

# Impact Report

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

## **BY THE NUMBERS:**

A celebration of growth at the  
Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

# 139,278

total number guests welcomed from all 50 states & beyond



## Spotlight: Whole New Vibe

There are many wonderful reasons to visit the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden and some of the greatest are the milestones that so many people celebrate with us. From proposals to weddings, baby showers to anniversaries, reunions and much more, we are your urban oasis for hosting celebrations and gatherings.

The Welcome, Gather, Grow campaign funded by so many generous donors, has helped the Botanical Garden create fresh and updated spaces for everyone to enjoy for these once-in-a-lifetime moments or annual events.

These renewed spaces now reflect the beauty of the Garden and bring nature to you no matter the time of year. The renovations are stunning, and we hope you will come in to see it for yourself!

Come check out the new vibe as an inspiration for an upcoming celebration space, a place for you and your colleagues to get together, or to enjoy one of our many classes, programs or events like [Dome for the Holidays](#), [Dome After Dark](#), [Botanical Blues](#), [Learn on Saturdays](#), [Earth Day](#) and many more!

GREATEST  
NUMBER  
AT EVENTS...EVER

10

Signature events

42,952

Total Attendees

15%

Members

85%

Nonmembers

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8,979

Dome After Dark

5,219

Botanical Blues

1,645

Earth Day

2,058

Spring Garden Market

1,832

Music In The Garden

178

Fall Bulb Sale

1,224

Botanical Brews +  
Trick Or Trees

260

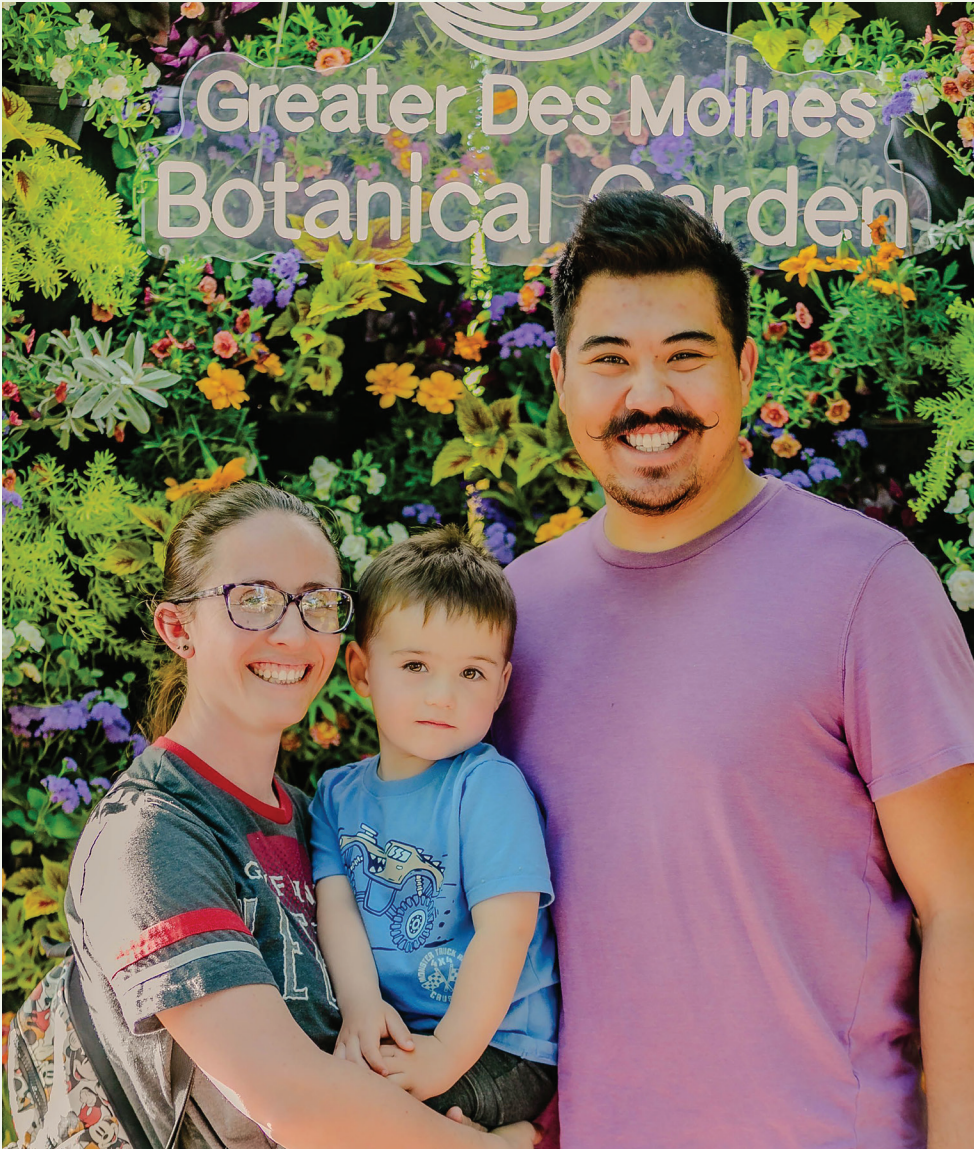
Champagne & Chocolate

21,239

Dome For The Holidays

318

Learn On Saturdays



27,221

Youth admissions

48

Iowa resident  
artists featured

12,254

Free admissions

3,276

Memberships

66

I dos

16,800

Private rental guests

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## SOCIAL BUZZ

453,667

Aggregated exposure to  
followers on Facebook + Insta  
and website interaction

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3,381  
Youth reached

110  
Plant Pet Kits

## Partnership Spotlight: Plant Pet Program

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden's Plant Pet Program partners with teachers and students to take our programs into Iowa classrooms. Participating classrooms receive materials, including their very own plant to love and care for, helping them to directly connect with the Garden's mission of exploring, explaining, and celebrating the world of plants. Educators are provided with nature-based lessons to use in their classrooms, strengthening student engagement in STEAM-based (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) hands-on learning. This program has grown in popularity over the past couple of years, and looking ahead, will be enhanced with video tutorials for teachers to reference as they continue to deliver these lessons to young nature enthusiasts.

