

2016 Illinois Master Gardener Annual Report



Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who build and enhance their community through gardening. In 2016, 470 people completed the approximately 60 hours of training throughout Illinois. 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

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Gardens | 112,107 hours |
| Hort Hotlines | 37,403 hours |
| Special Events | 18,625 hours |
| Therapeutic Gardening | 7,067 hours |
| Speakers Bureau | 3,666 hours |
| Youth Gardening | 2,925 hours |
| Admin/Tech Support | 18,834 hours |



Number of Volunteers

2834

Over 66,316
contacts

Service Hours

200634

Plus 38747
Continued
Educaton

Value to our Communities

Over \$5
milion

\$5206452
according to
Independant
Sector

Nine MG Projects Receive Mini Grants

Projects representing Adams, Cook, DuPage, LaSalle, McHenry, Ogle, Peoria, St. Clair and White Counties received funds raised through silent auction during MG State Conference. An example of the powerful projects is the Fairmont City Library Community Garden in St. Clair County.



Fairmont City Library Community Gardens

- ❖ Project Goals - Food safety, security and production and youth development.
- ❖ Fairmont City - predominantly Hispanic with 97% of the youth receiving free school lunches.
- ❖ Weekly summer group of 20 youth, 10 continued to work through fall.
- ❖ Experienced youth became mentors for the newer members.
- ❖ Harvested 472 pounds of produce.
- ❖ Youth brought parents and younger siblings along to work in the garden.
- ❖ Many youth continued to garden at home with their parents.

Award Winning People and Projects

During the 2016 Illinois State MG Conference 266 Master Gardeners and staff learned about the *Plight of Pollinators* such as bumble bees from Dr. Sydney Cameron, UI Entomology professor and the research behind *The Importance of the Green Spaces MGs Create* from Dr. Bill Sullivan, UI professor and head of Dept. of Landscape Architecture.

MG Honorees - 53 received State Outstanding Awards, 12 Sustained Excellence Awards and 16 Teamwork Awards.

Teamwork Project Highlights:

Montebello Health Care Center Hancock County
MGs engaged retirement home residents with creative, mobility-friendly flower arranging project. Activities immersed residents, both mentally and physically.





Anne M. Jeans School Garden DuPage County The entire elementary school participated in garden maintenance during gym classes. Parents and students living near the school helped during the summer. Garden provided a local, free source of vegetables and small fruits. This project provided much needed outdoor education to over 900 youth and their families.

Pollinator Patch Rock Island County

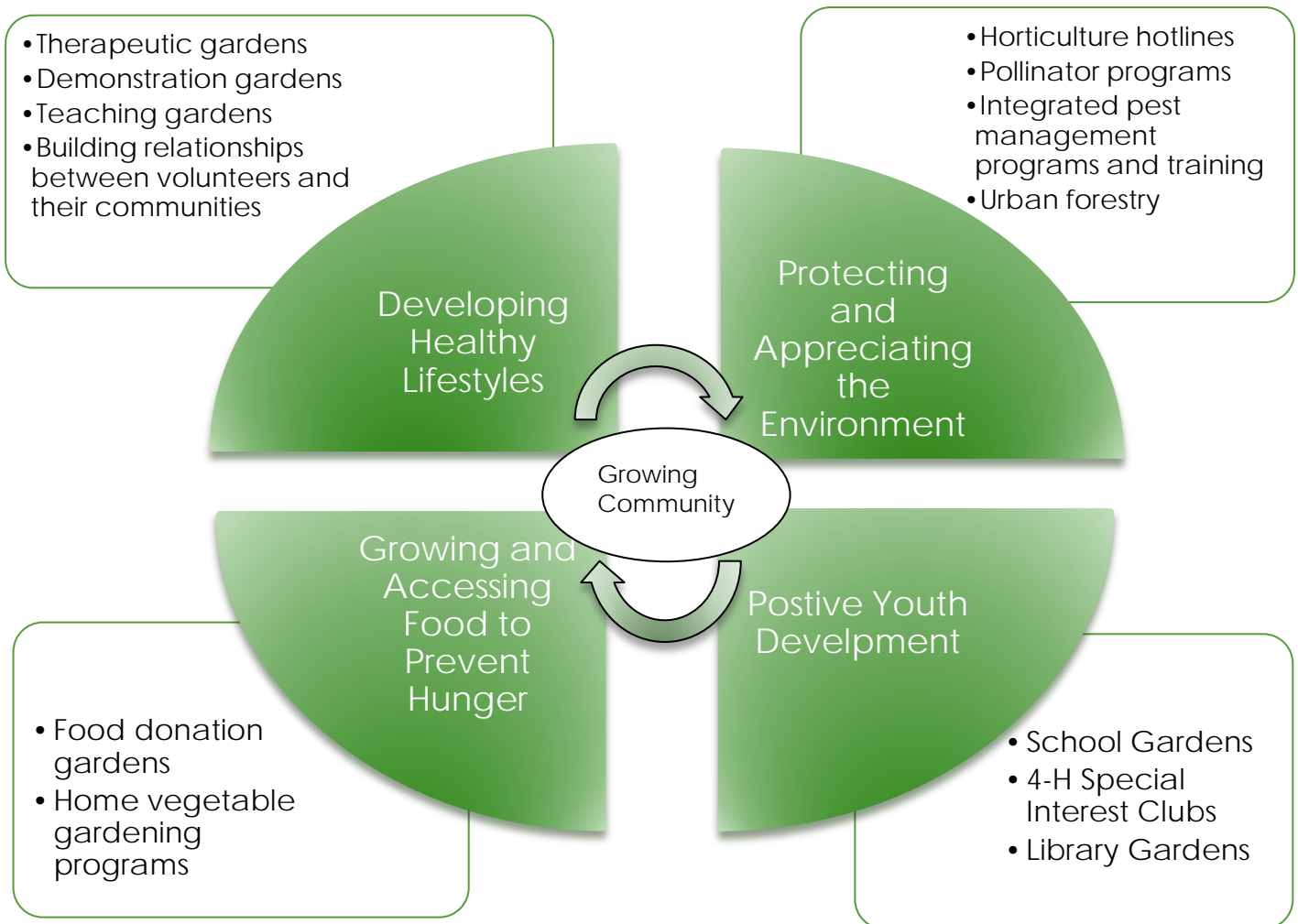
MGs invited day care providers, homeschoolers, and community families to participate. Project delivered a structured learning experience for children and a hands-on introduction to vegetables, fruits, herbs, and plants to attract pollinators. Lessons included a story, activity, and take home information, reaching approximately 240 children per summer.



Seeds to Harvest 4-H SPIN Club

Marshall-Putnam County MG project goals – deliver unique, creative hands-on experience for 3rd-5th grade youth, instill a love of gardening and the environment and develop youth as leaders. Project invited students to explore herb and vegetable gardening from seeding to harvesting. Students were responsible for watering and care. Youth were inspired to present garden programs to others.

How the Master Gardener Program Addresses Illinois Issues



The Illinois Master Gardener Team

- Master Gardeners - 2834 active members
- College of ACES – Dean Kim Kidwell and state specialists
- Office of Extension and Outreach – Associate Dean & Director Dr. George Czapar
- Program Leader – Assistant Dean Dr. Suzanne Bissonnette sbissonn@illinois.edu
- State MG Coordinator – Sandra L. Mason slmason@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 - 22 members including MGs and Extension staff