

Year in Review

2020



Dear Patron,

The Houston Botanic Garden is open! The Garden is growing. The Garden is exquisite.

In September, after approximately 18 months of construction, the Garden's gorgeous gates opened to the public, marking the culmination of the efforts of so many. All the time, money, and sweat invested made the dream of a world-class, horticulturally interesting botanic garden in Houston a reality. The Garden achieved many milestones in 2020, in the midst of a challenging pandemic, which underscored the importance of bringing the Garden to life for inspiration, discovery, relaxation, and rejuvenation.

When planting a garden, you are planting for now, and you are planting for the future. The Garden is celebrating the seeds planted that will have a positive impact on the surrounding community, and the city at large, for decades to come. The Garden will inspire generations to love plants and care for our planet.

Toddlers who light up as butterflies dance around them in the Garden will return as adults to see the same spirit of wonder reflected in the faces of their own children. Home gardeners inspired by the Garden's globally diverse collection will discover a have-to-have-it plant for their own garden. Replicating the Garden's retention pond wetlands and coastal prairie in future developments will help make the bayou city both more resilient to future storms and more beautiful.

Almost 20,000 visitors enjoyed the Houston Botanic Garden in the final months of 2020, learning, growing, and making memories. As it is said, "More grows in a garden, than the gardener knows she has planted." On behalf of the millions who will benefit, now and in the future, thank you to all who helped *Grow Houston's Garden*.

Nancy O'Connor Abendshein

Nancy O'Connor Abendshein
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Claudia Gee Vassar

Claudia Gee Vassar
President & General Counsel

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Justin Lacey, Communications & Community Engagement
Ayanna Jolivet Mccloud, Education & Public Programs
Brent Moon, Horticulture

*Succeeded by Connie Boyd in February 2021

†Deceased



"We've needed a botanical garden for so long; it's very exciting to have it open finally! Lovely place to safely wander with the family out in nature."

— C. Talkington



MISSION STATEMENT

Enriching life through discovery, education, and the conservation of plants and the natural environment.

“Brand New Houston Botanic Garden Brings an Outdoor Wonderland to America’s Fourth Largest City.”

— PaperCity, Sept. 16, 2020



Covered by more than 20 local/regional TV, radio, print, and digital media, as well as Departures, Condé Nast Traveler & USA Today 10Best

19,563

Attendance
Sept.—Dec. 2020



25k+

Tropical, Sub-tropical & Arid Plants
More than 900 taxa



“It’s cool to see this in a part of Houston ‘off the beaten path’ for most of us. Can’t wait to watch it develop.”

— D. Robinson

72k+

New, first-time visitors to redesigned website
Aug.—Dec. 2020

Editors’ Pick, Landscape
Architect’s Newspaper Best of Design Awards 2020



1,929

Memberships
Aug.—Dec. 2020

“After my first visit, I opted for membership to visit frequently and enjoy the plants and trees as they grow! It is close to home and gives me a chance to soak up some nature on lovely days in Houston.”

— Brittany W.

23

Full & Part-Time Staff
28 FTEs



206 Volunteers | 1,914 Hours of Service

In 2020, despite the disruptions of the COVID pandemic, volunteers continued to safely assist our horticulture, visitor services, education/programs, and administrative staff.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Jim Reeder, Claudia Gee Vassar, Nancy Abendshein, Nancy Thomas, Susie & Mel Glasscock

“I will watch with true delight as our garden paths fill with people from Houston’s wonderfully diverse population, and the garden brings pleasure and educational value to all—a living treasure for years to come.”
 — Nancy S. Thomas, *Chairman Emerita & Secretary, Board of Directors*



Joe & Lynne Hudson



Dr. George Peterkin & John Peterkin



Tommy & Terry Smith



Lela & Robin Gibbs



Amy & Mark Hammer



Jose Rocha



“Houston has many wonderful and serene destinations, and I know that the 132-acre Houston Botanic Garden will live up to its promise to provide a place for visitors to learn about plants, conservation, and nature, and connect Houstonians and visitors to our city across different cultures and ethnicities.”
 — Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner



Butch, Nancy & Ralph Abendshein



Steve & Shelli Lindley



Beth & Don Black, Gretchen Hilyard



Sharyn Weaver & Judy Tate



Councilmember Robert Gallegos



Beto Cardenas

Susan Garver Family Discovery Garden Sneak Peek

January 26, 2020



500

Community
Members
Attended

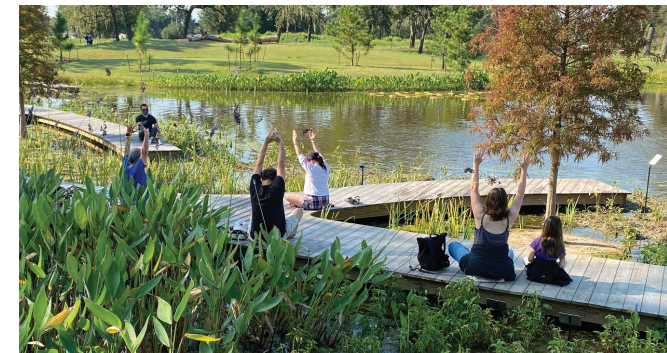


Opening Season Programs

The opening season reminded us that in plants – even during an otherwise uncertain time – we find creativity, pleasure, and cross-cultural connections.

