses	\$455,340

Total Expenses	\$1,942,224
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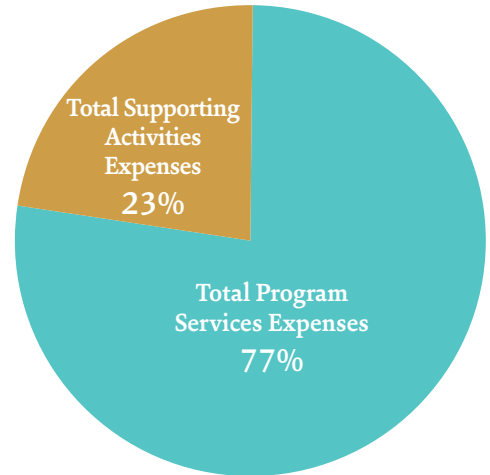
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$124,241
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Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$911,431
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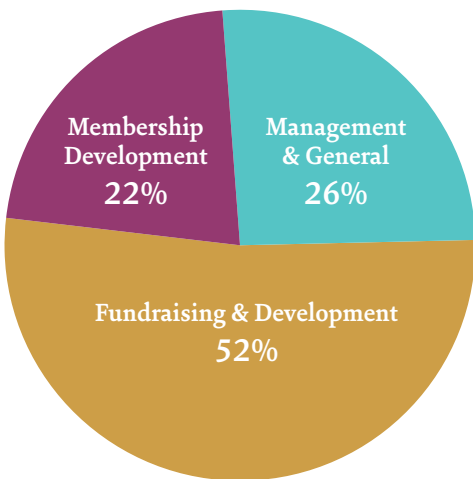
OBS/OBSF REVENUE



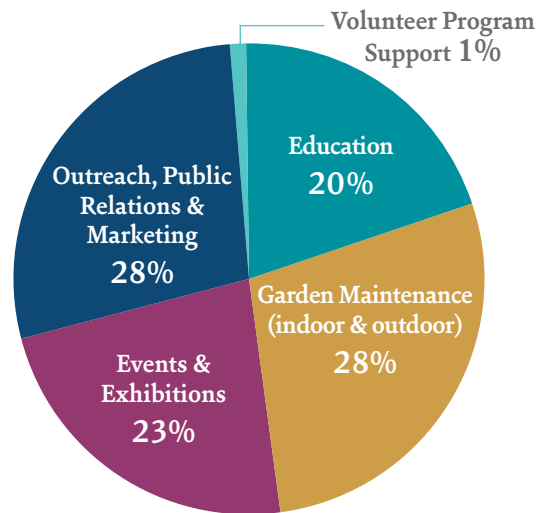
PROGRAM SERVICES VS SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES EXPENSES



SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES EXPENSES



PROGRAM SERVICES EXPENSES



PARTNERSHIPS

THANK YOU to the many partners who worked with us in 2017 - this is just a snapshot of the happenings during the past year!

LIGHT CAMP

Olbrich Botanical Gardens was the site of a “Light Camp” presented by Reinders, Inc. to train landscape lighting industry professionals in a real-life setting. As part of the camp, Reinders donated the installation of landscape lighting in the Perennial Garden.

ZOETHICA EXHIBIT

Through a unique partnership with the UW-Madison Arts Institute, along with other campus and community partners, Olbrich hosted *Zoethica*, a public exhibition of bioinspired art and science. More than 20 pieces by Peter Krsko, Katie Schofield, Dan Steinhilber, and undergraduate UW students dotted the landscape throughout the gardens, sparking imaginations and enriching relationships with the surroundings.

REACH DANE

Six Head Start classrooms visited the Children’s Kitchen Garden through a partnership with Reach Dane. The 3-5 year olds visited on two separate occasions to take part in the *Little Sprouts Gardening* Program. In total, 60 students and 23 adults participated in this summer program.

NATURAL RESOURCES FOUNDATION

Olbrich hosted a Natural Resources Foundation Field Trip during Blooming Butterflies on July 25. The field trip supported the Foundation’s goal of raising awareness of butterflies and monarch conservation and exposed Olbrich to an audience that is interested in nature but may not have been aware of Olbrich or its programs. The field trip filled to capacity within 25 minutes of the registration period opening in March 2017.

CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN

Chicago Botanic Garden donated bromeliads from their “Brazil in the Gardens” exhibit this year. The plants will be used in the 2018 Spring Flower Show and throughout the gardens in the coming years.

