

ACGA



AMERICAN  
COMMUNITY  
GARDENING  
ASSOCIATION

**ANNUAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR 2019**





# Our Work

**THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY GARDENING ASSOCIATION (ACGA) BRINGS PEOPLE, EDUCATION AND RESOURCES TOGETHER TO CREATE COMMUNITY WITHIN A VARIETY OF GARDENING ENVIRONMENTS.**

Since 1979, ACGA has been a leading resource for starting, maintaining, and growing community garden programs throughout the United States and Canada.

The organization now has over 1,000 individual and 252 active organizational members representing the full range of community gardens, from community-based to giving gardens to urban farms. The member organizations represent over 2100 gardens across the country.

We are able to provide education to our members in the form of localized training workshops, online resources, distance webinars, and yearly conferences; also available is an invaluable communication platform that allows members to:

- Promote the formation and expansion of regional community gardening networks.
- Provide grants and other resources to member gardens.
- Develop resources in support of community gardening and community greening projects.
- Encourage research on the impact of community gardening, urban agriculture and greening.
- Conduct Educational training programs and events.
- Provide an online resource and network for all people interested in community gardening.
- Support community driven urban agriculture and food security projects.

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# Wellness

The Governance Committee is responsible for the smooth and effective functioning of the ACGA Board. The Governance Committee handles ACGA's human resources and internal policy development on behalf of the board. ACGA's Board is an all-volunteer board, with many talents and passions. The board meets in person twice a year and conducts monthly board teleconference calls to ensure the mission of the organization is carried out. In addition to the monthly board teleconference calls, each committee meets monthly.

Highlights for the governance committee in 2017 include updating the organizational operations manual, developing the board member attendance policy, and managing a staffing search for the organization. ACGA moved to Atlanta in 2014, and it has been a good fit for the organization. The Greater Atlanta area is an urban agricultural mecca and an epicenter of food justice and sustainable agriculture. ACGA has settled in and integrated the organization into this thriving community.

Additionally, ACGA is always interested in anyone who has a passion for community Gardens who would like to become a member of our board. We have a diverse board from throughout the US who are involved in numerous aspects of government, gardening and horticultural healing. Please contact the home office if you are interested in applying to become a member of our board.

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**AMERICAN COMMUNITY GARDENING ASSOCIATION**

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# 40th ACGA Conference

## Gardening At the Crossroads Indianapolis, Indiana



Community garden enthusiasts from Indiana and across the country meet in Indianapolis at the Ivy Tech Culinary and Conference Center on September 12th through 15th for the 40th Annual Conference of the American Community Garden Association (ACGA). The ACGA is committed to building strong communities and enhancing community gardening and greening across the United States and Canada. Over the course of the four-day conference, experts conducted workshops on a wide variety of community gardening and greening topics. Our keynote speaker Brandon Cosby told a remarkable story about Flanner House and Flanner Farms was included in our interesting tours.

2019 was an extraordinary year for our Growing Communities Workshops. We presented in partnership with University of Georgia UGA Cooperative Extension of Dougherty County in Albany, GA. In partnership with Food Well Alliance in Atlanta, GA Savannah, GA.



# Development

ACGA would not be able to help so many people in North America if it were not for our members, partners and donors! It is because of our partners and donors that we are able to engage neighbors, and families and teach all that they can grow their own food, build community, and empower neighborhoods across North America. We are grateful for each and every donation; and sincerely appreciate the support we received from the following sponsors:

- Gardener's Supply
- The City of Indianapolis Office of Public Health & Safety
- Indy Food Council
- Flanner House
- Newfields, a Place for Nature and the Arts
- Urban Patch
- BigCar.org
- Visit Indy
- Mapleton Fall Creek Development Corporation
- Purdue Extension
- US Department of Agriculture

Together we are empowering communities to grow their own food, and revitalizing neighborhoods. The development committee is always looking for partnerships and funding to move ACGA's mission forward.

**Thank you for helping us Grow!**



# Growing Communities Workshop

2019 was an extraordinary year for our Growing Communities Workshops. We presented in partnership with University of Georgia UGA Cooperative Extension of Dougherty County in Albany, GA. In partnership with Food Well Alliance in Atlanta, GA. We also presented in Savannah, GA and Tampa, FL.

