

NEWS RELEASE

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Adkins Arboretum Awarded Funds for Native Plant Propagation Initiative by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust

Adkins Arboretum was recently awarded funding for its Native Plant Propagation Initiative by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust (SSHT). Grant funds for improvements and maintenance to the Arboretum's nursery growing facilities have been awarded in the amount of \$11,500 for the calendar year 2018. This award follows a \$10,000 grant from the SSHT that funded horticultural project activities during calendar year 2017.



Adkins Arboretum Horticultural Advisor Leslie Hunter Cario (at right) demonstrates plant propagation techniques to volunteers as part of the Arboretum's Native Plant Propagation Initiative. The Arboretum has received a grant of \$11,500 from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust to support the program.

Begun in 2015, the Native Plant Propagation Initiative at Adkins Arboretum is an effort to broaden the selection of native plant species available to the horticultural trade by focusing on under-represented species with ornamental worthiness and important ecological benefits. This is accomplished by scouting for local populations, also known as local ecotypes, of desired native plants and following prescribed protocols to collect seeds and cuttings to propagate stock plants. GPS is used to map those located on Adkins' grounds, which in turn helps expand the Living Collections Database. Stock plants will be planted in demonstration gardens or seed plots at Adkins, serving as a focal point for educational programs and used to produce plants. The Arboretum is sponsoring a hands-on workshop series during 2018 in which participants will learn about propagation by divisions, seeds and cuttings, as well as sustainable seed harvest and processing, while helping to produce additional plant material for the project.

The plants under evaluation in the project have the potential to provide numerous ecosystem benefits. As species that are native to the region, they will not pose the threat of invasiveness that is often inherent

with exotic species. Through increased production in the nursery trade, and eventually distribution throughout developed landscapes, these plants can provide increased pollen and nectar sources for pollinators, as well as food or shelter for additional species that play a vital role in the food web. By promoting plants that are more tolerant of regional climate, insect and disease pressures, there will consequently be fewer pesticides needed in production or landscape maintenance than some more widely used ornamental species. In response to pressures of climate change, the identification of new regionally appropriate ornamentals will fit closely with the Arboretum's effort to help shape more resilient communities on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and throughout the Chesapeake Bay region.

Work with the Native Plant Propagation Initiative is undertaken by a core group of Adkins volunteers, along with Adkins Land Steward Kathy Thornton and Horticultural Advisor Leslie Hunter Cario. Volunteers are actively involved with plant scouting, seed collection and propagation activities, as well as researching propagation methods. Production of native plants from local ecotypes at Adkins Arboretum was presented by Cario at the American Public Garden Association's Native Plants and Plant Conservation Symposium held in Boston in October 2017.

Originally founded as Maryland's state arboretum in 1980, Adkins Arboretum has operated as a non-profit since 1992 and serves as a model for land management that strives to engage all people in conservation, appreciation and enjoyment of the Chesapeake region's native landscapes through education, recreation, art and community events. Situated adjacent to Tuckahoe State Park, the Arboretum operates and maintains a visitor's center, 400 acres of meadows, woods and wetlands, and five miles of paths under a 50-year lease with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Its diverse collection includes more than 600 trees, plants, grasses and wildflowers species native to the Eastern Shore and the Mid-Atlantic coastal plain. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847.

The Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust is a private foundation that supports ornamental horticulture education and research projects. Funding has been primarily directed toward projects in North America, South America, Central America, the Caribbean and Australia, with \$635,000 awarded to 44 organizations in 2017. To learn more, visit adminitrustllc.com/stanley-smith-horticultural-trust/.

CUTLINE: Adkins Arboretum horticulturist Leslie Hunter Cario (at right) demonstrates plant propagation techniques to volunteers as part of the Arboretum's Native Plant Propagation Initiative. The Arboretum has received a grant of \$11,500 from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust to support the program.

Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum offers educational programs for all ages about nature and gardening. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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