The Mission of the American Community Gardening Association is to build community by increasing & enhancing community gardening & greening across North America.
Like the three sisters companion crop planting, we bring together people, education and resources to create community within a variety of gardening environments.

The Wellness Committee is responsible for the smooth and effective functioning of the ACGA Office Staff & Board Members.

ACGA members are the driving force behind ACGA. With the US & Canada divided into 8 different regions, we are able to address the needs of our members as well as present a national perspective.

Much like a community garden, our marketing efforts have been flourishing due to lots of attention from our members.

ACGA works to influence public policy to encourage governments (local, state, federal) to increase support and resources for urban agriculture, which includes all forms of community gardening.
Since 1979, the American Community Gardening Association (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. The ACGA is able to provide education to its 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.
The Wellness committee has continued the steps necessary to relocate our headquarters from Franklin Park in Ohio to College Park in Georgia. Our office at the Metro Atlanta Urban Farm is a good fit and we are pleased with our new home. ACGA has strong committees which continue to assist with the tasks required by our mission. We invite our members to join these committees. We plan to update our strategic plan and always seek member input.

Additionally, we are always interested in anyone who has a passion for community gardens & 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 & horticultural healing. Please contact the office if you are interested in applying to become a member of our board.
As newly elected President of the American Community Gardening Association, I am humbled, yet proud to report that ACGA is still the “Go to” organization for starting and sustaining community gardens across the U.S. and Canada. As a native of Bainbridge, Georgia, I have always embraced, “Southern Hospitality” and have been a staunch promoter of community engagement. For the past seven years, I have served on the Board of Directors of the American Community Gardening Association, and for those seven years, I served as the Chairman of the Membership Committee. This position allowed me to constantly share my passion for community engagement by reaching out to others and recruiting, recruiting, recruiting – always recruiting. ACGA has a membership level for EVERYONE -- whether you are an individual, governmental agency, non-profit or corporation. ACGA’s ability to teach, sustain and uplift its members continues to grow.

As I reflect on the mission of ACGA, I am reminded of the adage by Lao Tzu that states, “Give a man food and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he eats for life.” ACGA has been teaching the public to grow and sustain healthy gardens for over 37 years so that they can grow not only for a day, but for life. With the positive energy and active engagement of our national Board of Directors, ACGA has continued to expand its impact for its members and the public alike.

I would like to also express a sincere thank you to our donors and membership for entrusting their resources in our educational efforts which allow us to provide useful benefits such as: regional trainings like our Growing Community Workshops, monthly eNews Letter, access to our listserv for thousands of gardeners, annual national conferences, maintaining and updating our informative website, on-going advocacy and support for gardeners, and one-on-one technical assistance.

In closing, ACGA is continuing to Grow and Sustain Communities, and with your help, we will continue to Grow, Sustain and Recruit – Always Recruiting.
Our members come from diverse cultural & economic backgrounds, across 49 states & 2 provinces in the US and Canada.
Much like a community garden, our marketing efforts have been flourishing due to lots of attention from our members. Our Facebook page has grown to almost 13,000 active participants.

Board members regularly contribute valuable information that is shared freely across all social media channels. Our Twitter account (@ACGA_CommGarden) continues to grow as well (please follow!)

In face-to-face scenarios, board members market ACGA via local events and by highlighting ACGA in presentations at national garden shows and other green events.

We’re looking forward to a big marketing push for our 2016 conference in Cleveland and ACGA’s mission to strengthen community gardens across the US and Canada.

Sessions: 150,327
Individual Users: 112,319
Pageviews: 497,262
Returning Visitor: 38,137
Sessions (25.4%)
New Visitor: 112,190
Sessions (74.6%)

We are making some changes to improve our website this year. In addition ACGA will be combining all our communication into one forum that you can customize. You will be able to be part of the discussions, by subject or region or both & receive newsletters, or receive emails from ACGA concerning available funding sources, advocating opportunities for community gardening legislation, annual conference information, & upcoming Greening Communities workshops.
Advocacy, Policy, & Research Committee

This year we completed a National survey to assess a direction of future national legislation around Community Gardening issues.