STEM CELL AND REGENERATIVE MEDICINE CENTER

Olbrich is proud to play a small role in current research happening at UW-Madison’s Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Center. Gianluca Fontana, a post-doctoral fellow, and Bill Murphy, a UW professor of biomedical engineering, approached Conservatory Curator John Wirth to inquire about tropical plants that might be used as part of their research. Together, they walked through the Conservatory and greenhouses and collected samples of vanilla, bamboo, elephant ear, and various orchids. The researchers used



Young gardeners from Head Start classrooms visited the Children’s Kitchen Garden through a partnership with Reach Dane.

Little Sprouts Gardening participants said...

“I’m so good at digging. I am going to be a great farmer!”

“Peter’s favorite thing to eat is carrots, and I love carrots too!”



More than 20 art pieces dotted the landscape as part of the *Zoethica* exhibit



Researchers from UW-Madison’s Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Center met with Conservatory Curator John Wirth to select tropical plants to be used in their research

these plant samples as ‘scaffolds’ on which to grow stem cells. To create this natural scaffold, the plant’s cells were stripped away, leaving a husk of cellulose. (Cellulose is the main component of the cell walls of green plants.) The remaining cellulose becomes the natural scaffold, or frame, on which the stem cells will grow. So far, skin, brain, bone marrow, and blood vessel cells have all been grown on plant scaffolds.

ROYAL THAI CONSULATE-GENERAL

Olbrich was honored to host Thai Fest on Sunday, September 24. The Royal Thai Consulate-General provided generous funding to underwrite the festival which allowed for free admission to all participants this year. The festival will kicked off with an opening ceremony that honored Thailand’s beloved late king. The Thai Cultural and Fine Arts Institute of Chicago provided live music and traditional Thai dance performances while the Thai Student Association at UW-Madison and the Thai-American Association collaborated to provide youth performances, demonstrations, and education displays. Sa-Bai Thong prepared authentic Thai dishes for purchase.

GOODMAN COMMUNITY CENTER

In late March, students from the Goodman Community Center’s Seed to Table program worked with Horticulturist Erin Presley and Assistant Conservatory Curator Amanda Dix to sow seeds for 15 different varieties of heirloom lettuces. In May, the students returned and planted the seedling lettuce plants in the Herb Garden, creating a colorful and intricate ornamental design. Six weeks later, as the lettuces matured, the students returned to harvest, wash, and process the lettuce. The total harvest yielded seven produce crates of beautiful lettuce for distribution through the Goodman Community Center’s Fritz Food Pantry and other meal programs.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK AND THE FRITZ FOOD PANTRY

The Children’s Kitchen Garden donated a record-breaking 2,085 pounds of produce to Second Harvest Food Bank of Southern Wisconsin and the Fritz Food Pantry at the Goodman Community Center. In September, nine students from Edgewood High School helped put the garden to bed for the season. The students did this as part of a community service day called Edgewood in the Community.

GREATER MADISON WRITING PROJECT

More than 175 elementary, middle, and high school students participated in Young Writers Camps in 2017. This collaboration between the Greater Madison Writing Project and Olbrich Botanical Gardens featured three different 4-day workshops for young writers and two 4-day workshops for high school writers. Using Olbrich’s gardens as inspiration, participants met each day in writing groups led by experienced writers and teachers. Each week ended with a family celebration and each writer contributed a piece of writing that was published in an anthology.



Students from the Goodman Community Center’s Seed to Table program helped grow lettuce in the Herb Garden



Participants from the Greater Madison Writing Project Young Writers Camp



Carrots from the Children’s Kitchen Garden



Thai Fest celebrated Thai culture and featured performances, demonstrations, education displays, and food.



Horticulturist Avery Marcott Plants the Autumn Garden Meadow



Volunteers plant prairie dropseed plugs along Atwood Avenue

NEW INITIATIVES

Olbrich Botanical Gardens is continually growing in new ways – here are a few new initiatives that ‘sprouted’ in 2017.

AUTUMN GARDEN

Olbrich’s new Autumn Garden Meadow replaced a Kentucky bluegrass lawn just east of the Rose Garden. The foundation of this meadow is primarily two native sedge species that establish a “green layer.” More than 20 species of forbs and five species of grasses add texture to the meadow plantings through the season. Native plants will grow up through and among the sedges and grasses, while seeds of annuals and short-lived perennials like poppies, columbines, and corydalis will fill in any open spaces in the meadow. Visitors can take in the beauty of this new meadow while relaxing in the shade of a new garden shed, generously donated by the Wenerowicz family in celebration of the life of Lorene K. Ritland. Even though this meadow will take a few years to establish, the reduced maintenance and water savings will begin immediately.

