Director of Horticulture
Powell Gardens: Kansas City’s Botanical Garden

Position Summary

The Director of Horticulture will assume a strategic role in the overall management of the organization. Leading a team of 20+ employees and focusing on the five key strategic priorities of the organization: 1. High Quality, Enjoyable Visitor Experience, 2. Region’s Leader in Botanical Education, 3. Increase Awareness and Recognition as a Premier Botanical Garden, 4. Establish Powell Gardens as a Critical Community Partner, and 5. Ensure Organizational Health and Sustainability, the Director is a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

Responsible for leading the Garden’s horticultural and facility initiatives and performance, the Director will focus on the gardens, production and display facilities, curation of the collection and research initiatives. The Director must have a solid understanding of the nature, role and operation of botanic gardens and their collections, associated best practices and display. He/she will collaborate with other senior leaders to facilitate an integrated approach among the Gardens’ priorities in science, horticulture, education and the visitor experience.

The Director of Horticulture reports to the Executive Director/President and is an integral part of a team-focused approach developing and achieving ambitious goals. The Director must embrace a challenge, have a strong work ethic, understand how horticulture goals affect the bottom line, be a strategic thinker with a “can-do” attitude and respond well under pressure. As a key public face of Powell Gardens, the Director will build relationships both externally and internally with multiple stakeholders and be a passionate advocate mobilizing others to move the Gardens to the next level.

Essential Functions

Strategic Leadership

1. Provides leadership linking and integrating the work of the Garden’s horticulture, facilities, research and education divisions to strengthen the Garden’s mission.
2. Develop a strategic direction for the horticulture division ensuring cutting edge, innovative solutions and practices with regional impact.
3. Oversee the implementation of all horticulture divisional goals and objectives outlined by the Garden’s Strategic Plan. Establish and monitor priorities and evaluate the division’s progress towards goals.
4. Be a change agent who can implement plans, communicate changes effectively, build commitment, overcome obstacles and resistance, supports those affected by change, monitor the transition and evaluates the results.
5. Effectively manage a division within a fast-paced, seasonal environment in a public attraction. Minimize the organizational obstacles to help teams work more effectively and focus on execution.
Gardens, Production and Display Facilities
1. Oversee the development, implementation and assessment of the 970-acre site including gardens, facilities, grounds, land and horticultural operations.
2. Design and oversee the implementation of major plant displays to build attendance; collaborate on the design of new Garden exhibits.
3. Work with the maintenance department to establish and implement preventative maintenance cycles.

Horticultural Leadership
1. Emphasizing the primary mission as a botanical garden, balance the direction of the Gardens related to preservation, conservation, restoration and sustainability issues.
2. Strategically identify and develop relationships and partnerships resulting in financial, operational and community leverage anchoring Powell Gardens at the heart of the Greater Kansas City community.
3. Participate in fundraising efforts as required providing the horticultural vision and passion needed to cement and advance long-standing relationships and potential supporters.
4. Work collaboratively with internal team members and external organizations to create a commitment to common goals, prioritizing and executing realistic priorities in a professional environment.
5. Working with Board members and the leadership team, be a critical team member in the master planning for Powell Gardens.
6. Guide Powell Gardens to be a model for the horticultural industry and regional community including advising and consulting with for-profit and non-profit operations on various and appropriate opportunities.
7. Establish and maintain professional and cordial relations with vendors, organizations and individuals regionally and nationally while maximizing the Gardens’ resources.

Collections & Research
1. Formulate and build the vision for both a native and regionally diverse plant collection ensuring the garden’s landscapes appeal to broad audiences while building a living collection of plants that supports conservation and interpretation.
2. Showcase and educate the public on the significance and relevance of the Garden’s collections and research projects.

Education & Interpretation
1. Consult, teach and train locally, nationally and internationally to support plant conservation, collections management, botanic garden development and horticulture skill development. Develop and encourage other horticulture division staff to participate in these activities.
2. Provide insight, content and editorial support for various publications, interpretative planning and marketing as required.
3. Works with the Director of Education, Outreach and Interpretation to design and implement a horticulturalist intern program.
Budget, Human and Resource Management

1. Ensure the effective and efficient operation of the horticulture and maintenance departments.
2. Oversee efficiencies and workflow to manage the daily upkeep and demands of a botanical garden.
3. Develop and administer the division’s budget; participate in identifying funding from diverse sources. Participate in grant writing and actively encourage staff to do the same.
4. Focus and implement the best use of staff time, budget and equipment resources, ordering timelines, planning documents and procedures.
5. Lead and manage a team of professionals providing coaching and mentoring as appropriate. Promote a department culture of teamwork, support, productivity, dedication and perseverance.
6. Working with the Executive Leadership Team, balance revenue generation, cost consciousness, process and policy, outsourcing, planning and resource allocation in a manner that is holistic and strategic and moves the organization forward both in profitability and mission.

Experience/Education

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<th>Education</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree required; Master’s Degree preferred in horticulture, botany, biology, plant science, science, landscape architecture/design or related field.</th>
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<td>Experience</td>
<td>Minimum of 7+ years relevant and increasingly responsible horticulture management experience inclusive of developed strategies, executed business plans, staff supervision and managing a variety of horticulture operations Living collection curation, development and management Experience with maintenance and facility challenges</td>
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<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Understands relevant ethical and legal considerations when developing living plant collections Thorough understanding of plant collection policies and procedures Plant care production techniques Conservatory display Landscape design and installation Landscape maintenance best practices Widely versed in the current horticultural field including pollinators, plants native to the Midwest flora and fauna, invasive plants, Integrated Pest Management, tropical and plant disease Construction management and creation/renovation of gardens</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>Excellent oral communication skills to a variety of audiences; able to convey passion and urgency of Garden priorities; speaks clearly and persuasively in positive or negative situations; listens and gets clarification; responds well to questions; demonstrates group presentation skills, one-on-one interactions and participation Excellent written communication skills related to publishing and editing; writes clearly and informatively; varies writing style to fit needs of audience; presents numerical and financial data effectively; able to write, read and interpret complex information and reports</td>
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Powell Gardens: Kansas City’s Botanical Garden

Powell Gardens, Kansas City’s botanical garden, was established in 1988 by the George E. Powell Sr. family on land purchased by Mr. Powell 40 years earlier. Powell Gardens sits on 970 acres of lush, rolling hills and windswept meadows, and offers breathtaking display gardens, renowned architecture, nature trails, one of the nation’s largest edible gardens, numerous
educational programming, and family events. It is uniquely located 30 miles east of Kansas City, attracting residents and visitors from the region and beyond.

As Kansas City’s official botanical garden, Powell Gardens has served the community and the region for nearly 30 years as a living museum and a signature cultural institution. Because of the responsibility of being the only botanical garden in the area, Powell Gardens’ board and staff have renewed their concentration on growth, improvements and funding to ensure the Gardens thrive for many more years. Without Powell Gardens, there would be a hole in the fabric of what makes Kansas City exceptional among other metropolitan cities.

More than 100,000 people visit the Gardens annually, from master gardeners trained in horticulture to young students seeing firsthand how plants become food. Powell Gardens makes a difference in people’s lives. Classes, programs, events, festivals, wedding venues and meeting spaces are available year-round to educate, entertain and inspire. As a nonprofit organization, Powell Gardens is dedicated to its mission of offering an experience that embraces the Midwest’s spirit of place and inspires an appreciation for the importance of plants in our lives.

Send a cover letter, resume and three references to Tabitha Schmidt, Executive Director/President at tschmidt@powellgardens.org. Application deadline: June 30th, 2017.