

# The Nature of Advocacy at Public Gardens

American Public Gardens Association  
2018 Annual Conference

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# GCA is often called “a force of nature”



# The Garden Club of America

- ▶ Founded 1913
- ▶ Volunteer, Nonprofit, 501(c)3 Organisation
- ▶ 200 Member Clubs throughout the USA
- ▶ 18,000 Members





# GCA Mission Statement

- ▶ The purpose of the Garden Club of America:
  - ▶ To stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening
  - ▶ To to share the advantages of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence and publications
  - ▶ To restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment through educational programs and action.



# Structure of GCA Advocacy

- ▶ GCA Mission Statement
- ▶ Priority Focus
- ▶ Position Papers
- ▶ Member Action
- ▶ Grants and Scholarships

# Top Five Priorities for GCA Advocacy 2018

- ▶ Botanical Science and Native Plants
- ▶ Land and Water Conservation Fund
- ▶ Climate Change
- ▶ National Parks and Public Lands
- ▶ Green Infrastructure

# GCA Position Papers

- ▶ Underlying Position Papers is a commitment to independent, academic, peer-reviewed scientific research as the basis for formulating public policy and legislation



# Role of GCA Position Papers

- ▶ Used as basis for advocacy
- ▶ Allows GCA to speak with one clear, well-crafted voice
- ▶ Available to membership on website
- ▶ Provides web-based tool for membership in their personal outreach
- ▶ Sharpens and concentrates the message for advocacy

# GCA Position Papers

- ▶ Focused
- ▶ Concise
- ▶ Fact-Based
- ▶ Non-Partisan
- ▶ Content is respected and preserved
- ▶ Revised as necessary through **Policies and Procedures** mechanism
- ▶ Allows nimble and prompt response to issues as they arise in the public domain

# Current GCA Position Papers

- ▶ Clean Air
- ▶ Clean Water
- ▶ Strategies to Address Climate Change
- ▶ National Parks
- ▶ National Public Lands
- ▶ Preservation of Native Plants
- ▶ Sustainable Agriculture, Seed Diversity, and Food Security
- ▶ Environmentally Responsible Transportation Legislation
- ▶ Waste Management





# GCA National Affairs and Legislation Committee

- ▶ The National Affairs and Legislation (NAL) Committee keeps the GCA membership current on federal policy initiatives that relate to GCA's mission; identifies advocacy opportunities based on GCA's Position Papers; and plans and executed the annual NAL meeting in Washington, DC

# June 2018 GCA Restoration Grants for Natural Disaster Remediation

- ▶ Houston, TX - Mercer Botanic Garden
- ▶ Jacksonville, FL - Cummer Gardens
- ▶ Beaumont, TX - Beaumont Botanical Garden
- ▶ Portland, OR - Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area restoration
- ▶ Savannah, GA - Historic Forsyth Park

# “Take The Hill”



# “Take the Hill”

- ▶ Provide training in legislative advocacy, education through presentations by legislators from both sides of the aisle, leaders of major conservation nonprofits, and thought leaders
- ▶ Present with focus on important topics from GCA Position Papers as they pertain to relevant legislation, federal administrative actions, and pending judicial issues
- ▶ Allocate time to visit legislators, public officials
- ▶ Distribute copies of position papers



In *Harvard Business Review's* emotional intelligence series about organizational happiness, three things are required

- ▶ A Vision for the Future
- ▶ A Sense of Purpose
- ▶ Great Relationships

# Girl on a Mission



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6/7/18

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# We are Caretakers of Their Future



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