

NYBG

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Gregory Long Announces Intention to Step Aside as CEO and The William C. Steere Sr. President of The New York Botanical Garden

Departure in June 2018 Will Conclude a Transformational 29-Year Tenure

Bronx, NY, April 20, 2017—At today’s meeting of the Board of Trustees of The New York Botanical Garden, Gregory Long announced his decision to step aside on June 30, 2018 as CEO and The William C. Steere Sr. President of the institution, a position he has held since 1989. The Trustees accepted his decision with deep gratitude for his unparalleled achievements at NYBG and immediately moved to form a search committee to identify the next executive leader.

When Mr. Long departs at the end of June 2018, his 29-year tenure will be the longest since that of NYBG’s founding director, Nathaniel L. Britton (who led the institution from 1896 to 1930), and the most consequential since then. Under Mr. Long’s leadership, NYBG has completed three 7-year strategic plans (1993–1999, 2001–2007, and 2009–2015). To fund the strategic initiatives called for in these plans, as well as ongoing operations, \$1.1 billion has been raised by NYBG, 80 percent of it from the private sector. The balance has been government funding for capital projects.

Inside this total, more than \$333 million has funded 43 major capital projects, including 15 new gardens and landscape renovations. These projects have revitalized the 250-acre living museum of plants—a National Historic Landmark—and have transformed it as a cultural attraction, research institution, center for education and publications, and community resource.

Attendance and membership have quadrupled since Mr. Long became CEO and President, the endowment has risen twentyfold, scientific and scholarly programs have flourished, and a series of widely admired exhibitions (such as *Impressionism: American Gardens on Canvas* and *FRIDA KAHLO: Art, Garden, Life*) have married botany and horticulture to the arts and humanities. Mr. Long has achieved all this while delivering a balanced budget for the past 28 consecutive years.

Gregory Long said, “When I came to The New York Botanical Garden, I joined an institution that was one of the most important of its kind anywhere, and that was needed more than ever by its city and by the world of research and conservation. As I quickly discovered, the many aspects of the Garden are as varied, marvelous, and intricately interconnected as the species

of the plant kingdom itself. That's why I say that everything I have done here has been through the support and collaboration of a great many people: our dedicated Trustees and staff, far-sighted government officials, loyal philanthropists with wide-ranging interests, an international network of scholars, scientists, and educators, and our neighboring communities in the Bronx. It has been an unimaginable privilege to serve all of them—and as I contemplate the next steps in my life and career, I will take great pleasure in continuing with these friends and colleagues for 14 more months.”

Maureen K. Chilton, Chairman of the Board of NYBG, said, “Our profound regret at Gregory’s decision is tempered only by the recognition that he has managed this change in characteristic fashion, waiting until he knew the Garden would be in the strongest possible situation and the timing would be strategically ideal. Over the past 28 years, Gregory has put our house in order—in fact dramatically improved the house—through three brilliantly conceived and managed strategic, capital, and financial plans. He has also looked to the future by giving us a new blueprint from now through 2021 for capital projects, endowment growth, and programmatic development. With the meticulous foresight and superb management skills for which he is widely admired, he has set a timetable for his departure that will allow the next CEO and President to take office with the first phase of the new plan already funded and in progress. We have gone from strength to strength through Gregory Long’s magnificent leadership. All of us at the Garden, and everyone for whom the Garden is an indispensable treasure, owe him our heartfelt thanks.”

A Transformative Tenure

Since 1989, Mr. Long has initiated and executed formal strategic plans that have renewed and elevated every aspect of the Garden. This work has included the restoration of existing buildings and landscapes, the development of new buildings and landscapes, the expansion and enhancement of scientific and educational activities, and the creation of an innovative exhibition program.

Building renovations have included the restoration of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, the LuEsther T. Mertz Library, and the Lillian and Amy Goldman Stone Mill. Landscape and garden restoration projects have included the Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden, the Thain Family Forest, the Arthur and Janet Ross Conifer Arboretum, the Benenson Ornamental Conifers, Daffodill Hill, the Marjorie G. Rosen Seasonal Walk, the Tulip Tree Allée, and the Rock Garden.

New buildings and landscapes developed under Mr. Long’s leadership include the Pfizer Plant Research Laboratory, the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium, the Leon Levy Visitor Center, the Everett Children’s Adventure Garden, the Nolen Greenhouses for Living Collections and Bourke-Sullivan Display House, the Peter Jay Sharp Building, the Adam R. Rose and Peter R. McQuillan Horticulture Operations Center, the Garden Café and Garden Terrace Room, the

Azalea Garden, the Native Plant Garden, and the expansions of the historic Burn Family Lilac Collection and the Judy and Michael Steinhardt Maple Collection.

Major program initiatives established during Mr. Long's tenure have included the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Program for Molecular Systematics, the Humanities Institute within the LuEsther T. Mertz Library, the C.V. Starr Virtual Herbarium, World Flora Online (a collaboration with three other international institutions to create the first universally accessible online data resource on all of Earth's 350,000 known plant species), the Edible Academy (where 100,000 children and families each year will learn about vegetable gardening and nutrition), the creation of hundreds of community and school gardens and 12 urban farms throughout the Bronx through NYBG's Bronx Green-Up Program, and scientific projects involving 250 international collaborations with 168 institutions in 49 countries.

Mr. Long has also been strongly committed to bringing plant science and gardening together with the arts and humanities through an innovative exhibitions program. In addition to exhibitions of important botanical art and books in the Rondina and LoFaro Gallery of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library, and popular annual favorites such as *The Orchid Show*, *Kiku: The Art of the Japanese Garden*, and the *Holiday Train Show*[®], exhibitions at NYBG in recent years have included *Spanish Paradise: Gardens of the Alhambra*; *Monet's Garden*; *Manolo Valdés: Monumental Sculpture*; *Healing Plants Around the World, Featuring The Italian Renaissance Garden*; *Groundbreakers: Great American Gardens and The Women Who Designed Them*; *Four Seasons*; *Moore in America: Monumental Sculpture at The New York Botanical Garden*; and the current exhibition *Chihuly*. In 2018 and 2019, large-scale exhibitions on Georgia O'Keeffe's Hawaiian art and the landscape architect Roberto Burle-Marx are planned.

Mr. Long has contributed as an author and editor to the reputation of the Garden through publications such as *The New York Botanical Garden* (Abrams). He is also author of *Historic Houses of the Hudson River Valley* (Rizzoli). His leadership of NYBG has been recognized through honors including the LaGasse Medal of the American Association of Landscape Architects, the NYC Cultural Leadership Award of Common Cause, the Ten-4-Ten Stewardship Award of the Cultural Landscape Foundation, the Acorn Award of the Native Plant Center, and NYBG's own Founders Award. The City University of New York conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters on Gregory Long for his "inspired stewardship" in helping to "make culture flourish New York City," and *The New York Times* has written in an editorial that under his direction, "The Garden has succeeded in its wildly ambitious effort to become one of New York City's leading cultural institutions."

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday, as well as certain federal holiday Mondays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (winter hours 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., mid-January through February). The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check the Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit nybg.org.

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

The New York Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. A portion of the Garden's general operating funds is provided by The New York City Council and The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Bronx Borough President and Bronx elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding.

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