



2020 Education Symposium - Call for Sessions

Natural Connections San Antonio Botanic Garden Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Zilker Botanical Garden February 12-14, 2020

Join us in February in Texas for the 2020 American Public Gardens Association Education Symposium, hosted by San Antonio Botanic Garden, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and Zilker Botanical Garden. We are currently seeking session proposals and want to hear from you!

Regardless of our institution's budget, location, age or acreage, public horticulture education is in a constant state of change and requires an endless supply of creativity to spark new ideas and problem solving. You won't want to miss this unique opportunity to share your own ideas and experiences to inspire and motivate your peers. Whether you're a veteran educator or new to educational programming at your garden, there are always practical tools to share and new ideas to ignite others.

CALL FOR SESSIONS

Proposals due by midnight EST, Monday, June 3, 2019

Session Formats:

- 45-minute presentation and 30 minutes of audience interaction, breakout, engagement, and Q/A (total time 75 minutes)
- 45-minute panel discussion that includes 5-10 minute presentations on the topic by multiple voices – up to 4 people - and 30 minutes of audience interaction, breakout, engagement, and Q/A (total time: 75 minutes)
- 5 min presentation with one slide for a rapid fire "Successes and Challenges" sharing session

Central Theme: "Natural Connections or Connecting People to Nature" More and more research studies point to the power of nature for healthy living and the importance for all ages to connect with the natural world. As educators, we provide transformative experiences that lead to lasting understanding and connection with nature. Understanding our various audiences, from "K through Grey", and what motivates them, is a first step towards accomplishing our goals. Assessing new audiences, trends, and content for new programs helps us make effective connections to nature. Connecting effectively with other departments at our gardens, and with outside partners, and the community at large, can maximize the results of our efforts, as we align intended outcomes with our institution's mission.

Topic Ideas

- **Accessibility/Inclusion:** Have you developed programs that invite new audiences to your garden and programs? Have you conducted outreach in your local community to discover what their needs are? What partnerships have you developed? What challenges have you faced? What benefits have new audiences brought to your institution?
- **Interpretive Planning:** Has your garden developed an interpretive plan? What was your process? Who was on your team? What was the timeline of the plan, and how was it implemented? What strategies have you used in capturing hearts and minds with mission-related messaging?
- **Evaluation:** Essential to success, how can you evaluate and improve upon your efforts in connecting people to nature? Do you measure short-term and long-term impacts differently? What data do you need to collect to judge if a program is successful, needs updating, or needs to be retired? How do you navigate the challenges of evaluating programs when there is already so much to do? Do you have tips and tricks to help colleagues save time, money, and headaches?
- **Volunteer Management:** Without volunteers, educational programs would have difficulty functioning - and some might not exist at all! What do you do to recruit and train volunteers? How do you keep your

volunteers engaged and happy? Has your docent program changed over time, or have you discovered alternative avenues for public engagement?

- **Teamwork:** How can you work most effectively with your horticulture department to provide relevant programming? Who and what is needed to be pulled together to make things happen, from staff to stakeholders and money to marketing?
- **Other topic ideas would also be welcomed!**

Sessions Should:

- Offer practical takeaways for participants; share planning, evaluation, or survey tools if possible.
- Engage with the audience and allow time for discussion; attendees learn from each other as well as the speaker(s)
- Offer an inside perspective on what it takes to build engaging, entertaining content that educates in a public garden/arboretum space and connects the audience to nature.

Session Selection Criteria:

- Intent and learning outcomes for attendees are focused, well presented, and thoughtfully articulated
- Rationale for choosing presenters in a moderated discussion is focused, well presented, and thoughtfully articulated
- Topic and presenters (when applicable) represent a wide range of perspectives, regions, and garden sizes/budgets/missions
- Presentation appeals to all levels of experience
- Session is pragmatic and allows participants to learn from one another in addition to the speaker(s)

HOW TO SUBMIT

Submit proposals via email to **(deadline midnight EST, Monday, June 3, 2019):**

Eileen Prendergast - epondergast@chicagobotanic.org

Any questions? Please contact:

Eileen Prendergast, Chicago Botanic Garden
epondergast@chicagobotanic.org 847-835-8363

Tanya Zastrow, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
tzastrow@wildflower.org 512-232-0122

Planning Committee Members

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Kristie Webber, Director of Interpretive Programs
Chicago Botanic Garden

Vice-Chair

Elin Filbey, Director of Programs and Community Engagement
Allen Centennial Gardens

Michelle Cugini, School & Youth Program Manager
Longwood Gardens

Heather Drzal, Director of School & Youth Programs
Longwood Gardens

Katie Erickson, Director of Programs
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Cindy Klemmer, Environmental Conservation Program Manager
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Nathalie Lavine, Director of Education and Interpretation
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Sarah States, Director of Research and Science Education
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Emma Trester-Wilson, Education Coordinator
San Antonio Botanical Garden

Tanya Zastrow, Director of Programs
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Joan Thomas, Director, External Relations
American Public Gardens Association, Pennsylvania

For more information about the American Public Gardens Association and the Education Community, please visit: www.publicgardens.org

The session proposal form is on the following page – please keep scrolling!



**American
Public Gardens
Association**

Natural Connections: 2020 Education Symposium

Session Proposal Form

Submit proposals via email to **(deadline midnight EST Monday, June 3, 2019)**
to **Eileen Prendergast, Chicago Botanic Garden**
eprendergast@chicagobotanic.org

Session/Panel Title: _____

Moderator's Name, Title and Institution:

Moderator Contact Information:

Presenters' Names, Titles and Affiliations:

Presenters' Contact Information:

Session/Panel Description (250 word maximum):

How the Session Addresses Selection Criteria (250 word maximum):