Plant Pet Kits are specifically designed for K-5, middle school science, and other classrooms such as music or art.

### Plant Pet Kits include:

- Potted Plant Pet and care card
- Grow light and watering can
- Grade-specific Next Generation Science Standards lesson plan and quick tutorial video
- Corresponding lesson materials, worksheets and digital copies
- Field trip opportunities, teacher training days, and more



16,611

Individuals reached via 552 education and outreach programs

**24% MORE PROGRAMS OFFERED**

### ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**153** programs  
**3,110** participants

### SCHOOL-BASED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**90** programs  
**3,926** participants

### LARGEST SCHOOL FIELD TRIP INCREASE IN HISTORY

**38%** increase in field trips equaled 25 more programs  
**32%** more field trip participants  
957 more participants

### YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

**130** programs with  
**3,182** participants

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**121** programs reaching  
**4,739** participants

# BEHIND THE SCENES SPOTLIGHT: GARDENERS SHOW HOUSE

The Gardeners Show House was created and designed in 2007 by emeritus Botanical Educator and Ambassador Elvin McDonald. The Show House began as a place to exhibit more plants from the Botanical Garden collection and to offer inspiration and ideas for the home gardener. Over the years, its purpose evolved to further serve the Botanical Garden's mission. During the holiday season, it has housed the beloved train display and featured seasonal designs to entice visitors to look, linger, and relax within the cozy seating arrangements and comfortable workspaces.

The updated space has better circulation and temperature control (essential for growing happy plants) as well as improved display ability that will blur the feeling between being inside or out.

Designed to last for years to come, the updated Gardeners Show House is open and ready to welcome more people, offer additional room to gather, and grow the ways the Botanical Garden can meet the needs of the greater Des Moines community.

Please pop in to visit the new Gardeners Show House, presented by the MidAmerican Energy Foundation.

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600+

Plants moved

36

Volunteers + Corporations  
who did the work



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENT 2025: LAURA RUTTMAN



The individuals and groups recognized with the Governor's Volunteer Award have been described as the people who show up, the people who invest in others and in our communities.

Laura Ruttman's commitment to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is remarkable. She has helped grow the Botanical Artisan Guild from just a handful of volunteers in 2021 to more than 100 today. Laura volunteers her time to coordinate the efforts of the Guild, resulting in growing impact from this group.

After creating projects that include sewing, woodworking, clay arts, embroidery, pressed flowers, plant propagation, photography, and more, Guild volunteers generously donate these handmade items to sell in the Garden Shop. All profits stay with the Botanical Garden to further our mission.

Laura (on left in the red wrap) recruits, teaches, organizes, leads steering meetings, screens ideas for new items, and makes schedules for the Guild, serving hundreds of hours per year. The sales figures in our shop from these beautiful contributions continue to increase. For the calendar year 2024, the sales generated by Botanical Artisan Guild made items exceeded \$29,000. We value Laura's creativity, patience, and leadership as an integral and outstanding part of our volunteer team.

More information about volunteering at the Botanical Garden is available on our website. More information about the Governor's Volunteer Award is available at [volunteeriowa.org](http://volunteeriowa.org)

**“WELL DESERVED RECOGNITION TO LAURA FOR HER DEDICATION AS WELL AS THE MANY TALENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE GUILD!”**

– Whitney Bouma, Chief Program Officer at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

## VOLUNTEER NUMBERS GROWING **649** volunteers & **19,287** volunteer hours



**Horticulture**  
5,427 hrs | 197 vols

**Guest Experience**  
2,732 hrs | 57 vols

**Botanical Artisan Guild**  
3,071 hrs | 81 vols

**Education/Outreach**  
2,982 hrs | 188 vols

**Events**  
905 hrs | 126 vols

**Other**  
1,102 hrs | 193 vols

**Boards & Committees**  
1,474 hrs | 50 vols

**Administrative**  
614 hrs | 7 vols

## PINEAPPLE PROGRAM

Increasing accessibility by reducing cost barriers and providing equitable opportunities in arts and culture to all



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248

Pineapple memberships  
(for EBT and WIC card holders)

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2,137

Free community  
day admissions

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2,042

Adventure pass  
admissions  
(with passes from 44  
participating libraries  
throughout Iowa)

4,658

Museums for all  
admissions  
(for EBT and  
WIC card holders)

19

Community  
memberships  
(Local organizations  
serving underserved  
individuals)

420

Community memberships  
admissions  
(for local organizations  
serving those in need)

**“THE BOTANICAL GARDEN IS A PLACE WHERE MY FAMILY AND I FIND RESPITE NO MATTER THE WEATHER OR FINANCIAL STRUGGLES. THANK YOU.” -Pineapple Member**