The mission of Denver Botanic Gardens is to connect people with plants, especially plants from the Rocky Mountain region and similar regions around the world, providing delight and enlightenment to everyone.

The four core values of Gardens – transformation, relevance, diversity and sustainability – spell out the Gardens’ intentions in the years ahead. These core values, along with the Gardens’ brand platform, strategy, icon and capital campaign, are cohesive and serve as a map to chart our course. With the support of friends, we set out to ensure Denver Botanic Gardens will forever flourish.
It was a year filled with opportunities, challenges and fulfillment. Throughout 2015, the Gardens once again saw what happens when a shared mission and sense of teamwork propels people to reach new heights.

The stories told in more than 50 gardens at York Street flourished. The recently built Ellipse garden, adjacent to the Waring House, exploded in color, its roses clearly relishing their new home. New crevice gardens became flashpoints of attraction, their minuscule plants both tenacious and stunning. The first major outdoor exhibition of Deborah Butterfield’s remarkable horses found a welcome home here, the figures both beautiful and beguiling. How did she first imagine her process of taking found wood and crafting bronze equines? We were all amazed.

At Chatfield Farms, a new Lavender Garden was created adjacent to the butterfly house which became a magnet for visitors. Vegetables grown at Chatfield Farms were shared with four sites to address the struggles of urban food deserts. Teams from the Gardens seemed to be everywhere, with projects at the 16th Street Mall to south Aurora.

The Gardens’ international impact deepened in 2015 as well. From design support of a new botanic garden in India to a new agreement with governmental authorities in Argentina to share plant research and propagation, we entered a new era of global understanding and cooperation.

By far, the biggest sensation of the year was Stinky, the Amorphophallus titanum that literally captivated the world. The event received international media attention including the Wall Street Journal, The Times UK, New York Times, Los Angeles Times and the Times of India. It was the first efflorescence of a corpse flower in the Rocky Mountain West and when throngs of daring visitors waited in line for half a day to see Stinky and as many thousands more tracked the bloom online, we had the opportunity to showcase one of nature’s greatest and strangest stories of adaptation. This was the perfect fusion of horticulture and public relations.

The challenges of 2015 came from our most important ally – Mother Nature. In June, the York Street gardens were struck by twin hailstorms. The damage was profound, but the team’s resilience proved to be equally so. Tents were shredded, whole gardens were pulverized. The roof of the greenhouse complex was pitted with holes. Conservatory panels were cracked. Yet, within hours, scores of staff and volunteers went to work and the recovery went into full swing. After mere days, visitors experienced no diminishment of their experience and the chance to rebuild became an opportunity to make everything even better. In fact, as the Boettcher Memorial Tropical Conservatory headed toward its 50th anniversary, the entire structure moved toward complete restoration.

Fulfillment. Under the leadership of our remarkable Board Chair, Dr. Jandel Allen-Davis, the Board approved a new strategic plan, taking the mission of the Gardens forward in a powerful way. Four key objectives were identified: sustainability, diversity, the reauthorization of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) and the realization of the final project of the Master Development Plan – the Center for Science, Art and Education. These four pillars have shared importance as each will be fundamental to the Gardens’ path for decades to come.

All good things at the Gardens are possible because of you – Board Trustees, volunteers, donors, staff and countless friends who relish this singular institution.

Thank you all.

Brian Vogt
Denver Botanic Gardens CEO
YEAR IN REVIEW

Art & Interpretation

• Seven exhibitions were presented throughout the year including Deborah Butterfield: The Nature of Horses and Colorado’s Climate Cousin: The Mountains and Plains of Southern Africa.

• The School of Botanical Art & Illustration offered 155 courses; nine distance learning courses with students from 15 states; two courses at El Charco Botanical Garden in Mexico and two six-week artist-in-residency positions in collaboration with the Research and Conservation Department.

• The interpretation team hosted 240 tours that served 2,814 people, 70 of which were of the Deborah Butterfield: The Nature of Horses exhibition.

• Roving and stationary docents engaged 3,700 visitors.

• Volunteers led 119 Science Chats in the Science Pyramid, reaching more than 6,500 visitors.

Chatfield Farms

• Lavender Garden constructed with 12 varieties of lavender, a labyrinth, pergola, stone patio and retaining wall. The garden will host a Lavender Festival in 2016.

• Veterans to Farmers Program participants completed 2,700 hours of agriculture instruction and hands-on work, focusing on urban agriculture growing and marketing of products. A stipend offset travel and living costs.

• Record breaking attendance: Pumpkin Festival attracted more than 30,000 people and Corn Maze gross revenue was $452,000.

• Plans were developed for the Deer Creek Stables rental facility that will be completed in 2016.

Development

• Corporate partner revenue was more than $400,000 of which $64,000 was corporate member revenue and $130,000 was sponsor revenue for the Summer Concert Series.

