

## MARJORIE L. AND ARTHUR P. MILLER FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Date: September 28, 2020

### Contact information:

Organization Name:	Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens	Contact Name:	Tom Smarr
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Web Address:	www.jenkinsarboretum.org	Year Incorporated:	1976

### Have you previously received the Miller Grant Award: Yes

(1) Year: 2006 Amt Rec'd: \$2,500

(2) Year: 2007 Amt Rec'd: \$2,000

(3) Year: 2019 Amt Rec'd: \$3,000

### Organizational Information:

Geographic Area Served: All of Chester County and beyond

### Annual Number of Clients & Description of Population Served:

Through our data collecting we calculate that we host 50,000 annual visitors, which includes families, retirees, lunch break office workers, home school groups, garden enthusiasts, teenagers, people with intellectual disabilities along with their caregivers, scout troops, college students, and neighbors. In addition, throughout the year we are visited by researchers, hybridizers, and other horticultural professionals who come from all over the country to study the plant collections, acquire pollen, cuttings, seeds, or plants, and share botanical knowledge with our staff. Our John J. Willaman Education Center hosts many of the regions garden club meetings, plant society events, and botanical themed art shows throughout the year. Additionally, we are the home base for the Valley Forge Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, whose members hold meetings, lectures, and plant sales at Jenkins regularly.

### Mission Statement:

Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens mission is to preserve natural tranquil woodlands for community enjoyment, to showcase native plants and a world class collection of rhododendrons and azaleas, and to promote environmental horticulture through learning, research, and conservation.

### Organization Description:

Jenkins is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. We are stewards of 48 acres of gardens and remnant forestland in the rapidly urbanizing Chester County. We are open every day of the year, free of admission for everyone in our community or visiting the area. We preserve this unique natural garden landscape and specialized plant collections for generations to come; along with offering public educational programs, tours, and events to engage and inspire people to discover, treasure, and protect plants in our natural world.

Annual Budget: \$1,082,284

81% of budget for program expenses

10% of budget for administrative expenses

9% of budget for fundraising expenses

100% TOTAL

8 # Number of Full Time Equivalent Paid Staff

24 # of Board Volunteers

30 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

2100 in 2019 # of Volunteer Hours

### Top 3 – 5 Funding Sources:

Otto Haas Trusts (special projects)

Arcadia Foundation (special projects)

Membership Dues and Public Donations (50% of operating costs and special projects)

Mars Foundation (special projects)

Jenkins Endowment (50% of operating costs)

**Proposal Information:**

Grant Amount Requested: \$2,500

**Description of Grant Purpose:****1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements, and distinctiveness:**

Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens sets itself apart from the other 36 other public gardens that make Philadelphia "America's Garden Capital" by maintaining a world class collection of ericaceous plants, and by maintaining free admission and being open to the public every day of the year.

In 1968, H. Lawrence Jenkins bequeathed his property as a living memorial to honor his deceased wife, Elisabeth Philippe Jenkins, who loved nature. It was his vision that the property would be developed as a "public park, arboretum, and wildlife sanctuary for the use of the public and responsible organizations engaged in the study of arboriculture, horticulture, and wildlife for educational and scientific purposes."

We are doing exactly what Mr. Jenkins set for this legacy, and so much more. Since the opening to the public in 1976, Jenkins has been offering horticultural inspiration, botanical knowledge, and refuge to people in a beautiful naturalistic design garden with unique plant collections. In 2009, the environmentally sustainable LEED certified John J. Willaman Education Center building was completed and opened to the public, greatly expanding the organization's ability to welcome and educate visitors.

Enriching the development and stewardship of botanical collections has always been central to the Jenkins's mission, along with preserving the natural tranquil woodlands. Over the past four decades, we have worked hard to develop the gardens and expand educational offerings to connect people to plants in meaningful ways. We are specific in how we pursue new projects to further the mission of the organization and how we enhance the beauty of the gardens for many generations. *"One generation plants the trees, the next generation reaps the shade."* - Ancient Chinese Proverb.