*“I had no idea how many of us were doing the similar thing in the greater Albany, GA area. Thanks ACGA!”*



# Letter

## From our President

I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank the many people whom help make 2019 successful. First, I would like to thank our members for their continued support throughout the year. Being a membership organization focusing on greening and community throughout the United States and Canada, the American Community Gardening Association (ACGA) continues to grow and impact the lives of millions. I would also like to thank our board members for their dedication and the countless hours they contribute to serving this great organization. From California, New York to Georgia, and many states between; our board members are representative of communities from Coast to Coast and I truly appreciate their dedication. Another group I would like to recognize is our partners and sponsors. Our partnership with USDA continues to highlight and educate the public on the importance of growing and consuming "Super Foods".

For the members that were able to visit our website and locate hard to find answers about how to start and sustain community gardens, I encourage you to share that knowledge and build on the success of your community engagement. To those members who were able attend a face-to-face training I must say, the pleasure was mine. Whether you attended a Growing Communities Workshop or our Annual Conference held in Indianapolis, fellowshipping and networking with like-minded individuals committed to making a difference in their communities is at the core of our belief.



The American Community Gardening Association believes to be true core beliefs that motivate and guide us. Below are two of my favorites that I encourage you to share:

#3 Diverse participation and leadership at all phases of garden operation, enrich and strengthen a community garden.

#4 Each community member has something to contribute.

2019 is a year that I will treasure dearly. The friendships forged, the partnerships established, the knowledge gained, I am humbled to have had the opportunity to serve. Thank you to all whom help make it possible. In closing, regardless of value or strength I encourage you to treat everyone special and embrace our core belief #4. Each community member has something to contribute.

Charlie Monroe

# Financial Report

## FINANCE 2019

Again ACGA was able to balance our budget with income exceeding expenses. Our main conference expense was a substantial number of scholarships provided to attendees. ACGA strives to continue to have our programming be our main expenditure. Our boards' many, many volunteer hours allow us to keep our costs low while continuing a high level of program offerings available to our members and the general public.

### Income

Grants, Promgram Fees, Membership and Contributions \$ 86,811

Conference \$ 32,000

Total Expenses \$118,811

### Expenses

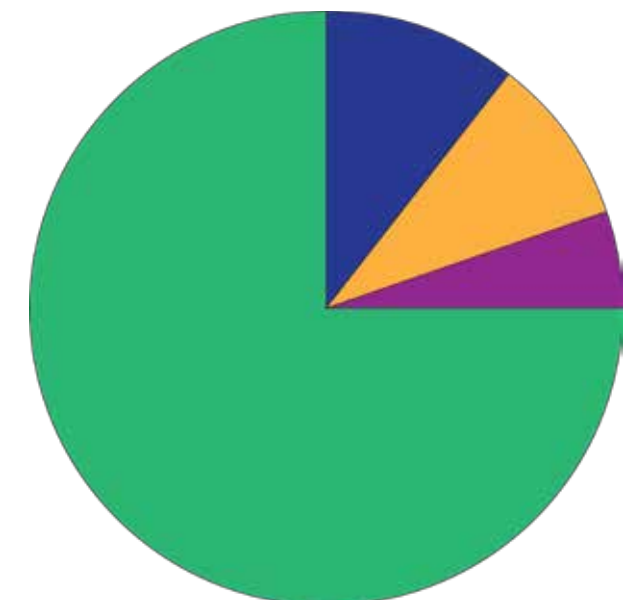
Professional fees \$11,100

Salaries and Wages \$9,697

Rent and Utilites \$5,378

Programing \$78,337

Total Expenses \$104,512



# Board of Directors



## **Charlie Monroe, President**

*Cobb PARKS Cobb County, GA*

*camonroe@dekalbcountyga.gov*

Charlie Monroe is a native of South Georgia and U.S. Veteran. He attended the University of Georgia where he earned a B.S. in Biology and Masters in Agriculture Leadership. He retired from the University of Georgia where he worked as an Extension Agent in DeKalb County (Metro-Atlanta). For over 20 years Charlie developed youth and adult programming and outreach with a focus on agriculture, community development and environmental sciences. Charlie is also a Master Gardener, Certified Arborist and life-time lover of 4-H. The official, "Nature Geek".