• UMB Bank continued to be a generous multi-year corporate partner with the Presenting Sponsorship of the Summer Concert Series, the naming of the UMB Bank Amphitheater at York Street and exhibition sponsorship.

• The Contributing Membership program reached record numbers, including nine President’s Circle, 15 Garden Leader and 33 Director’s Circle members, totaling $201,250 in revenue.

• The Gardens was a recipient of the “Innovate for Good” award for the Chatfield Farms Veterans in Food Deserts program.

• A grant from Kaiser Permanente supported the “Farm Stands in Food Deserts” with produce grown at Chatfield Farms.

Education & Library

• Summer camps had record attendance of 335 participants. Almost all camps at York Street and Chatfield Farms sold out.

• Mordecai Children’s Garden celebrated its fifth season. Through restructuring the teen volunteer program, 77 drop-in activities were provided for visiting families.

• The Bonfils-Stanton Series featured staff speakers including Michael Bone, Vera Evanson, Dan Johnson, Panayoti Kelaidis, Mike Kintgen and Larry Vickerman.

• A second collaboration with the Girl Scouts doubled the program compared to last year. 199 Daisy Scouts and 114 adults attended the two “Scout Days.”

• The Helen Fowler Library expanded the book club to include a summer meet the author event.

• Cataloging was completed of the research department’s library collection.

Center for Global Initiatives

• Dr. Sarada Krishnan, Director of Horticulture and Center for Global Initiatives and Mike Kintgen, curator of alpine collections went on a 10-day trip to Argentina to work with local agencies to acquire permits to collect and import plant material for trialing in Colorado.

• The book “Steppes: The Plants and Ecology of the World’s Semi-arid Regions” was published and released, authored by five experts.

• The master plan for the M.S. Swaminathan Botanical Garden in Wayanad, India was completed, featuring schematic designs done in collaboration with University of Colorado, Denver Landscape Architecture students.

• Seeds were exchanged with the Jerusalem Botanical Garden and germination studies were performed. The plants will be trialed for garden performance in the coming years.

Events
• Record breaking Blossoms of Light attracted 85,000 visitors and $670,493 revenue
• Record breaking Winter Gift Market attendance of 9,242
• New event series Glow at the Gardens was hosted over three nights and featured 1,500 luminaries, 265 carved pumpkins and showpiece pumpkins. All but one night sold out with a total of 8,100 visitors.

Horticulture
• “Urban Food Initiative: Feeding Communities: A Handbook for the Urban Farmer” was used to teach two public sessions and one in the Mariposa neighborhood. Additionally, the material was used to teach participants in the Chatfield Farms Veterans Farm Program.
• The Mariposa Urban Farm increased growing space to 2,500 sq. ft., including a 400 sq. ft. greenhouse which was used for winter vegetable production and spring transplant production. A distribution of 2,016 lbs. of produce occurred.

Operations
• In collaboration with Metropolitan State University of Denver, the 3-credit hour Urban Vegetable Gardening course was offered during the Summer 2015 Semester through the Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Events.
• Experiments were conducted in the tissue culture lab to develop protocols and propagation of 15 species for distribution to the green industry.
• Annuals trials: Third and final year of the annuals trials at York Street featured 31 plant entries and 45 jurors. Best of Show: Bidens CAMPFIRE™ Fireburst.

Research & Conservation
• Restoration of Deer Creek at Chatfield Farms began with a floristic survey of the creek and planning for alterations to the hydrology. The 5.5 acres of degraded habitat will be restored to a functional riparian corridor supporting urban wildlife.
• Expanded scientific capacity through the formalization of a graduate program in collaboration with the University of Colorado at Denver. The first graduate student worked to understand seed mixes for restoring areas of the West.
• Insect collection initiation within the Kathryn Kalmbach Herbarium to focus on insects within the York Street gardens. The collection has been used for educational purposes in the School of Botanical Art & Illustration and Science Pyramid.

BY THE NUMBERS
January through December 2015
Visitors
Total Annual Attendance: 1,042,763
Membership
Total Member Households: 42,551
Community Garden
Rented Plots: 89
Registered Gardeners: 160
Produce donated to SAME Café: 658 pounds
Horticulture Therapy Program
Participants per category
Winter Green and Summer Sensory Programs: 652
Chatfield Farms Veterans Farm Program: 18
Community Supporting Agriculture
Pounds of produce grown at Chatfield Farms: 58,300
Pounds of produce sold through CSA: 51,800
Pounds of produce donated to community: 3,500
Public Programs
School Children Visitors: 30,107
Youth and Family Program Attendance: 13,575
Adult Class and Workshop Attendance: 14,925
Adult Class and Workshops: 813
Helen Fowler Library
Circulation:
items checked out: 2,183
items used in house: 879
periodicals used in house: 637
Patrons:
new patrons added to the library: 19,911
Catalog:
new items/records added to the library collection: 545
library records edited/corrected: 2,062
InterLibrary Loan:
items lent to other libraries: 137
items borrowed for staff and members: 112
Gardening Help questions answered: 1,012
Living Plant Collection
New Plant Accessions: 2,773
Plant Families: 244
Genera: 2,205
Species: 9,685
Taxes: 16,673
Accessioned Plants: 26,780

