

News From: National Garden Clubs Inc.
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NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS INC. ANNOUNCES 2011 AWARD OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS

ST. LOUIS (June 29, 2011)—National Garden Clubs Inc. recently announced the winners of its highest honor: the national 2011 Award of Excellence competition. The winners, who recently were recognized at NGC's annual convention in Washington D.C., are: George Sanko, creator of the Georgia Perimeter College's Botanical Garden; Patrick Chassé, ASLA, nationally renowned landscape architect; and the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute of the University of Arkansas system in Fayetteville, Ark., for its significant educational programs in sustainable agriculture.

George Sanko is professor emeritus of Georgia Perimeter College in Decatur and creator of the college's botanical garden, including the "Ferns of the World" garden, which contains more species of ferns than any other garden in the U.S. As a biology professor at GPD, Sanko took a 3-acre tract of land on the GPD campus that was overgrown with privet, briars and trash and transformed it into what is recognized as one of the top gardens in the nation. Sanko's nomination was sponsored by The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.

Patrick Chassé is a nationally recognized landscape architect, lecturer, botanist and ecologist. He earned a masters degree in landscape architecture from Harvard Graduate School of Design, and holds a bachelor of science degree in biology in addition to completing graduate studies in botany and a masters of education degree in environmental education from the University of Maine. Chassé maintains an active design practice, specializing in historic landscapes, reconstruction of natural plant communities and the design of new gardens from Maine to Istanbul. In 2004, Chassé was appointed as the first Curator of Landscape at Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, a position he held until 2009. He lectures at the Landscape Institute of the Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University, and the New York Botanical Garden and at botanical gardens and symposia across the nation and abroad. Chassé's nomination was sponsored by The Garden Club Federation of Maine Inc.

The Winthrop Rockefeller Institute of the University of Arkansas System on Petit Jean Mountain, near Little Rock, Ark., fosters awareness for the natural world, energy and significant educational programs in sustainable agriculture. The Winthrop Rockefeller Institute of the University of Arkansas System is a new center for thought leadership which offers educational programming that ushered in the early stages of Arkansas Agritourism, promotes sustainable agriculture and the local food movement through gardening, horticulture and culinary workshops and sponsors and hosts national events such as nanotechnology and writer's conferences. Current programs and partnerships include "Growing Healthy Communities," which influences communities to promote physical activity and provide access to healthy foods and the "Heritage Farmstead," which cultivates a growing interest in heritage gardening and agriculture. The Institute is named for Winthrop Rockefeller, son of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., an innovator, philanthropist, reformer and catalyst in government, industrial development, education and race relations, and two-term governor of Arkansas. The nomination of the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute of the University of Arkansas System was sponsored by the Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.

Headquartered in St. Louis, National Garden Clubs Inc. www.gardenclub.org has a network of 6,300 local clubs, 50 state clubs, a National Capital Area club and hundreds of international affiliates. NGC offers members extensive educational resources on topics ranging from the many benefits of container and organic gardening to the study of how to attract birds, butterflies and beneficial insects into the garden. Among current projects are "Plant It Pink," an initiative that encourages clubs to develop local programs to promote breast cancer education and awareness through pink-infused therapeutic gardens; flower shows; school gardening initiatives for children;

and a host of civic beautification and improvement efforts. With nearly 200,000 members, NGC is the largest volunteer organization of its kind in the world.

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