

Looking to the Future

Common Ground

Cristina Salvador

It's a small world.

You may have lived on multiple continents, and I may call home-sweet-home the same place for my entire life. We find common ground quickly, however, in what we grow, how we cultivate, and what sustains us in our gardens. What are we going to do about water? How is climate change going to impact our way of life? Connections, communication, and communities are rapidly diversifying—and so are public gardens.



The corner of the world where I live and work—Santa Fe, New Mexico—is already facing these challenges. As the state capitol's first public garden, Santa Fe Botanical Garden (SFBG), opened in 2013, is thinking forward. Unlike any time before, SFBG is partnering to form interdisciplinary teams of engineers, scientists, educators, garden designers, and cultural practitioners. We are stewards of our living collections and over one thousand years of cultural heritage. The Garden is positioned to be a model of sustainability through innovative water catchment and recycling, permaculture, and water-wise landscape designs. Public gardens make a visible commitment to a sustainable future by leading in implementing sound techniques and providing educational opportunities. Our engagement with each other and our communities is key.

But whom are gardens reaching? How are gardens connecting with their communities? Here in New Mexico, our population is 47 percent Hispanic, and young with 24 percent under the age of eighteen (2010 Census). Public gardens such as ours celebrate diversity and promote outreach to young talent looking for learning opportunities. Whether in social media or GIS mapping, the new generation of emerging horticulture professionals will look to APGA for a strong network of support. APGA's role in bringing us together as professionals and guiding our future leaders will ensure another twenty-five years of success.

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