



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

For Immediate Release
June 5, 2014

25-Year Garden Renaissance To Be Recognized By \$28 Million Raised

CEO Gregory Long Honored

“The 1890’s founders of The New York Botanical Garden, including John D. Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan, and Andrew Carnegie, who set out to create one of the world’s largest and most distinguished botanical institutions, would be elated if they could witness the evolution of their great cultural institution as it has unfolded over the past 25 years.”

—Maureen K. Chilton, Chairman of the Board, The New York Botanical Garden

A special Anniversary Fund of \$25 million has been assembled by the Board of The New York Botanical Garden to honor Gregory Long, Chief Executive Officer and The William C. Steere Sr. President, for his 25 years of leadership. It will be announced at the Botanical Garden’s Conservatory Ball on June 5, 2014, that the fund’s goal has been exceeded and \$28 million has been raised.

“I know of very few institutions where the Board would come forward to honor the CEO in this way—we are all delighted to do this,” said Shelby White, a Vice Chairman of the Board of the Garden and Trustee of the Leon Levy Foundation, which gave \$5.6 million. The fund was launched with a \$5 million challenge by the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust.

The restoration and revitalization of the Garden have been guided by an innovative strategic planning process that was instituted by Gregory Long and is widely recognized as one of the finest ever developed by a cultural institution. It is taught at business schools and in museum management programs internationally and has been documented in case studies published by the University of Virginia.

Among many other programmatic and educational initiatives, The New York Botanical Garden has:

- Redesigned and rejuvenated 150 acres of its 250-acre historic landscape, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including New York City’s only old-growth forest;
- Restored its New York City Landmark buildings, including the iconic Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Library building, and Lillian and Amy Goldman Stone Mill;
- Created internationally recognized new display gardens, including the Native Plant Garden, a major, cutting-edge installation featuring 100,000 new plants, and the 11-acre Azalea Garden, one of the largest in the United States;
- Created new public programming, including exhibits that explore the connections among plants and garden design with the visual arts, architecture, poetry, music, and science. These included blockbuster shows such as *Monet’s Garden*, *Emily Dickinson’s Garden*, *Darwin’s Garden*, and *Spanish Paradise: Gardens of the Alhambra*, attracting as many as 370,000 visitors per exhibition;

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- Built extensive new educational facilities and increased access annually for 90,000 school children, 4,000 teachers-in-training, 250,000 family visitors, and 40 Ph.D. candidates;
- Created new state-of-the-art science facilities for its library, now the world's foremost library about the plant kingdom; for its research plant collection, now the world's third largest; and for its molecular genomics program, the first at any botanical garden.

In total, investments of \$300 million have been made in buildings and the landscape.

In financial terms:

- The endowment has increased 19-fold to \$330 million and now produces 21 percent of total revenue;
- Attendance and Membership have each increased four-fold, and earned-income initiatives now produce 27 percent of total revenue;
- The Garden's operating budget, now \$70 million, has been balanced for 25 consecutive years;
- Dozens of National Science Foundation grants for plant research have been awarded to the Garden, totaling several million dollars annually.

During this period, an illustrious national and international governing Board has been formed and includes several distinguished scientists such as Dr. Tom Lovejoy and Dr. Oliver Sacks, as well as creative figures such as Jessye Norman, Mario Batali, and Sigourney Weaver.

The new Anniversary Fund gifts are all for core needs identified as goals of the Botanical Garden's current strategic plan. Capital and operating projects that will be assisted by the fund include: the establishment of the Edible Academy, a state-of-the-art, year-round facility to teach 80,000 children and families about vegetable gardening and nutrition each year; and the building of institutional-scale composting facilities essential for the maintenance of the Garden's landscape and 50 display gardens. New endowment gifts will support the research library and the state-of-the-art visitor center.

Having spent 20 years with great New York City institutions, including The New York Public Library and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, before coming to the Garden in 1989, Gregory Long said: "Our vision for the Botanical Garden has been to re-establish its primary role as one of the city's major cultural institutions and one of the greatest botanical gardens in the world. Our models were, in a sense, the Met and the Library, and others of the world's most significant cultural and educational places. I think we are succeeding in realizing the wildly ambitious goals of our founders."

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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 and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 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 our 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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