THE GARDEN CLUB *of* AMERICA

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PRESS RELEASE

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THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA ANNOUNCES 2020 FOUNDERS FUND GRANTS *PERENNIAL PLANTERS, PROVIDENCE, RI RECEIVES $10,000 GRANT* TO SUPPORT WHAT CHEER FLOWER FARM IN PROVIDENCE, RI

Perennial Planters, Providence, RI, has been named a recipient of The Garden Club of America (GCA) 2020 Founders Fund Grant. The $10,000 grant was announced last month at The Garden Club of America headquarters in New York. The funds will be used to purchase a new delivery van for the What Cheer Flower Farm, part of the Perennial Planters' Community and Civic Development project. The van will be branded, **"CheerMobile: What Cheer Flower Farm on the Rhode."**

The CheerMobile van will carry educational programming including flower arranging and art classes to those who cannot travel to the farm. It will be used year-round, allowing the farm to expand its flower distribution and share thousands more free flowers that would otherwise go to waste. The rescued blooms include: unsold flowers that retailers and florists currently throw away and recycled 'gently used' flowers from weddings and events. In addition, the CheerMobile will be used for foraging trips to glean leftover flowers from local commercial flower farmers' fields. The farm has explored successful programs in all of these operations.

The 2.7 acre What Cheer Flower Farm is located on a brownfield site just two miles from Providence City Hall. The farm has been remediating the land since 2017 and now grows 45,000 flowers per year outside on its organic fields and in its unheated high tunnels. The farm gives away

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its crop for social good, donating thousands of bouquets to local nonprofits such as hospitals, hospices, recovery centers, shelters, at-risk youth programs, and senior centers. They have directly touched the lives of thousands of people every year.

Additional Grants

The GCA has awarded additional grants. Garden Club of Madison (GCM), Madison, NJ, received a $10,000 grant and will use the funds for its community project, **Growing It Green in Paterson, NJ - Public School Rain Garden Project.** Together with Great Swamp Watershed Association (GSWA) and Rutgers University, the GCM will expand its transformational school rain garden program through GSWA's hands-on environmental education programming.

Twin City Garden Club (TCGC), Winston-Salem, NC, was awarded a $30,000 grant and will use the funds to support its community project, **Permaculture Sanctuary: Promoting Trauma Resilience Through Regenerative Gardening at Crossnore School & Children's Home.** This permaculture sanctuary, on a 212-acre urban campus, brings together children that Crossnore School & Children's Home serves with the community by restoring souls through soil. Crossnore's campus houses 45 foster children and serves over 450 others daily.

Founders Fund

The Founders Fund was established in 1934 to provide monetary awards to projects proposed by GCA-member clubs in partnerships with community organizations. The award was endowed in memory of the GCA's first president, Elizabeth Price Martin (Mrs. J. Willis) of Philadelphia, who served from 1913-20. Generous gifts from clubs and individuals have since augmented the fund.

The first Award in 1936 was $700; currently the winner receives $30,000, with $10,000 going to each of the two runners-up. With remarkable vision, energy, and perseverance, The Garden Club of America has saved thousands of acres of land, innumerable trees, and enriched multitudes. Historic landmarks have been restored and civic plantings flourish in countless communities nationwide. Research and education projects enrich the young and old. Along with the winners, the runners-up for the awards have made distinguished contributions to their communities.

The GCA is a nonprofit national organization composed of 201 clubs with nearly 18,000 club members who devote energy and expertise to projects in their communities and across the United States. Founded in 1913, the GCA is a leader in horticulture, conservation, creative arts, historic preservation, and environmental protection. www.gcamerica.org