

For immediate release
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\$600 Million Invested in Garden Renaissance over 15 Years
Achievement Celebrates Stewardship, Philanthropy, and Public/Private Partnership
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Visionary Planning Guides Process and Will Chart Further Advances through 2015

In the past 15 years, The New York Botanical Garden has invested \$600 million to repair and improve its century-old infrastructure, create world-class horticulture exhibitions, expand renowned adult and children's education programs, develop scientific research programs and projects with worldwide impact on environment and conservation policy, and create an endowment.

Gregory Long, President and CEO of the Botanical Garden, made the announcement celebrating this unprecedented investment at the Garden's annual Conservatory Ball yesterday evening, a gala event that in itself raised nearly two million dollars this year. It also marks the 10th anniversary of the restoration of the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, the largest Victorian glasshouse in America.

Long, speaking on behalf of Board Chairman Wilson ("Roly") Nolen and the entire Board of The New York Botanical Garden, said: "Since the 1990s, it has fallen to our generation, the people of the Board and staff of the Garden, to restore this institution—its historic landscapes, buildings, programs, and financial strength. Tonight Roly and the Board and I are delighted to be able to tell you that, as we complete Phase II of the renaissance of the Garden this month, the public and private sectors have invested \$600 million in this massive project."

Stewardship, Leadership, and Dedication

Long praised the stewardship, leadership, and dedication of the Garden's Board as "dedicated philanthropists with broad-ranging interests in education and the world of plants" and thanked tens of thousands of others, including the Garden's extended family of Patrons and Members and the dedicated and creative chairmen who raise millions each year through events and benefits. "The Botanical Garden is a place of ineffable beauty and charm. It isn't only because of the landscape, it's also the spirit of the people who care about it," Long noted. "You have done a wonderful thing for the people and the international reputation of New York."

Nolen singled out government support. "We want to thank our city, state, and federal government partners for their significant role in the Garden's remarkable renaissance. We are especially grateful for the ongoing support of New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Commissioner Kate Levin and the Department of Cultural Affairs, Speaker Christine Quinn and the New York City Council, Borough President Adolfo Carrión, New York State Governors George Pataki and Eliot Spitzer, and our Congressional delegation."

Since its founding in 1891, The New York Botanical Garden has been a vital component of New York City's cultural landscape. Dedicated to collecting and disseminating knowledge about plants and their diversity, evolutionary history, and benefit to human life, the Garden is among the premier botanical gardens in the world. The Garden's unparalleled programs in plant research and discovery, public horticulture, and children's education have earned The New York Botanical Garden the status as "America's Garden."

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Strategic Planning Sets Framework for Renaissance

The Garden's comprehensive renaissance began in the early 1990s. The institution conducted its first comprehensive strategic planning effort, which resulted in a detailed, seven-year blueprint for programmatic expansion, capital development, landscape restoration, and financial well-being.

The first phase of the long-term project was known as a *Plan for 1993–1999*. A \$210 million investment, Phase I focused primarily on “the Garden within the Garden,” the 50-acre triangle defined by the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, LuEsther T. Mertz Library, and the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, a 12-acre indoor/outdoor facility dedicated to teaching plant science to children. This plan also brought new vigor and focus to the Garden's important work in scientific research and conservation as well as restoration of the historic landscape. Additionally, infrastructure improvements throughout the Garden's entire 250-acre site were made to enhance the visitor experience, increase attendance, and improve financial stability.

After nearly a decade of unprecedented growth, the Garden embarked on Phase II of its transformation, defining a new set of priorities designed to build on the accomplishments of the previous decade and further advance the institution's mission and international presence. Known as the *Campaign for a New Era 2001–2007*, Phase II of the Garden's overall renaissance has added \$326 million in additional investments to improve its campus and programs and secure its financial future through the creation of new earned income programs and increased endowment.

During Phase II, the Garden made many changes to its physical landscape and programs. The Nolen Greenhouses for Living Collections, the largest behind-the-scenes greenhouses at any botanical garden in the nation, opened in May 2005. They enable the growth of a much wider range of plants for public exhibition as well as for research by Garden scientists. The New York Botanical Garden has also become an ever more powerful force in biodiversity research with the addition of the 28,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art Pfizer Plant Research Laboratory. This new facility, opened in 2006, provides highly advanced scientific research infrastructure for the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Program for Molecular Systematics Studies, Plant Genomics, and Graduate Studies. The latter program prepares the next generation of plant scientists who will advance scientific knowledge of biodiversity, conservation and sustainability, and climate change worldwide. In 2004, the Leon Levy Visitor Center opened, enhancing the visitor experience and providing space for the Cafe and Shop in the Garden, which generate income that supports the Garden's core mission in science, horticulture, and education. During Phase II, the endowment also has increased substantially through gifts and investments; it now provides 16% of the Garden's annual operating budget.

Phase III of this historic renaissance will cover 2009 through 2015 and aims to secure the financial stability and institutional sustainability of the progress made to date, as well as to further develop the Garden's programs. Strategic planning is well underway and additional funds have already been received towards Phase III, bringing the total investment in the Garden renaissance to \$600 million.

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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. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit our Web site at www.nybg.org

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.

Media Contact: Karl Lauby 718.817.8637