Plant Propagation & Production
Plants produced for displays: 34,780
Plants produced for CSA: 34,426
In-house propagated plants sold at the Shop at the Gardens: 2,113
In-house propagated plants sold at Spring Plant Sale: 5,713
In-house propagated plants sold at Fall Plant & Bulb Sale: 1,723

Plant Distributions
Boyce Thompson Arboretum: 13 species for collections
Tucson Botanical Garden: 18 species for collections
University of Arizona Campus Arboretum:
1 species for collections
Researcher from Midwestern University:
4 species for phylogenetic research
Researcher from Smithsonian:
77 species for the Global Legume Genome Initiative
Researcher from University of Wyoming:
3 species for molecular research

Index Seminar Seed Program
Institutions that ordered seeds: 63
Countries that participated: 21
Distributed seed packets: 742

Herbarium
Sam Mitchel Herbarium of Fungi: 17,681
Collections that represent newly documented fungi in Colorado: 9
Kathryn Kalmbach Herbarium: 56,674

Research and Conservation
Collections that represent new county records: 17
New Funding awarded/received: 510,984
Phenology visits: 649 total
People reached through scientific outreach participants: 7100

Staff
Full-Time, Part-Time and Seasonal Staff: 224
I am pleased to report on Denver Botanic Gardens Inc. results of the year ended December 31, 2015, as detailed in our accompanying audited financial statements. The Gardens is a non-profit corporation formed in 1951, organized for the establishment and maintenance of botanical gardens and arboreta in cooperation with the City and County of Denver (the “City”), pursuant to a long term cooperative agreement with the City. In accordance with this agreement, the Gardens manages and operates the facilities including the buildings, plantings and all other properties that constitute Denver Botanic Gardens, including a long term agreement to operate Denver Botanic Gardens Chatfield Farms.

The accompanying financial statements also include the accounts of Denver Botanic Gardens Endowment Inc. (“DBGE”) a separate nonprofit organization established in 1991 that holds a majority of the Gardens’ endowment funds and also includes the accounts of two affiliated volunteer organizations: the Associates of Denver Botanic Gardens and Denver Botanic Gardens Guild, who work for the betterment of the Gardens by providing volunteer assistance and financial aid.

In 2015 the Gardens continued its mission of connecting people with plants with an operating budget of $18.5 million, compared to a 2014 operating budget of $19.8 million. The decrease reflects a return to normal long-term growth after the unprecedented popularity of the 2014 Chihuly exhibition. We ended the current year with an operating surplus more than $729,000, compared to $4.2 million in 2014.

Non-operating activity included: endowment and capital campaign contributions of more than $319,000, investment return on the endowment (net of distribution) of minus $1.3 million; and capital expenditures of $594,000. Under the operating agreement with the City all capital improvements are assets of the City and as such are not reflected as the Gardens’ assets in the accompanying financial statements. These capital improvements, however, are central to our mission and the experience of visiting the Gardens.

Total program services expenditures (representing core programs in the areas of horticulture, research, education and Chatfield Farms), decreased by nearly $1.4 million or 8% compared to 2014, reflecting the additional expenditures in 2014 for the Chihuly exhibit.

Endowment net assets grew from $22.9 million in 2014 to $24.6 million in 2015 after contributions, realized and unrealized gains, and an $873,000 distribution to the Gardens’ operating budget. Endowment investments are stated at fair market value each year and for 2015 the change in fair value resulted in a loss of 1.4%. The investment portfolio is diversified to limit the endowment’s investment risk and the Board of Trustees establish the portfolio’s investment policy. Since its inception in July 1992, the portfolio has earned a compound annual growth rate of 8%.

During 2015, the finance committee of the board of trustees, the chair of the board, the CEO and the CFO met regularly to review financial statements and results. This committee also approved the annual operating budget, the Internal Revenue Service Form 990 and made recommendations on various policy decisions to the Board of Trustees and the CEO.

On behalf of the Gardens, I would like to thank the members, donors, the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) and the City and County of Denver for their foundation of support as we endeavor to ensure that the Gardens will forever flourish.