**2. Funding Request:**

Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens seeks funding to further establish the new Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository that will be planted in an expanded area at Jenkins for public study and enjoyment. Specifically, we are asking the Marjorie L. and Arthur P. Miller Fund to contribute to the development and establishment of the landscape design of this expanded space that includes planting layers and new pathways system that will provide access to this new collection.

Rhododendrons have been the core collection at Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens since its inception in 1976. This repository of live rhododendron plants, mostly azaleas, focuses on the 23 species, and the many selections of those species, that are native to the eastern United States. Native rhododendrons, particularly native azaleas, are a collection we have been actively increasing. In fact, the horticulture movement has emphasized the study and planting of native North American azaleas in residential and commercial landscapes as part of the import connection to natural ecology. This project focuses our intent to further build our collections for horticultural research and public education.

There is a vast genetic diversity within the species that allows for a wide range of flower colors, bloom times, siting opportunities, growth forms, and, in many cases, intense fragrance. The addition of potentially hundreds of new selections would have a huge impact on the overall aesthetics of our gardens and would significantly enhance the visitor experience.

The establishment of a nationally recognized Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository will further solidify Jenkins as a center for native rhododendron research and conservation. Several of the 23 native

species have a very limited natural range and are extremely rare in the wild. Because of the changing environmental conditions, plus residential and commercial development in many parts of their range, this project will be vital in preserving these species.

Some of the newly acquired plants will be strategically placed in current garden areas. Most will require an expanded space in a currently undeveloped area, again increasing our opportunities for horticultural display and enhancing the visitor experience. The expansion will be between Berwyn Baptist Road and the existing trails on Woodland Walk. Some work for this one-acre garden expansion area is already in process to prune the trees for canopy elevation that increases the growing space and improves light conditions for new plants to thrive. We need funding to support the development for the layout design and establish phase 1 of the new trail construction. This will enable our team to start establishing the garden area and allow visitors to walk through as it is developing. All of this provides further time spent in the gardens and opportunities for new discoveries about plants.

**A. Specific Chester County needs and issues addressed:**

Surrounded by residential and commercial development in the busy Main Line suburbs of Philadelphia, Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens not only aims to provide an exceptional visitor experience through beautiful gardens for everyone, but provides habitat for countless species of birds, bees, and other wildlife. Additionally, our garden is an educational resource about planting for ecological value that extends the health of our environment and community.

**B. Project impact:**

Expanding the public garden into this new space will impact our visitors in a variety of ways. The expanded garden will provide an additional visitor experience with more places to explore and plants to enjoy. Furthermore, the ecological connections between plants and wildlife will increase, contributing to greater biodiversity within our collections.

**C. Overall strategies to implement our mission (this project):**

Our mission is about promoting learning, research, and conservation. This project addresses all three goals by being a resource for education, opportunities for study, and increase biodiversity.

**D. Why it is important to fund this now:**

The Arboretum is completing a new site master plan. This new garden area for Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository is part of the plan. Many of the plants we are seeking are threatened to disappear. Hybridizers who have been working in their nurseries for decades are starting to shut down and sell their land. Native populations are threatened to disappear from commercial development and impacts from climate change on forest habitats. It is critical we collect to preserve these plants now for care and preservation before lost.

**E. How do you intend to meet the challenge component of this grant?**

The funding from the Marjorie L. And Arthur P. Miller Fund for a Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository project will be matched through several different ways. The Jenkins weekly volunteers, as well as special groups such as scout troops and team-building staff retreats contribute countless hours assisting in propagation, nursery care, planting, and garden tending. A prestigious grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust was received in 2020 to launch the early plant collection for the Native Rhododendron Germplasm Repository. An on-going campaign will start this autumn to engage continued matching support from other generous donors, special interest groups, and foundations. Funding from your foundation will be a match to all these contributions as we build momentum to developing this collection and expanding a new garden.