

Job Description: Horticulture Specialist

Reports To: Director of Horticulture

Status: Full-Time

Classification: Non-Exempt (\$19 - \$21 Hourly)

Revised Date:

About Us

Waterfront Botanical Gardens (WBG) is a vibrant and inclusive nonprofit organization devoted to connecting individuals with the splendor of the botanical world. Located in Louisville, Kentucky, WBG opened in 2019 and has developed approximately four of 23 total acres, which showcase a diverse array of plant collections and offer a peaceful urban oasis for visitors. At WBG, we are dedicated to providing exceptional educational experiences, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of plants, and contributing to a greener, more sustainable future for our community.

Role Summary

The Horticulture Specialist at Waterfront Botanical Gardens is a vital member of the horticulture team. Reporting to the Director of Horticulture, the Horticulture Specialist will perform diverse tasks to ensure the health, beauty, and functionality of our gardens. This role includes a wide range of responsibilities, from maintaining garden aesthetics to overseeing equipment and workspace conditions.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Garden and Workspace Maintenance:**

- Maintain display or vegetable beds to the highest aesthetic standards through weeding, watering, pruning, deadheading, mulching, edging, raking, and fertilization.
- Ensure a clean garden setting free of litter and debris, including timely plant identification signage.
- Proactively monitor systems such as greenhouse mechanics, deer fencing, and water spigots year-round and report repair and replacement needs.
- Keep interior workspaces, including the headhouse, office, conference room, and restroom, clean, safe, and conducive to plant and human health.
- Frequently work with plants, engaging in propagation, insect/disease monitoring, and daily plant maintenance, within a production and display greenhouse setting.

- Plant & Soil Care:**

- Perform hands-on work in cultivated gardens and natural ecosystems, including planting, pruning, training, mulching, weeding, watering, staking, and transplanting various plants.
- Conduct structural pruning, removal of dead branches, maintenance of espaliered plants, and elimination of girdling roots.
- Operate a range of equipment, including trucks, mowers, pruners, loppers, weed eaters, chippers, and blowers.
- Execute appropriate soil preparation, planting, and establishment procedures for various outdoor-hardy plant types in USDA Zone 6b.

- Coordination and Communication:**

- Collaborate with the Director of Horticulture to schedule plantings and structural pruning.
- Coordinate operational procedures with the Director of Horticulture and other Horticulturists.

- Provide effective communication with horticulture staff and volunteers, offering hands-on training in plant care, both in the field and through classroom instruction.
- **Plant Documentation, Education, and Events:**
 - Participate in plant documentation, including tasks such as plant labeling and notifying changes in plant inventory within the garden.
 - Support educational initiatives, including leading garden tours, delivering talks, and contributing articles to various media outlets.
 - Assist in the selection and documentation of plant accessions within the curatorial database.
 - Teach appropriate educational programs on gardening topics for adults.
 - Contribute content, as requested, for youth day camps or youth garden tours.
 - Assist with important special/seasonal events, such as grand opening weekend, Gardens-A-Glimmer, holiday-related events, and more.
- **Equipment and Tools:**
 - Assist with irrigation, mowing, and other Horticulture-specific equipment maintenance.
 - Operate and maintain horticulture equipment and machinery.
 - Safely operate small engine equipment, including tillers, snowblowers, weed-eaters, blowers, edgers, mowers, electric clippers, and similar machines.
 - Responsibly clean and maintain hand tools and equipment.
- **Additional Responsibilities:**
 - Ensure the presentation of plant labels and maintain a clean garden environment, free of litter and debris in beds and walkways.
 - Occasionally work with plants in a greenhouse setting.
 - Collaborate with fellow WBG staff on team projects, including interns and volunteers.
 - Supervise horticulture vendors.
 - Identify and manage pests and diseases using pesticides and herbicides, adhering to integrated pest management (IPM) principles.

Supervisory Responsibilities:

No supervisory responsibilities unless designated to oversee specific volunteer or intern projects and/or events.

Education and Experience:

- Minimum of an Associate's degree in Horticulture or a related field and 3 years of practical experience. Bachelor's degree preferred.
- At least one year of experience in a public garden or private estate setting is preferred.
- Obtain and maintain the KY Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Applicator's License within 60 days of hire.
- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) certification or an accredited tree expert license is a plus.
- Knowledge of plant species, soil science, and horticultural practices.
- Experience with garden design and expansion projects is a plus.
- Proficiency in plant database software and Microsoft Office Suite.
- Additional work experience will be considered in lieu of a degree.
- Must have a current driver's license and an insurable driving record.

Physical Demands:

- Frequent standing, walking, and sitting.
- Frequent manual labor during an 8-hour day.
- Ability to stand, walk, sit, kneel, and climb.
- Use of hands to perform various tasks.
- Lifting and moving objects up to 50 pounds.
- Specific vision abilities required, including close and distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.
- Physically able to operate power equipment.

Work Environment:

- Willingness to adjust work hours for holidays, weekends, and special events.
- Able to work required hours to meet deadlines.
- Frequent exposure to outside weather conditions, including high heat, humidity, rain, wind, subfreezing temperatures, and snow.
- Occasional exposure to moving mechanical parts, fumes, airborne particles, risk of electrical shock, and vibration.
- Moderate to high noise level in the work environment.

To apply for this position please send your cover letter and resume to:

Haley Justice

Senior Manager, Human Resources

hjustice@waterfrontgardens.org

The job description outlined above provides a general overview of the role's nature and level of work. It is not intended to encompass every responsibility, duty, or required skill associated with the position. This job description does not create a contractual agreement and does not modify the at-will employment relationship between the employee and the employer. The organization reserves the right to revise, modify, or amend any aspect of this job description as necessary and at its discretion.



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