

Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who build and enhance their community through gardening.

In 2018, 402 people participated in the approximately 60 hours of training throughout Illinois, including 78 in the new self-paced online Master Gardener training course launched this year. Of the 102 counties in Illinois 76 have MG programs. Cook County has three programs plus a very active program at Chicago Botanic Gardens.





Volunteer Hour Categories	Hours
Gardens	101,801
Hort Hotlines	29,509
Special Events	18,357
Therapeutic Gardening	6,731
Speakers Bureau	3,975
Youth Gardening	2,990
Admin/Tech Support	20,332



#### **Volunteer Statistics**



2,622 Volunteers



66,616+ Contacts



183,086 Service Hours



36,186
Continued Education
Hours



\$5.7 million\*

Value to
Communities

\* \$5.705,462 according to Independent Sector study

### Nineteen MG Projects Receive Mini Grants

Projects representing Boone, Cook, DeKalb, Johnson, Lake, Madison, Perry, Randolph, Rock Island, and Will counties received funds raised through silent auction during the MG State Conference to support ongoing MG efforts in 2018.

The 2018 Mini-Grant program also brought an exciting new collaboration to impact hunger in Illinois. Through the generous support of the Illinois 4-H Foundation, counties were also able to receive funding for projects that partnered Master Gardeners with 4-H youth. Bond, Kane, Kendall, Lee, Macoupin, Marion, North Cook, St. Clair, and Washington counties were all able to receive funds to help forge connections between Master Gardeners and youth to work together to combat hunger locally by expanding healthy food access.

An example of the powerful projects is the Mon-Arc Garden in Rock Island County.





# **Project Goals**

Using education and gardening for a therapeutic benefit to challenge and strengthen individuals with development and other disabilities.

# Partnerships

The Arc of the Quad Cities is an independent, non-profit organization that promotes living and working in partnership with the community to support individuals with developmental and other disabilities, through a variety of support services.

### **Audience**

46 adult clients with varying degrees of disabilities attend MG led classes and garden with the volunteers.

### The Garden

Raised beds, a vertical garden and several container units in order to accommodate all persons with various handicaps.

### Education

Monthly classes led by the Master Gardeners utilizing education and gardening for a therapeutic benefit to challenge and strengthen the clients.

# Award Winning People and Projects

During the 2018 Illinois State MG Conference, 297 Master Gardeners and staff gathered together in Springfield, IL to network together and recognize Master Gardener achievements.

Attendees learned about Renovating a Home Landscape from Greg Pierceall, Professor Emeritus at Purdue University, enjoyed a bit of botanical humor from Chris Benda the Illinois Botanizer, and Luscious Landscape Edibles from Dr. Bill Sullivan, Carol Reese, Ornamental Horticulture Specialist, University of Tennessee Extension.

### MG Honorees



34
State Outstanding Awards



9 Sustained Excellence Awards



**9** Teamwork Awards

### Livingston County Youth Enrichment Lessons

Master Gardeners provided horticulture enrichment lessons to 2nd and 5th-grade classroom youth in Livingston County. They worked with Extension staff to set learning objectives for each lesson, designed the curriculum for each age level, and trained fellow Master Gardeners on teaching the lessons.

They created grab and go kits that include: Pollination, Seeds/ Germination, Insects, Web of Life, Plant Adaptations, in order to save time and resources.





# Ottawa Butterfly Garden - Waystation

Master Gardeners in LaSalle county worked with the City of Ottawa to create a butterfly garden to raise awareness of butterfly preservation. They created information to educate the public on the needs of butterflies throughout their life cycle, images for identification of common Illinois caterpillars and butterflies, and a list of plants that should be used.

# Ingalls Hospital Rooftop Donation Garden

MGs taught Ingalls Hospital dietetic interns how to grow their own vegetables so they in turn can teach the clients they work with to grow their own vegetables to support a healthy diet. They grow and donated fresh nutritious produce to food pantries in local food-desert communities and educated youth from Restoration Ministries area outreach programs how food is grown.



### Harrison Bruce Historical Garden

MGs worked together with the Harrison-Bruce Foundation to establish gardens designed to enhance the historical interpretation at this historical site. They designed the gardens to reflect an 1818 Illinois settler's gardens utilizing heirloom varieties and educated the public on historical gardening through a variety of training sessions, garden tours, signage, and reenactments at the site.



# Sixteen MG Projects Receive Funding to Grow More Food

The Growing Illinois Food Access Allocation (GIFAA) program is an SNAP-Ed funded initiative that partners Master Gardeners, SNAP-Ed educators, and food pantries to increase access to fresh produce for low resource populations. Project goals include increasing food availability through expanded garden capacity, increasing food utilization through pantry-based education and environmental changes; and expanding community capacity through education and through the development of partnerships like these.

In 2018, gardens at the 16 sites donated 8,022 pounds of produce valued at \$11,373 to 18 food pantries serving over 14,000 people.



GIFAA Project Highlight

### Decatur Correctional Center Gardens

Master Gardeners and local Extension staff provided education through the use of the Master Gardener training course to educate inmates at DCC on all things gardening.

The facility has a vegetable garden and greenhouse located at the Decatur Correctional Center for Women, which is a minimum-security prison located in Decatur, IL.

Vegetables are started by seed in the greenhouse, and grown outdoors by the women. In 2017, the gardens produced approximately 400 pounds of food, which at its current size, was not enough to feed the 600 inmates at the facility. Thanks to GIFAA funds, the garden was able to be expanded in 2018 and the produce is now donated to the Decatur Salvation Army's food pantry each week.



### How the Master Gardener Program Addresses Illinois Issues Horticulture hotlines Therapeutic gardens Pollinator programs Demonstration gardens Integrated pest Teaching gardens management Building relationships programs and training between volunteers and Urban forestry their communities Protectina Developing and Healthy Appreciating Lifestyles the Environment Growing and Accessing Positive Youth Food to Develpment Prevent Hunger Food donation School Gardens gardens • 4-H Special • Home vegetable Interest Clubs gardening Library Gardens programs

### The Illinois Master Gardener Team

- Master Gardeners: 2,622 active members
- College of ACES: Dean Kim Kidwell and state specialists
- Office of Extension and Outreach: Associate Dean & Director, Dr. Shelly Nickols-Richardson
- Program Leader Assistant Dean, Dr. Suzanne
   Bissonnette sbissonn@illinois.edu

- State MG Coordinator Sandra L. Mason slmason@illinois.edu
- Interim Coordinator- Candice Hart

# mille116@illinois.edu

- Horticulture and Local Foods Small Farms Educators throughout the state: 26
- County Directors, Extension program coordinators and support staff: ≥ 60
- State MG advisory committee: 16 members including MGs and Extension staff

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