## **Cathy Walker, Vice President**

*Metro Atlanta Urban Farm College Park, GA*

*cpfarmcathy@aol.com*

Cathy Walker is currently serving as Director of Programming at Metro Atlanta Urban Farm. She also served as a Garden Specialist for The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension/Atlanta Urban Gardening Program (AUGP) for 17 years; offering gardening instruction and support to some two hundred gardens located at public housing complexes, shelters, schools, churches and elder care facilities in metro Atlanta..



## **Cordalie Benoit, Treasurer**

*CT Community Gardening Association New Haven, CT*

*Cordalie.Benoit@aya.yale.edu*

Cordalie Benoit holds a Masters in Environmental Management and is a UConn Extension active certified Master Gardener. She is an attorney with decades of experience with nonprofits, including the Connecticut Community Gardening Association. She is a member of the William Street Community Garden which is sponsored by The New Haven Land Trust.

# Board of Directors

## **Alexis Barnes**

Alexis Barnes is a Resident of Overland Park, KS, The University of Georgia (UGA) B.S.A. Food Industry

Marketing & Administration Employed at Deere & Company (John Deere)

Marketing Representative: Tillage Product Line Marketing. Her other accomplishments include: John Deere MRDP Steering Committee: Career Development Chair

Urban Bicycle Food Ministry - Des Moines



## **Natalie Walsh**

*Pitney Meadows Community Garden, Saratoga Sprngs, NY*

*nwalsh54@gmail.com*

Natalie Walsh is the founding director of the Pitney Meadows Community Garden in Saratoga Springs, NY. A lifelong gardener, her professional background is as a journalist, author and teacher. She is also a Cornell Cooperative Extension Master Gardener who liked the program so much she returned to college and earned a plant science degree from the State University of New York Cobleskill to add to her master's degree in journalism. She is a garden columnist and has a deep appreciation of what it takes to create a garden that flourishes on every level having created community gardens from concept to construction and built partnerships with donors, volunteers and gardeners.

Upon graduation, she taught at SUNY and became the garden columnist and magazine editor for the Gazette Newspapers in New York's Capital Region. When considering retirement, she committed to helping others grow food in a community setting.

In the past year, Natalie and her husband traveled over 15,000 miles across the country, including a hop to Hawaii, and spoke to community garden directors and gardeners about their projects, challenges, solutions and successes. "It was a spectacular and educational trip that gave me a national perspective and a network of peers," she said.

Natalie has a deep appreciation of what it takes to create a garden that flourishes on every level having created community gardens from concept to construction and built partnerships with donors, volunteers and gardeners.





# Board of Directors



## Dr. Whitney Elmore

[whitney.elmore@communitygarden.org](mailto:whitney.elmore@communitygarden.org)

Dr. Whitney Elmore grew up in rural south-central Kentucky. Whitney was very active in FFA and played golf competitively as she was growing up. Whitney attended Western Kentucky University where she received an Associate of Science degree in Turfgrass Management, a Bachelor's degree in Agriculture, and a Master's degree in Agriculture with her research focusing on bentgrass putting greens and water-repellent soils. Whitney worked for plant nurseries and various golf courses before attending the University of Florida where she received her Doctorate in Plant Pathology. While there, Whitney concentrated on turfgrass diseases and mycorrhizal fungi. Whitney spent eight years as a professor at Middle Georgia State College before coming to Pasco County as the County Extension Director, Urban Horticulture Agent, and Master Gardener Coordinator in September 2014. Whitney's most recent programs center around community development and community gardens/urban Agriculture and its impact on the reduction of poverty and crime in urban areas.