- Survey was sent to ACGA members & other gardening groups
  - Some initial trends from survey:
    - 328 respondents, from 31 states.
    - Confirming what we know about a community gardens ability to build community, 85% say the garden helped build relationships in their neighborhood.
    - In 32% of respondents the garden is the only open space in their neighborhood.
    - 61% of the gardens are on government owned land. This shows us a clear need to work with local governments to oppose any legislation or land use policy that may block community gardening as a use.
    - 88% classified themselves as being in an urban environment.
    - Community gardeners surveyed are growing food: 59.5% say that 75-100% of their garden is dedicated to growing food.
    - 75% speak to how gardens change the neighborhood, including building stronger community connections, adding physical beauty, & creating a safe place for spiritual respite. A few also spoke to the gardens potential to play a role in encouraging gentrification.
  - Policy, utilities and land-use issues are top priorities. Trends tend to focus on land-use pressures/threats around cg’s not seen as a priority of use, access to land and local capacity for help/resources. Many spoke to how ACGA could help advocating for cg’s & the benefits of community gardening; educating & developing legislation to protect and develop gardens; supplying resources/grants to seed gardens; developing & sharing best practices and tips sheets.

Additionally we researched all previous national community gardening legislation in preparation to find support legislatively for development of possible funding and land-use support.
In 2015, the Education Committee published the yearly *Community Greening Review*, continued to revise the Growing Communities curriculum, and hosted the 36th annual ACGA Conference in Denver, CO. We look forward to our upcoming efforts in 2016 & hosting our next conference in Cleveland, Ohio in August.

**Community Greening Review**

The theme of the 2015 *Community Greening Review* was Immigrant and Refugee Gardens. Submissions told stories of immigrants and refugees using gardening as a method of engaging in new surroundings, reconnecting to tradition, and providing food for their families and communities. The theme for the 2016 *Review* is Master Community Gardeners in the Community Garden.
In August of 2015, the 36th annual ACGA national conference was held in beautiful Denver, CO. The event was co-hosted by the Denver Botanic Gardens and Denver Urban Gardens with help from several local community gardening organizations including Growing Gardens from Boulder, CO and Pikes Peak Urban Gardens from Colorado Springs, CO.

The conference welcomed 240 guests from across North America for three days of workshops and panel discussions, networking, and tours of local community gardens and urban agriculture projects. Key note speakers included Chef Ann Cooper of the Chef Ann Foundation and Gary Oppenheimer of AmpleHarvest.org.

A gala and silent auction event was held on Friday night at the picturesque historic homestead of Chatfield Farms just south of Denver. Guests enjoyed dancing, tours of the property, bidding on fabulous silent auction items, and wine provided by our generous sponsor, Don Sebastiani & Sons.

Major conference sponsors included Gardeners Supply Company, Denver Water, Chipotle Mexican Grill, and Corona Tools.
## 2015 Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>$38,468.62</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$48,850.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>$14,079.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Donation</td>
<td>$6,149.48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>$797.99</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$108,345.11</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

![Pie chart showing income sources]

- Conference: 35%
- Grants: 45%
- Membership: 13%
- Unrestricted Donation: 6%
- Misc.: 1%

![Pie chart showing expenses]

- Programming: 28%
- Regranting: 22%
- Administrative: 50%
# 2015 Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programming</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Expense: Annual Conference</td>
<td>$24,407.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Expense: Workshop-Educational Seminar/Event Expense</td>
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<td>Program Advance/Prepaid Program Expenses</td>
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<td>Re-Granting</td>
<td>$22,900.00</td>
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<td><strong>Administrative</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Officers &amp; directors salaries</td>
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<td>Salaries &amp; wages - other</td>
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<td>Payroll taxes, etc.</td>
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<td>Accounting fees</td>
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<td>Supplies</td>
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<td>Telephone &amp; telecommunications</td>
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<td>Printing &amp; copying</td>
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<td>Books, subscriptions, references</td>
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<td>Rent, parking, other occupancy</td>
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<td>Advertising expenses</td>
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<td>Other expenses</td>
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<td>Other expenses - Board /President mmisc. expense</td>
<td>$330.19</td>
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<td>Fines, penalties, judgments</td>
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<td>Organizational (corp) expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$104,886.14</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Operating Income</strong></td>
<td>$3,458.97</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ACGA would not be able to help so many people in North America if it were not for our 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 institutions:

