

The Columbus Green Patch

All About Community Gardens | [VIEW IN BROWSER](#)



Tribute to Bill Dawson

BILL DAWSON: A CHAMPION OF COMMUNITY GARDENING

Bill Dawson, the dedicated Growing to Green Manager at Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, has inspired and led the community gardening movement in Columbus, OH. Since 2000, Bill has tirelessly worked to promote and provide free community resources for community gardening and city beautification.

Under Bill's guidance, the Growing to Green program has assisted in starting up or renovating hundreds of community gardens throughout central Ohio. His efforts have beautified neighborhoods and fostered a sense of community and connection among residents. Bill's philosophy, "Food is culture, and culture is food," reflects his deep understanding of the transformative power of gardening.

Bill's impact extends beyond the physical gardens; he has been instrumental in educating and empowering individuals and groups to start their community gardens. His work has brought people together, creating spaces where they can learn from each other, share techniques, and build lasting relationships.

During the pandemic, Bill's commitment was greater than ever, as community gardens became essential sources of fresh produce and safe social interaction. His unwavering dedication to sustainability and community-building has made a lasting difference in the lives of many.

Bill Dawson's legacy is one of growth, resilience, and community. His devotion to nurturing plants and people has left an indelible mark on all of us and will continue to inspire future generations of gardeners and community leaders.

Meet A Community Garden

STATE STREET COURTYARD GARDEN

Two years ago, the courtyard at State St. was a patch of asphalt enclosed by the corners of a brick building in a historically disinvested neighborhood. In 2023, with support from Franklin Park Conservatory and the Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation, we invested in raised beds and began turning it into a garden. Today, with help from numerous volunteers and community partners, this garden is a co-created space between students and teachers that provides hands-on learning for the almost 300 students at our elementary campus.

Students visit our courtyard garden during the school day, participating in hands-on learning activities to illustrate the material in their science units. Students grow native plants that attract pollinators, such as columbine and coneflower, while learning how they benefit the environment. Kindergarteners observe the plant life cycle from seeds to decomposition, first-graders use the garden space for observations and sun-journaling during their Earth & Sky unit, and our second-grade class uses the garden to watch what they've learned about root systems brought to life.

The garden also serves as a quiet space for overwhelmed students to reset or a place where fidgeting students can expend some energy. Tactile sensory activities help students focus and stay on task at school, while calming spaces help them self-regulate and prepare for learning. Benches in the garden area provide a quiet place for independent reading in the spring when students sometimes want nothing more than to be outside. Our garden supports students by encouraging them to thrive in an outdoor environment that supports their unique ways of learning.

By: Sarah Sanchez

State Street Courtyard Garden is the 2024 Harvest Award Winner for Education Garden of the Year Award; presented to a school or other organization that utilizes garden projects for educational purposes.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

APPLICATIONS OF INTEREST FOR COMMUNITY CONNECTION 2025!

Community Connections is a volunteer service initiative through the Growing to Green program to assist community gardens, neighborhood beautification projects and urban farms. We hope to further educate ourselves about our communities and the neighborhood leaders who take on these projects.

Saturdays May 2025 through October 2025 (Weather dependent).

As we plan 2025 Community Connections, we have available spots to visit community gardens who have expressed interest. Please share your garden information and anticipated time for us to come and learn and help at your garden. Follow the link to email and learn more.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

Communal Garden Class

CHECK OUT THE COMMUNAL GARDEN CLASS SERIES

This free class series is open to all in the community and is part of larger Conservatory initiatives that build capacity, knowledge and enthusiasm for the joys of gardening. To learn more about all the ways that the Conservatory supports community gardeners, check out our Growing to Green program and discover how you can get involved!

The Communal Garden: Companion Planting:

Dec 3, 6-7:30pm At FPC - AEP Foundation Education Pavilion

We will explore ways to plan your garden with companion planting as a guide. Companion planting is a way to ensure that you have a bountiful harvest and a part of integrated pest management. Learn what plants are best planted together, and what plants to avoid growing together.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Community Garden Grant

FINAL REPORT REMINDER TO ALL PAST GRANT RECIPIENTS

For past grantees, final report are due Nov. 29, 2024. Grantee have received email reminder for the final report with a link to sent the report. You can also click the link below.

[LINK TO REPORT](#)

The Sustainable Kitchen: Turkey 101

This is a cooking class taught by the Conservatory's Sustainability Educator, Heather Bell. As with all of the classes in The Sustainable Kitchen series, Heather will talk about sustainability in the kitchen and the small steps you can take to help the planet as she teaches you to cook something delicious.

You'll learn how to clean, prepare, and truss a turkey for cooking as well as the best method for achieving a juicy turkey with crispy, golden brown skin.

[LEARN MORE](#)

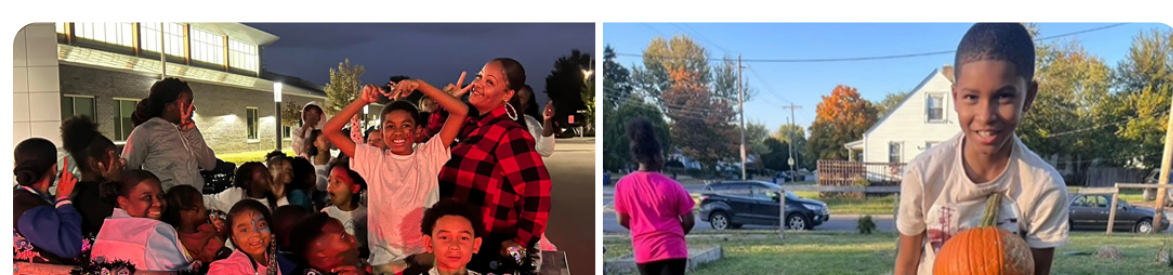
Winter Interest



Winter Greenery Wreath Daytime class

Learn how to create a wonderful DIY wreath suitable to adorn any front door throughout the holiday season. A varied selection of greenery, decor, cones, berries and bows are all included in the class cost. Take home your masterpiece to hang on your front door for the rest of the winter!

[LEARN MORE](#)



Winter Greenery Wreath Evening Class

Learn how to create a wonderful DIY wreath suitable to adorn any front door throughout the holiday season. A varied selection of greenery, decor, cones, berries and bows are all included in the class cost. Take home your masterpiece to hang on your front door for the rest of the winter!

[LEARN MORE](#)

Community Corner

Recognizing achievements, celebrating success, and sharing memorable stories.



JOIN LEGACIES UNITED FOUNDATION FOR OUR
TCI CARES ANNUAL
PUMPKIN PATCH
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13TH, 2024
2510 McCuffey Road
3pm-6pm
Admission: \$10
Enjoy:
• Pumpkin Patch
• Arts and Crafts
• Games
• Face painting
• And more!
COME OUT FOR A GREAT TIME!

Community Gardens Fall Festivals

A recap of Legacies United Foundation Annual Fall Festival and Pumpkin Patch. Legacies United Foundation is a platform for intergenerational research learning and activity.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Local Gardening Events

FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING FOR GARDENERS IN CENTRAL OHIO



[VIEW BULLETIN BOARD](#)