5

Live performances
spotlighting regional
cultures entertained
visitors



630

Free plants given
as a gift from the
Garden to visitors



25

Regional
presentations
demonstrating the
importance of plants
to various cultures



Partners in Progress

Wildlife Habitat Federation

Sowed two rounds of cover crops, September 2019 and May 2020, in Coastal Prairie to prepare soil and planted native grasses in September 2020.



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's Texas Community Watershed Partners

Approximately 100 volunteers helped plant more than 12,000 aquatic plants in 2.2-acre Stormwater Wetlands adjacent to Sims Bayou meander from July-November 2020.



Trees for Houston

Planting approximately 1,200 trees for reforestation, including hundreds grown in our on-site tree farm.



Houston Audubon

Conducting monthly first-Thursday bird count and monitoring bluebird boxes.



Billboards Make Garden's New Brand Hard to Miss

During the fall of 2020, a 16-week paid billboard campaign featuring dramatic plant imagery ran on major freeways in the metropolitan area to introduce the Garden's "Life grows here" tagline and encourage Houstonians from all walks of life to visit the city's new living museum for plants.



Chavez High School Environmental Science

"While leading an afternoon walk at the Garden, I met Olga, who is 96. She joined the walk with several members of her family and rode along in her wheelchair. About halfway through our trek, Olga told her daughter she wanted to walk, so she stood and pushed her wheelchair along. She told me that the beauty of the Garden and the sunshine inspired her and gave her the energy!"

— Laura Conely, *Urban Paths*

Spring 2020 Programs



Houston Center for Photography



Urban Paths Wellness Walk



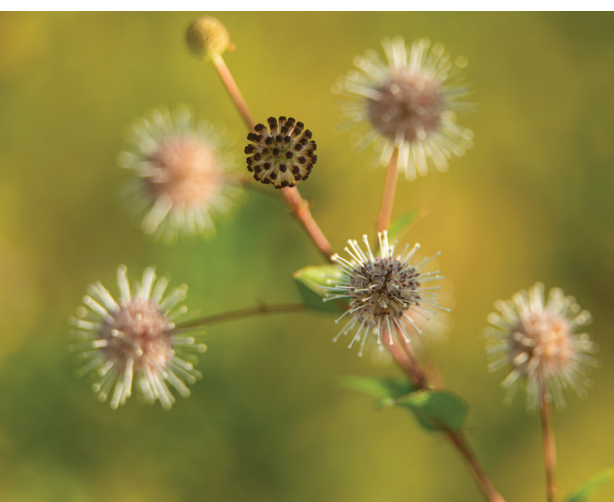
Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS & LIABILITIES	
OPERATING CASH BALANCE	\$1,150,423
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLES (PLEDGES)	\$5,675,633
FIXED ASSETS ADDITIONS (SINCE DEC FY19)	\$16,547,876
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS, NET	\$42,899,140
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$3,384,717
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$39,514,423

