

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

Master Gardener Program

The mission of the Phipps Master Gardener (MG) Program is to empower highly motivated and trained volunteers to share their knowledge and expertise to assist Phipps in carrying out its mission and build a stronger, more knowledgeable horticultural community, while providing a rewarding and engaging experience in an environment that values and appreciates their contributions.

Master Gardeners are needed to support Phipps' education and outreach programs. MGs teach and write on a variety of horticultural subjects, answer gardening questions for the general public through the Dr. Phipps service, support our Homegrown and Top 10 Sustainable plant outreach programs, and represent Phipps at public events. In addition, Phipps MGs help throughout our organization, helping with greenhouse production, installation of seasonal shows, maintenance of the display gardens in the Conservatory and outdoor gardens, both at the Conservatory and the Garden Center, and other projects related to horticulture, gardening, and the environment.

Phipps Mission: To inspire and educate visitors with the beauty and importance of plants; to advance sustainability and worldwide biodiversity through action and research; and to celebrate its historic glasshouse.

Please review the application process, course information and program structure outlined below to see if this program is a good fit for you.

Application Process

1) Submit an application: The attached application is our first chance to get to know you, so please fill the application out thoughtfully. **MG classes start March 13, and applications are due January 15.** You can submit an application by mail, fax, or e-mail.

Mail: Phipps Garden Center
1059 Shady Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15232
Attention: Master Gardener Program

Fax: 412/665-2368

E-mail: edu@phipps.conservatory.org

2) Schedule an interview: Within two weeks of receipt of application, you will be contacted by our volunteer coordinator to schedule an interview. Please be sure to check your messages on the contact phone number you provided.

3) Application Status and Payment: Within 2 weeks of your interview, Phipps will contact you to let you know if you have been accepted into the program. If accepted, you will be given instructions on how to pay the class fee of \$250 to reserve your spot. Payment instructions will be included with your acceptance notification. *Do not send any payment with this application.*

4) Attend Orientation: If you are accepted into our MG class, you will be invited to an orientation two weeks before the class starts. This is a mandatory meeting to review expectations for the program, meet fellow classmates, receive class materials, and review expectations. **The 2018 orientation date is from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 27, with a snow make-up date of March 6, at Phipps Garden Center in Mellon Park (1059 Shady Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15232).**

Course Information

The Master Gardener class is divided up into three semesters - Spring, Summer and Fall. During the Spring and Fall semesters, classes meet weekly with one additional Saturday workshop per month. During the Summer semester, the schedule is much lighter, with trainees required to attend just one event per month.

Class times and days vary each year. **In 2018, the class will meet on Tuesdays, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** A complete schedule will be included as part of orientation, but the semesters will adhere to this general outline:

Spring Semester: Tuesdays, March 13 through May 15 (weekly meetings, plus one Saturday morning)

Summer Semester: mid-May through mid-September (focus on volunteerism, with just one scheduled class or event per month)

Fall Semester: Tuesdays, Sept. 11 – Oct. 30 (weekly meetings, plus one Saturday morning)

Location: The majority of classes take place at Phipps Garden Center in Mellon Park, which is the center for Phipps' adult education classes. Some classes may take place at the Conservatory, or off-site.

The core of the MG class is lecture based instruction from an array of knowledgeable instructors on the topics outlined below. Students are provided with a textbook for pre-class preparation, and to keep as a reference. Hands-on and experiential learning are also utilized throughout the class. Students will also be given Phipps-specific training, enabling them to graduate from the MG class uniquely prepared to support Phipps' many educational and horticultural efforts.

Course topics include:

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| • Soil Ecology | • Indoor Plants | • Plant Propagation |
| • Botany for Gardeners | • Small and Tree Fruits | • Native Plants |
| • Entomology | • Vegetables | • Pollinators |
| • Organic Lawn Care | • Herbs | • Landscape Design |
| • Plant Pathology | • Pruning | |
| • Ornamental Plants | • Diagnosing Plant Problems | |

Program Structure

Once admitted into the program, there are four expectations you must meet in order to qualify as a Phipps Master Gardener:

1) Class attendance: Due to the self-contained structure of each class, attendance at all sessions is important. If a session must be missed, it can be made up the next year at no additional cost. Students may miss two classes and still receive Master Gardener certification.