Gardener’s Supply  
Don Sebastiani & Sons Wine  
Atena Insurance  
Wells Fargo Bank  
Durable Green Beds  
Lotech Products – Compost Crank  
and various conference donors

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!
Board Members 2015

Cordalie Benoit, ACGA Treasurer, Chair Finance Committee
Community Gardening Association  New Haven, CT
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.

Joelette Crawl, ACGA Board
Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF, Epes, AL
Joelette Crawl holds a BS in Forestry Science from Alabama A&M University and a MS in Geography and Planning from the University of Toledo. For the past five years, she has worked for the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF as the Forestry Program Coordinator.

Brien Darby, ACGA Vice President, Chair Education Committee
Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver, CO
Brien works as the Manager of Urban Food Programs for the Denver Botanic Gardens in Denver, CO, where she manages community gardens, urban farms, and other food based growing projects. Prior to this role, she worked as the farm manager for the 63rd Street Farm in Boulder, CO. Brien served for three years as the board secretary for ACGA and in 2016, stepped into the role of Vice President.

Jared C. Hudson, ACGA Board
Dekalb County Parks & Recreation, Decatur, GA
Recreation Center Director for DeKalb County Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs. Jared manages the day-to-day operations of a recreation facility. Additionally, he is responsible for researching, planning, and implementing programs and cultural activities. As a leader for over 12 years, he has used creative skills that influence people to make wise choices, improving their quality of life. Prior to recreation management, he spent over fifteen years as a player, coach, and trainer in American football organizations. Direct involvement in community garden programs is another example of improving life quality for the patrons that frequent the intergenerational recreation center.
Nicole Kitchens, ACGA Board – Small Business Owner, Flora, MS
Nicole is a small-business owner specializing in horticulture therapy, healthcare garden design, and small-scale heirloom cut-flower production. She is also a full-time student finishing her B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies, with minors in both Psychology and Plant/Soil Science. She graduated from college with a degree in this May. She has a background in natural resources management with 23 years of combined experience in forest fire resources management and conservation.

Nancy Kohn, ACGA Board, Chair Wellness Committee, New York, NY
Nancy oversees programming, material and technical support provided to over 600 community gardens, and 500 school gardens. She collaborates with various agencies and over 20,000 volunteer gardeners to expand garden sites, education, and policy. Nancy holds a BA from Temple University and an MA from Columbia University. She is passionate about creating sturdy communities, ensuring equity to open space and food, and improving quality of life.

Bill Maynard, ACGA Board, Executive Committee member
Sacramento Area Community Garden Coalition, Sacramento, CA
Bill Maynard has worked on community garden and school garden projects in the Sacramento area for over 20 years. His work has included technical support, design and layout, construction, construction management and inspection, and garden management. He is a UCCE Master Gardener & the City of Sacramento Dept. of Parks and Rec Community Garden Program Coordinator, Founder of the Sacramento Area Community Garden Coalition, Board Member of the Sacramento Hunger Coalition. He was also appointed to the State of California Board of Education School Garden Advisory Committee, and was involved with the design and planting of Maria Shriver’s WE Garden at the State Capitol.