ATWOOD AVENUE PRAIRIE DROPSEED MEADOW

Drawing inspiration from the Perennial Garden, Olbrich’s front turf area was transformed into a low maintenance, beautiful prairie dropseed meadow. First, we grew plus of prairie dropseed in our greenhouses and nursery for five months. Then, after removing the original Kentucky bluegrass turf, the 5,000 prairie dropseed plugs were planted with the help of many volunteer hands. We also wanted to add little pops of color to the meadow, so we planted some self-seeding drought tolerant annuals to the mix – soon, brilliant poppies, cosmos, and heleniums will shout out among the sea of emerald green grasses.

CHANTICLEER GUEST GARDENER PROGRAM

In September 2017, Erin Presley and Dan Schuknecht participated in Chanticleer’s Guest Gardener program and worked side-by-side with their gardening staff.

BOLZ CONSERVATORY ORCHID WALK

Indoors, the Bolz Conservatory underwent many changes including the addition of an “orchid walk” on the west walkway to the upper level. The large *Tetrastigma* vine covering the walkway wall was pruned back, providing additional spaces to display orchids and bromeliads and widening the path, allowing for increased ease of movement for visitors.



A new “orchid walk” in the Bolz Conservatory



(L to R) Volunteers Connie Newman, Sue Penfield, Beverly Schluenz, Jean Endres, Peggy Johnson, and Opal Prochnow received the President's Volunteer Service Award.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

2017 was extra special for Olbrich's volunteer program. Not because more than 600 volunteers gave over 27,000 hours of service, or because 89% of those volunteers had returned for more than one year (although we are very proud of all those accomplishments and statistics!) 2017 was just a little bit sweeter because numerous Olbrich volunteers were recognized by outside organizations for their service and dedication. Olbrich volunteers are some of the best out there, so when others recognize their efforts in such official capacities, it's cause for a celebration!

In January, the Corporation for National and Community Service awarded six Olbrich volunteers with the President's Volunteer Service Award in recognition of their commitment to strengthening the nation. All six volunteers received Lifetime Achievement Awards for having completed more than 4,000 hours of service to others, demonstrating exemplary citizenship through volunteering. Each awardee received a letter and a personalized certificate signed by the President and a commemorative Lifetime Coin. Congratulations to Sue Penfield (6,258 hours), Peggy Johnson (5,625 hours), Jean Endres (4,740 hours), Connie Newman (4,411 hours), Opal Prochnow (4,423 hours), and Beverly Schluenz (4,093 hours). Thank you for your commitment to service and making Olbrich such a special place!

On April 17, Terry Jackson thought he was going to a reception at Olbrich for one of the staff. Little did he know that he was the guest of honor. As guests gathered in the Conservatory, First Lady of Wisconsin Tonette Walker asked Terry to come forward to receive the Wisconsin Heroes Award, a quarterly award given by the First Lady to a Wisconsin volunteer to recognize outstanding service to the community. From 1997, Terry has volunteered at Olbrich, giving more than 800 service hours. He worked as an outdoor garden volunteer, helped maintain the tropical collection inside the Bolz Conservatory, and engaged visitors interested in learning about the outdoor gardens. Thank you, Terry, for your service and dedication to Olbrich Botanical Gardens!



Olbrich's 2017 Spring Flower Show featured "Banquets of Blooms."



Terry Jackson (R) received the Wisconsin Heroes Award from First Lady of Wisconsin Tonette Walker (L).



Accolade cherry trees (*Prunus accolade*) amazed visitors with a prolific bloom in 2017!



Dan Schuknecht and Erin Presley met up with a former Olbrich intern at Chanticleer's Guest Gardener program



2017 horticulture interns enjoyed a field trip to Boerner Botanical Gardens in Milwaukee