2) Quizzes: Students are tested throughout the course to ensure they are making adequate progress. The quizzes will cover content in the manual, in-class lectures and workshops. Students must attain an overall average score of 75% or higher in order to pass.

3) Independent Project: In collaboration with the class coordinator, students will choose a topic for an independent project that they will work on over the duration of the class. This project is a part of the class requirements.

4) Volunteering: Phipps volunteers typically commit to 72 hours of service each year. Master Gardeners **must** volunteer a *minimum* of **36 hours** of approved activities over the course of the calendar year in order to qualify to be a Master Gardener for one year. At least half those hours (18) must be with Phipps. The other half can be volunteered through other horticulturally appropriate activities in the community.

Note: Continuing Education and Volunteerism: After the first year, 12 hours of continuing education and at least 36 hours of volunteerism are required each year to maintain your Master Gardener certification.

Each of these qualifications must be met in order to receive your Master Gardener certificate.

We look forward to receiving your application. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us:

Phone: 412/441-4442 x3925 E-mail: edu@hipps.conservatory.org

Master Gardener Application

MASTER GARDENER APPLICATION

I wish to become a Master Gardener with Phipps and would like to be accepted into the training program beginning in March. I understand that if accepted into the program, I will attend the required classes and agree to donate a minimum of 36 hours of public service in the Master Gardener Program within a year. At the end of a year, if the above requirements are met, I will receive a Master Gardener Certificate.

Each year thereafter, I can renew my certification by completing at least 36 hours of public service in the program and 12 hours of update training.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (home) _____ (cell) _____

E-mail address: _____

Most Recent Employment Information:

Company: _____

Position: _____

Responsibilities: _____

Volunteer Experience (list in order of most recent experience)

Company: _____

Position: _____

Responsibilities: _____

Company: _____

Position: _____

Responsibilities: _____

Education

College/University

Degree/Field of Study

High School _____

Technical _____

Other _____

Please briefly describe your gardening background, including how long you've gardened, and any relevant classes or trainings:

Please circle the activities below that you are currently involved with or have been involved with in the past.

Vegetable Garden	Small Fruits	Landscape Construction
Annual Flower Garden	Light Gardens	Composting
Perennial Flower Garden	House Plants	Organic Gardening
Herb Garden	Flower Arranging	Food Preservation
Cold Frames	Drying Flowers/Grasses	Cooking With Vegetables
Greenhouse	Fruit Trees	Container Gardening
Landscape Design	Nutrition	Other_____
Native Plants	Sustainable Design	Other_____

What other skills, hobbies, or interests do you have that might be helpful in your volunteer work at Phipps?

When are you available to volunteer? (Day, evening, weekend, etc.)

List any group affiliations.

How did you learn of Phipps Garden Center's Master Gardener Program?

What types of volunteer activities would you most enjoy doing as a Master Gardener?

Rate each activity below separately. Do not consider this to be a commitment to any specific activity.

	Least			Most	
Answering telephone questions	1	2	3	4	5
Answering questions in person	1	2	3	4	5
Writing gardening newsletter articles	1	2	3	4	5
Working festivals/public events	1	2	3	4	5
Representing Phipps in the community	1	2	3	4	5
Greenhouse work	1	2	3	4	5
Outdoor garden work	1	2	3	4	5
Leading tours	1	2	3	4	5
Interacting with guests through hands-on discovery stations	1	2	3	4	5
Working with youth	1	2	3	4	5
Teaching classes	1	2	3	4	5

What are your expectations of the volunteer program at Phipps Conservatory?

What do you hope to accomplish, both for yourself and for Phipps during your time here?