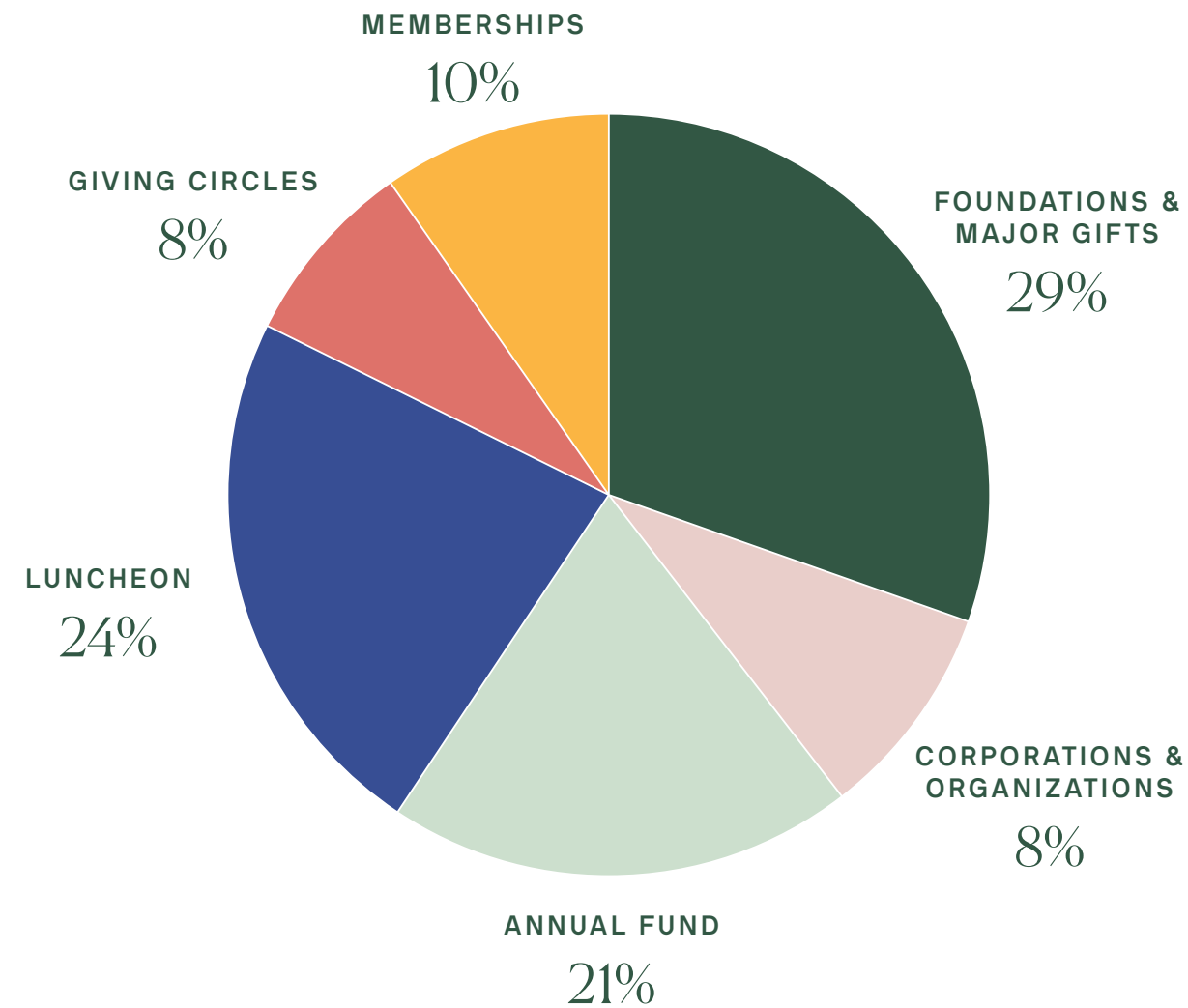


Statement of Activities

CONSOLIDATED ACTIVITY	
OPERATING ACTIVITY	YTD
CONTRIBUTION REVENUE	\$3,724,184
EARNED REVENUE	\$338,504
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADMISSIONS • MEMBERSHIP • MERCHANDISE • OTHER 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$208,802 \$60,290 \$32,094 \$37,318
TOTAL REVENUE	\$4,046,840
BOTANIC GARDEN AND GUEST SERVICES	\$988,242
MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL	\$510,700
MARKETING	\$242,150
FUNDRAISING	\$356,648
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,097,740
NET REVENUE	\$1,949,100



Philanthropy



2020 OPERATING RAISED

\$1,878,604

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT RAISED
FOUNDATIONS & MAJOR GIFTS	\$544,147
CORPORATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS	\$151,500
ANNUAL FUND	\$397,462
LUNCHEON	\$444,185
GIVING CIRCLES	\$146,000
MEMBERSHIPS	\$195,310
TOTAL	\$1,878,604

2020 Garden Supporters

Houston Botanic Garden pivoted from the capital campaign to fundraising for operations in 2020. We are ever grateful to these donors for their generous support January 1 – December 31, 2020.

“An exceptional addition to Houston! The diversity of plants and the pathway networks are so good. We are excited to watch this new garden grow and expand over the years. Proud members as of today.”

— J. Doak

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Quasi-Endowment

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Gulfway-Hobby Airport Rotary Club
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Community Garden ADA Beds

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Donors to the Annual Fund provide essential unrestricted support for the Houston Botanic Garden's operations and immediate needs.

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\$10,000+

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Grow Houston's Garden

The campaign to build a world-class botanic garden in Houston

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“Great place to visit. It is a
 lot bigger than I expected.
 Definitely bring your camera. I
 can see this becoming one of
 my favorite places in Houston.”

— J. Camacho



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Garden Features

Global Collection Garden

With three acres of themed tropical, subtropical, and arid zones—demonstrates the wide variety of diverse and beautiful plants that flourish in Houston’s climate.



“Everything about this place = peace. If you need somewhere to think, meditate, cry or laugh or just be, come here.”

— Christian P.

Culinary Garden

Features edible and medicinal plants that have served as a basis for economic and cultural exchange across the history of the world.



Susan Garver Family Discovery Garden

Presents opportunities for families to engage with nature in hands-on ways, with a lagoon, boardwalk maze, and plenty of space to roam and explore.



Woodland Glade



Natural Ecosystems



The features on the Island — Global Collection Garden, Culinary Garden, and Pine Grove, all adjacent to the Welcome Pavilion — seen here in the final weeks of construction in September 2020, serve as the centerpiece of Phase I of the Garden's 30-year master plan.

HOURS

Monday–Sunday
9:00 A.M.–5:00 P.M.

GARDEN ENTRANCE

One Botanic Lane
(at 8210 Park Place Blvd.)
Houston, TX 77017

MAILING ADDRESS

8205 N. Bayou Drive
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