## Joyce Moore

Co-Founder/Programs Manager of Urban Patch (317) 513-8744

[joyce@urbanpatch.org](mailto:joyce@urbanpatch.org)

Joyce is an entrepreneur and state licensed real estate broker who owns her own real estate and property management company. She is a member of the board of the Indy Food Council, The American Community Garden Association, a life member of both the Indiana University Alumni Association and NCNW (National Council of Negro Women), and a member of the NAACP. She works with various community education outreach programs and loves to work with youth and young adults on career fulfillment and financial wealth development. Mrs. Moore is a graduate of Indiana University's Kelly School of Business with a BS specializing in Business Administration, a graduate of REAL (MIBOR Real Estate Academy of Leadership) and of the University of Philadelphia's SAS Graduate Programming Course. She is an advocate for entrepreneurship and self-sustainability.

# Board of Directors

## Kristin Brock

Kristin Brock, MSW is a social worker, writer and community organizer who has long seen community gardens as a tool for building community health and well-being. Kristin currently serves as the Gardening Program Specialist for the Chicago Park District where she manages all citywide gardening programs, including a network of over 70 community garden groups. In 2015 she founded the Community Roots Demonstration & Community Garden, a teaching garden and outdoor classroom which hosts free adult and family educational programs that showcase the diversity of experiences one can find in the garden.



## Lee Trotman, Chair Governance Committee

Jonathan Rose Companies New York, NY

[Lee.Trotman@communitygarden.org](mailto:Lee.Trotman@communitygarden.org)

Lee Trotman started with the Jonathan Rose Companies in January 2018 as Assistant Project Manager. Jonathan Rose Companies is a sustainability and transit focused affordable housing developer with buildings across the United State. Before beginning at Jonathan Rose Companies, Lee served at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) from 2009 to 2017 in several sustainability-focused roles. Lee started as an AmeriCorps VISTA then managed NYCHA's Garden & Greening program, one of the most extensive public gardening programs in North America. Lee then served as the Assistant Director of the Gardening & Sustainability Unit where he managed resident-driven sustainability initiatives and ended his tenure as a Program Manager in the Energy & Sustainability group in the Capital Projects Department at NYCHA. Lee holds a BA in History from Southwest Minnesota State University and a Masters Degree in Sustainability Management from Columbia University.



# Board of Directors



## **Terri Carter**

*Terri.Carter@cobbcounty.org*

Terri Carter is a graduate of The University of Alabama and she is currently employed with The University of Georgia's Cobb County Extension Office in The Family and Consumer Science Department. She is a Cobb Master Gardener and also a Sustainability Ambassador with the City of Atlanta. Terri can be seen on Cobb TV doing cooking and gardening shows and she is the coordinator at Historic Mableton Community Garden. She is the secretary for Cobb Community Gardens and a member of the planning committee for the annual Soil Festival. Terri teaches classes related to urban agriculture and food at local libraries, schools, senior centers, churches and she also does lectures on the food history of the South. She is committed to teaching environmental education, urban agriculture and food preservation.



## **William LoSasso**

*william.losasso@communitygarden.org*

Bill grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, and moved to New York City while completing his master's degree in urban planning. He has been active in the NYC community gardening movement, and served several terms as Executive Director of La Plaza Cultural Community Garden, an iconic garden founded in Manhattan's Lower East Side in the 1970s. Bill currently serves as Director of NYC Parks GreenThumb, the largest community gardening program in the country, where he oversees support to over 1,200 community and school gardens, ranging from quaint relaxation spots to teaching gardens to large urban farms. Bill joined the ACGA board in 2017, where he served as Secretary.

# Board of Directors

## **Marilú López Fretts**

*marilu.lopezfretts@communitygarden.org*

Marilú López-Fretts is a community coordinator for Celebrate Urban Birds, a bilingual citizen science project from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. She is a photojournalist by trade, a graphic designer, visual communicator, informal science educator and community advocate who earned a Master's degree in photography from the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University.

At the Cornell Lab she currently co-leads National Science Foundation community-based participatory research to better understand and document the equitable co-creation of community science projects in the sciences. Marilú also loves the outdoors, nature and the birds in it, and seeks to inspire and connect diverse communities with the outdoors and promote access while embracing culture, heritage, and community leadership.



## **Perryn Reynolds**

*staff*



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