



Contact: Lori Kingston, Marketing Director
Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens
Office: 614.715.8150
lkingston@fpconservatory.org

15th Annual Growing to Green Awards Honor Local Community Gardeners

Columbus, OH— On the evening of September 8, 2016, 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 15th 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, the Conservatory’s Executive Director. “Gardens transform neighborhoods and bring people of all ages and backgrounds together to work side-by-side, improving the quality of life for many.”

The Conservatory’s Community Outreach and Education Chair Barbara Brandt presented the Education Garden of the Year award, stating that “community gardens and the Growing to Green Awards go right to the heart of what the Conservatory is all about: bringing people together to connect with nature and each other.”

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 Jenny Pope, Director of Community Outreach and Education at the Conservatory.

Winner: **Good Samaritan Garden** located in the Ascension Lutheran Church Parking Lot at 1479 Morse Rd, Columbus, OH 43329.

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: **Weinland Park Community Garden** at Godman Guild. 303 E. 6th Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201.

Paul B. Redman Youth Leadership Award

\$250 awarded to an outstanding youth gardener, to be applied toward his/her education or garden. Presented by Subha Lembach, 2016 Women’s Board President.

Winner: **Said Jeylani of Horn of Africa Garden** located at 2154 Eddystone Ave, Columbus, OH 43224.

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 Mark Reiner, Oakland Nurseries. Mark is also a member of Franklin Park Conservatory's Board of Trustees.

Winner: **St. Stephens Community House, Project Aquastar** at 1500 E 17th Ave, Columbus, OH 43219.

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: **Charissa Coleman-Muhammad** is connected with three community gardens:

1. Our Community Garden One: 1402 Kohr Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211
2. Our Community Garden Too: 2222-2226 Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211
3. The Fireman's Flower Garden: 1567/1569 Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, OH 43211

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: **Growing Wellness Community Garden** at CarePoint East, 543 Taylor Ave, Columbus, OH 43203

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: **The Miracle Garden** at 2718 through 2724 Westerville Rd, Columbus, OH 43211

The Conservatory's Growing to Green Community Gardening Program is supported by: Cardinal Health, City Barbeque, 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, and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation in cooperation with the Boyd Bowden Family.

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.