Shawn A. Simmons
Treasurer, Board of Trustees
## Combined Statement of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Revenues, Gains and Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCFD</td>
<td>$4,153,456</td>
<td>$3,934,420</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Dues</td>
<td>2,962,683</td>
<td>3,575,429</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>2,006,134</td>
<td>5,054,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events and Facility Rentals</td>
<td>2,441,728</td>
<td>2,963,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and Grants</td>
<td>2,061,814</td>
<td>2,662,709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatfield Farms</td>
<td>1,730,096</td>
<td>1,660,168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and County Of Denver</td>
<td>992,904</td>
<td>964,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational/Public Programs</td>
<td>883,517</td>
<td>789,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shop at the Gardens</td>
<td>697,270</td>
<td>1,165,162</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endowment Distribution</td>
<td>873,328</td>
<td>765,456</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>421,690</td>
<td>506,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Revenues, Gains and Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,224,620</strong></td>
<td><strong>$24,041,191</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Operating Expenditures    |              |              |
| Program Services          | 16,069,995   | 17,430,832   |
| Supporting Services       | 2,425,906    | 2,390,186    |
| **Total Operating Expenditures** | **18,495,901** | **19,821,018** |

| Change in Net Assets from Operating Activities | 728,719 | 4,220,173 |

| Non-Operating Activities  |              |              |
| Endowment and Capital Campaign Contributions | 319,361 | 932,159 |
| Capital Improvements      | (593,631)    | (7,200,176)  |
| Bond Proceeds Received for Capital Projects | –     | 777,988     |
| Investment Return on Endowments, After Distribution | (1,280,016) | (127,006) |
| **Change in Net Assets from Non-Operating Activities** | **(1,554,286)** | **(608,895)** |

| Net Assets at Beginning of Year | 31,473,165 | 27,861,887 |

| **NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR** | **$30,647,598** | **$31,473,165** |
I send greetings from the Board of Trustees of Denver Botanic Gardens and a hearty thank you for all the ways each of you support the work of connecting people to plants. As you see in this annual report, the Gardens continues to flourish in all of its venues and 2015 was no exception. At the heart of it is a shared passion for all things living and a desire to assure sustainability of our work in all dimensions…

- Scientific work, an often behind-the-scenes, yet significant contribution is dedicated to the sustainability of this lovely planet.
- Community investments literally and figuratively feed people through stimulation of the mind, body and spirit in ways that only plants enable.
- The creative and artistic beauty of the Gardens nurtures the soul of many communities and is fueled by a love of and passion for the wonder and amazement that only the natural world can bring.

Denver Botanic Gardens’ team of staff, trustees and volunteers commit to this work because we believe in the mission and what fruit that mission can bear for this community and beyond. We look forward to serving you for many years to come and hope this brief look at some of the important work we have done (and not nearly all the work that has been accomplished: that would take a report many pages longer!) makes you smile and motivates you to visit often. Share the magic of this special place with others!

Thank you and see you around the Gardens!

Dr. Jandel Allen-Davis  
Chair, Board of Trustees
The Gardens is grateful for dedicated volunteers who offer their passions and skills to ensure we fulfill our mission and create important connections between plants, conservation, art and our community.

Total Active Volunteers: 2,100
Total Volunteer Visits: 23,029
Total Volunteer Hours: 83,000

Hours by Department and Affiliate Volunteer Groups
York St. Horticulture: 16,695
Special Events: 11,980
Research and Conservation: 4,606
Chatfield Farms (CSA, Horticulture, FRAPA): 4747
Chatfield Farms (Butterflies, Information Specialist, Hildebrand Ranch House): 541
Children’s Education: 1,732
Summer Teen Program: 3,187
Ambassador Program: 8,590
Docents: 5,195
Library: 692
Administration Board of Trustees: 882
Development/Membership: 119
Summer Concerts & Green Team: 1,492
Marketing/PR: 594
Gift Shop: 344

Hours by Affiliate Volunteer Groups
Denver Botanic Gardens Herb Guild: 7,519
Associates of Denver Botanic Gardens: 3,452
Garden Club of Denver: 800
Rocky Mountain Weavers Guild: 840
Master Gardeners Garden Help: 740

Volunteer Award Recipients
Volunteer of the Year: Ken Kuhar
Outstanding Behind the Scenes: Shirley Geist, Alice Bucher, Sheralyn Fischer, Arlene Flannery, Barbara Keyswetter, Mary Montry and Joanne Fisher
Outstanding Education Volunteer: Nevin Bebee
Lainie Jackson Outstanding Horticulture Volunteer: George Moo-Young
Outstanding Chatfield Farms Volunteer: Peg Montagne
Outstanding Teen Volunteer: Zach Taylor
Golden Gnome Award: Karina Nabors
Golden Shovel Award: Jen Trunce, Angie Jewett, Erik Geyer, Lydia Abernathy and Drew Habig
Marilyn Skelton Most Number of Hours Served: Ken Kuhar, 1,205 hours
Excellence in Event Leadership: Kim Kimpton
Pete Petersen Award: Donna McLellan