2017 Olbrich Botanical Society BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

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VICE PRESIDENT

Julie Rupert

SECRETARY

R. Richard Wagner

TREASURER

Mary Phillips

PAST PRESIDENT

Kevin Hess

DIRECTORS

Alnisa Allgood

Renee Boyce

Philip Bradbury

Julie Herfel

Dan Lauffer

Erik Lincoln

Susan Derse Phillips

Timothy W. Sherry

Michelle Taschek

EX OFFICIO

Angela Jenkins, *District 15 Alder Designee*

Laurel Neverdahl, *Olbrich Garden Club President*

Brad Hinkfuss, *District 6 Alder Designee*

Roberta Sladky, *Olbrich Botanical Gardens Director*

Betty Chewning, *Neighborhood Association Representative*

Eric Knepp, *Madison Parks Superintendent*

Nancy Ragland, *Madison Board of Park*

Commissioners Representative

ADVISORY BOARD

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Jack Bolz

Jt Covelli

Jennifer Curliss

Sandy Dolister

Elizabeth Ogren Erickson

Edith Lawrence-Hilliard

Jeff Levy

Janet Loewi

Dale F. Mathwich

Dan Matson

Jerry Minnich

Tricia Perkins

Emanuel Scarbrough

Barbara L. Tensfeldt

Paul Williams

2017 Olbrich Botanical Society FOUNDATION BOARD*

OFFICERS

Sandra Dolister, *President*

Tim Sherry, *Vice President*

Phyllis Lovrien, *Secretary/Treasurer*

DIRECTORS

Dennis Birke

John A. Bolz

Kevin Hess, *ex officio*

Jeff Levy

Dan Matson

Mary Phillips, *ex officio*

Roberta Sladky, *ex officio*

*As of December 31, 2017

OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS STAFF*

ADMINISTRATION

Roberta Sladky, Director
Angela Donahue, Financial Coordinator
Patti Jorenby, Rental Coordinator
Kai Skadahl, Education Registrar/Customer Service

CONSERVATORY & GREENHOUSE

Colten Blackburn, Conservatory Curator
Cindy Cary, Tropical Plant & Wildlife Specialist
Amanda Dix, Assistant Curator
Intern: Erin Foley
Interim Conservatory Assistant: Lorelei D'Huyvetter

DEVELOPMENT

Ashlyn Mehlhaff, Director of Development
Jake Immel, Membership & Development Associate
Tom Fullmer, Marketing & Special Events Coordinator
Melissa Jeanne, Special Events Manager
Katy Plantenberg, PR & Marketing Manager
Joe Vande Slunt, Membership & Development Specialist
Blooming Butterflies: Caitlin Graham, Connor Wood, Anne Youngwood
Membership Weekend Supervisor: Claire Wilson
GLEAM: Caitlin Graham, Hywania Thompson, Adam Winegarden
Holiday Show: Christine Fleming, Braden Jorenby, Barbara Roth, Alexandra Wehman
Special Events Intern: Jessie Perez
Spring Show: Eric Olson, Boyd Shafer Jr.

EDUCATION

Jane Nicholson, Director of Education
Sarah Ellis, Youth & Family Programs Coordinator
Lynn Jacobson, Horticulture Librarian
Kimberly North, Youth & Family Programs Manager
Kai Skadahl, Education Registrar/Customer Service
Tram Drivers: Bob Borman, Gary Case, Kia Conrad, Sharon Larson, Russell Potter, Mike Sloan, Susan Stein
Intern: Mary Van Dyke

GROWING GIFTS SHOP

Camela King, Manager
Halie Fass, Retail Associate
Jeanne Kessenich, Assistant Manager
Ruby Koca, Retail Associate
Sheridan Schakelman, Retail Associate
Cindy Sullivan, Assistant Manager

HORTICULTURE/OUTDOOR GARDENS

Jeff Epping, Director of Horticulture
Samara Eisner, Horticulturist
Avery Marcott, Horticulturist
Kate McWhirter, Plant Recorder
Katey Pratt, Horticulturist
Erin Presley, Horticulturist
Dan Schuknecht, Horticulturist
Phillip Stutz, Horticulturist
Aaron Wilkie, Garden Facilitator
Samantha Yoder, Horticulturist
Seasonal Gardeners: Michael Paul Czechanski, Nick Hartman, Emily Skogen
Interns: Claire Engelen, Allison Kohlhase, Valerie McGoldrick, Matthew Olson, Tess Reeves

MAINTENANCE

Don Saunders, Maintenance Mechanic II
Jim Maier, Facility Maintenance Worker
Building Attendants: David Anotonacci, Sam Lechnir, Greg Monson (Weekend Building Coordinator), Nika Taylor, Tyler Thompson, Hannah Tubbs, Bryant Ward (Weekend Building Coordinator)

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Marty Petillo, Volunteer Services Manager

WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES

Colten Blackburn, Conservatory Curator
Sarah Ellis, Youth & Family Programs Coordinator
Halie Fass, Retail Associate
Tom Fullmer, Marketing & Special Events Coordinator
Ruby Koca, Retail Associate
Avery Marcott, Horticulturist
Tyler Thompson, Building Attendant
Hannah Tubbs, Building Attendant
Samantha Yoder, Horticulturist

FAREWELL TO

Rachel Gabriel, Visitor Services
Denise Gotzion, Retail Associate
Christian Harper, Horticulturist
Robert Kay, Garden Specialist
Monica Moen, Retail Associate
Kelly Moore, Building Attendant
Mark Shimasaki, Horticulturist
John Wirth, Conservatory Curator

*As of December 31, 2017



Students learn about the things plants need to grow during a session of the Ecology Explorer School Program.



More than 2,800 visitors enjoyed Thai Fest in 2017!

OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS

3330 Atwood Avenue
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 246-4724 | Olbrich.org



Visitors of all ages enjoyed seeing more than a dozen species of butterflies in flight during Olbrich's Blooming Butterflies.