



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Conservatory Celebrates 16th Annual Growing to Green Awards Honoring Local Community Gardeners

Columbus, OH— On the evening of September 14, 2017, more than 200 community gardeners and local business and civic leaders gathered in The Wells Barn at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens for the 16th annual Growing to Green Awards to recognize the hard work of community gardeners throughout central Ohio. Growing to Green Program Coordinator Bill Dawson invited guests to enjoy a potluck dinner and harvest celebration featuring dishes and entrees sourced from local community gardens.

“The work community gardeners are doing is changing Columbus,” said Bruce Harkey, President & CEO of Franklin Park Conservatory. “Gardens transform neighborhoods and bring people of all ages and backgrounds together to work side-by-side, improving the quality of life for many.”

Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens’ Women’s Board and community garden leaders reviewed entries for seven award categories and selected the following winners:

Neighborhood Improvement Project of the Year

\$250 awarded to the park, gateway, streetscape or beautification project that does the most to benefit its surrounding community. Presented by Bill Dawson, Growing to Green Manager at the Conservatory.

Winner: The Giving Garden at Dutch Mill 18443 State Rt. 4 N, Marysville, OH

Education Garden of the Year

\$500 awarded to a garden that best utilizes garden projects for educational purposes. Presented by Barbara Brandt, member of the Conservatory’s Board of Trustees and chair of the Community Outreach and Education Committee.

Winner: Newark Sanctuary Garden Newark High School 314 Granville St., Newark, OH

Paul B. Redman Youth Leadership Award

\$250 awarded to an outstanding youth gardener, to be applied toward his/her education or garden. Presented by Nancy Russo, 2017 Women’s Board President.

Winner: Nasir Groce of Urban GEMS 905 Mt. Vernon Ave., 996 Oakwood Ave.



Sustainability Award

\$250 awarded to a garden best utilizing sustainable gardening practices, including community-building activities, sustainable garden design and utilization of green practices. Presented by Dan Sharpe, Vice President - Community Research and Grants Management, Columbus Foundation

Winner: Good Samaritan Garden 1421 Morse Rd., Columbus, OH

Community Gardener of the Year

\$250 awarded to a person who is exceptionally dedicated to his/her community garden and the gardening movement. Presented by Bill Gerhardt, GreenScapes Landscape Company. Bill is also a member of Franklin Park Conservatory's Board of Trustees.

Winner: Charles Nabrit

Garden Affiliation: The Charles Madison Nabrit Memorial Garden at The Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith (CMNMG@CCAF) 1200 Brentnell Ave., Columbus, OH

Community Garden of the Year

\$500 awarded to the top neighborhood gardening project for food production or beautification. Presented by Su Lok, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company. Su is also a member of Franklin Park Conservatory's Board of Trustees.

Winner: Bible Way / SKIP Community Garden

(SKIP: Stop Killing and Injuring People) 451 S Highland Ave., Columbus, OH

Boyd W. Bowden Garden Impact Award

\$750 awarded to the top neighborhood gardening project for significant and sustainable impact on the health and vitality of its community. Presented by the Ellen Bowden, on behalf of the Boyd Bowden Family and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation.

Winner: Urban GEMS garden and farms, 905 Mt.Vernon, 996 Oakwood, 3500 Refugee Rd.

The Conservatory's Growing to Green Community Gardening Program and the Growing to Green awards are supported by: The City of Columbus, The Columbus Foundation, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, GreenScapes Landscape Co., The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, The Hinson Family Trust, Nationwide, City Barbeque, and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation in cooperation with the Boyd Bowden Family.

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About Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens and Growing to Green

Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens features plant collections, art and nature-based exhibitions, plant shows and educational programs for all ages. Situated in an 88-acre urban park, the Conservatory features the historic 1895 John F. Wolfe Palm House and 83,000 square feet of glasshouses, classrooms, and meeting and event spaces. The Conservatory's Growing to Green program is Columbus' largest organized effort to promote and provide free resources for community gardening. Established in 2000, Growing to Green has provided resources to more than 250 community gardens, schools gardens, and neighborhood beautification projects throughout the central Ohio area.