Demetrice Mills, ACGA Board - Brooklyn Queens Land Trust, Brooklyn, NY
Demetrice Mills is a retired Business Systems Analyst from JP Morgan Chase. Since his retirement, Demetrice has served for the past three years as the President of the Brooklyn Queens Land Trust Board of Directors. The goal of BQLT is to educate and inspire people to become successful and environmentally responsible gardeners, while preserving, supporting, managing and enhancing open spaces, greenways and playgrounds, and conserving land for public use.
Board Members 2015

Charlie Monroe, ACGA President - Natural Resource Manager, DeKalb County, Georgia
Charlie Monroe is a Georgia native and U.S. Veteran; he attended the University of Georgia where he earned a B.S. in Biology and Masters in Agriculture Leadership. He is a Certified Arborist.

Lukan Paulus, ACGA Board Membership & Marketing Committee Chair, Grayslake, IL
Lukan holds certificates in both Sustainable Agriculture & Horticulture Therapy. He co-founded the group Growing Healthy Veterans (GHV) that works with veterans to help them find careers in agriculture. Through their work in both community gardens & an indoor farm site, GHV is able to strengthen local food production in the Lake County Illinois region. This year GHV is working with patients at the VA PTS program doing various horticulture therapy activities.

Sandy Pernitz, ACGA Secretary, Chair Advocacy, Policy & Research
City of Seattle’s P-Patch Community Gardening Program, Seattle, WA
Sandy has a community organizing background and has been working at the P-Patch Community Gardening Program for the past 21 years. She graduated from Huxley School of the Environment, with a degree in Human Geography and Environmental Policy. Certified in Permaculture she is interested in how community based gardening transforms the urban environment and the people in it. When not working on community gardening she is a trained herbalist and grows many of the herbs she uses in her herbal salve business, In-City Remedies. Master Gardner and former Extension Agent and lifetime 4-H’er.

Kim Scott, ACGA Board, 2016 Cleveland Conference Chair – City Planner, Cleveland Planning Commission Cleveland, OH
Kim has assisted in the development of zoning codes that regulate agricultural activity. She sits on the Cleveland-Cuyahoga Food Policy Coalition and is co-founder of the Salaam Community Garden 131. She offers diverse experiences related to education, healthy food & nutrition, and sustainable growing practices. Ms. Scott holds a Master of Public Administration, a BA in Urban Studies and a GIS Certificate from Cleveland State University. She received Housing Development Finance Professional certification from the National Development Council, is a certified instructor of Roots of Success, and is a member of the Bionutrient Food Association.
Julius Tillery, ACGA Board – Farm Resource Coordinator, The Conservation Fund, Chapel Hill, NC. A native of northeast North Carolina, Julius grew up working on his family land that he continues to farm with his father and grandfather. Julius is a proud graduate of the UNC at Chapel Hill where he studied economics. He helps farm communities connect to resources and technical assistance to advance innovative new enterprises. His strong understanding of rural economic development and direct experience in farming help him advance this work. He supports small farmers by providing agricultural business planning, new enterprise development and farm advocacy. Julius serves on the Town Advisory Council for the Town of Garysburg, NC, and is a member of the Conservation Trust for North Carolina’s Future Leaders of Conservation Advisory Board.

Lee Trotman, ACGA Board – New York City Housing Authority, New York, NY

Lee Trotman started with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in 2009 as an AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer with NYC Service. Lee was then hired to manage NYCHA’s Garden & Greening program, one of the largest 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. Lee is currently the Deputy Director of Programs in the Energy & Sustainability group in the Capital Projects Department at NYCHA.

Cathy Walker, ACGA Board, Finance Committee - Atlanta Urban Gardening Program, Atlanta, GA

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.

Sandra Zuniga, ACGA Board, Chair Development Committee - San Francisco Department of Public Works, San Francisco, CA

Sandra was born and raised in the Bay Area, earned her Bachelor Degree from Sacramento State University, and Masters Degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University in San Francisco, California. Sandra works as Assistant Deputy Director for Operations at the Department of Public Works.
AMERICAN COMMUNITY GARDENING ASSOCIATION

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Contact Us

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Email: info@communitygarden.org
Web: https://communitygarden.org/