Old Stone House & Washington Park
Director of Gardening

OSH Mission

Rooted in Brooklyn’s revolutionary history, the Old Stone House & Washington Park (OSH) fosters civic engagement through educational, cultural, recreational and environmental programs for more than 500,000 park visitors annually, including 7,000 schoolchildren.

OSH was part of the culminating action during the Battle of Brooklyn in August, 1776 – the largest battle of the American Revolutionary War. We are part of the Historic House Trust of New York City and serve as the conservancy organization for JJ Byrne Playground and Washington Park. OSH is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

A Model Urban Garden

Our gardens, created over 14 years by Claudia Joseph – a recognized leader in the permaculture community -- engage the public in considering how landscapes have served us through the centuries. Too often, NYC does not have the funding necessary to expand and improve the beauty and function of our public spaces; the Old Stone House & Washington Park are developing a template for neighborhood stewardship by engaging residents and visitors, alike.

The landscape is filled with native and introduced plants for a variety of needs: food, medicine, craft material, wildlife habitat (birds, bees & butterflies) and pure beauty. The gardens are open all day, every day, with educational programming during the growing season.

The garden model at OSH demonstrates human and landscape interactions: the swamp and creek that once existed are covered by 15 feet of landfill. The Dutch colonial house was rebuilt in the center of the Park in the 1930’s, and interpretive gardens were added in 2004. The Kitchen Garden was quickly followed by a Farm Garden, a Toddlers Garden and a Fragrance & Berry Garden. Ten separate areas now comprise a garden network of approximately one acre at the center of the 3.5 acre park, including the adjacent schoolyard of William Alexander Middle School.

Position Objectives

The Director of Gardening will work to maintain and preserve the vision and qualities that make the Old Stone House/MS 51 Gardens unique; will help to implement OSH’s vision and program plan, and will be a key player in OSH’s efforts to develop OSH’s gardens as a “third place” that reflects the history of the site and engenders a strong sense of community.

This is a part-time position, based on the cycle of garden care, reporting to the Executive Director of the Old Stone House & Washington Park, to oversee management of the garden and its public programs.
**Duties & Responsibilities**

The Director of Gardening will play an important role in maintaining the OSH gardens and plantings during the spring, summer and fall seasons (April-October). The job is physical - weeding, pruning, mulching, composting and compost management, planting in spring, summer and fall, watering, organic pest management and winter cut down of garden. Primary responsibilities will include the following:

**Recruit, manage, and work with volunteers** on the daily maintenance of the gardens, following maintenance practices established by Claudia Joseph and upholding Ms. Joseph’s standards of excellence. Especially during the first year at OSH, the Director of Gardening will be expected to spend time participating in the work of maintaining the garden. He/she will need to learn every aspect of current maintenance protocols from watering to weed control as part of learning the rhythms of the garden and recommending evolutions.

The Director of Gardening will be responsible for generating and monitoring weekly and quarterly work plans and keeping maintenance records.

**Help develop volunteer program** by training and supervising garden volunteers. Help to recruit volunteers. Develop meaningful opportunities for volunteer participation in the maintenance and development of the garden.

**Support public visitation, donor development, tours and open days** by greeting guests and giving tours; maintaining information such as plant lists and signage; seeing that the garden is prepared for visitors. Conduct tours of the garden; answer questions.

**Develop garden**, according to the conceptual plan. Direct new plant acquisitions, installation and design; supervise and assist as needed with maintenance of physical plant; including irrigation systems, garden equipment and supplies.

**Manage the living plant collection**: Lead and oversee plant record keeping system. Maintain and update plant records and mapping. Lead the effort to make the most effective use of plant collections information. Accession plants and record location, source, cultural information, status, maintenance needs and schedule, propagation information and photographs. Develop photographic record of collections. Update and maintain plant labels and accession tags. Monitor condition of plant collection.

**Help develop and participate in programs to promote the garden and strengthen its educational outreach** through educational programs, lectures, tours and workshops, in partnership with OSH’s director of education. Work in partnership with the executive director to plan, execute and schedule programs to promote the garden, raise funds, and develop its educational outreach. Write plant information for brochures, website, and other publications. Cultivate relationships with relevant organizations to develop partnerships. Help create and support collaboration with educational institutions and other partner organizations to foster research and exchange of information.
Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Enthusiasm and passion about horticulture and garden design, as well as a high degree of awareness of permaculture principles, and an ability to communicate this to professionals and the public.

Knowledge of permaculture practices, especially relating to New York and Mid-Atlantic natives. Degree preferred in permaculture, horticulture, plant science, public garden management, landscape architecture or closely related field. Advanced degree a plus.

Managerial skills and work experience, at least 5 years of prior public garden management experience desirable. Ability to supervise and lead volunteers, including organizing and prioritizing work assignments, identifying objectives and evaluating results.

Communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to work with staff and volunteers and to represent the garden by engaging the public. Strong interpersonal skills; must be a team player able to work effectively with a diverse group community. Ability to work to a plan and adapt as conditions warrant.

Documentation and technical expertise. Facility with plant recordkeeping systems and plant identification skills. Strong recordkeeping and organizational skills required.

Physical fitness and ability to operate equipment. The garden is a labor-intensive work environment and some aspects of the job could involve heavy lifting and the use of power equipment, as well as the vagaries of working in a public space that encompasses garden lovers, families with small children, the general public, and vermin. Proficiency in safe operation and proper maintenance of hand tools and power equipment.

Compensation
The salary for the position is $35,000 for April through November. There are also income producing opportunities that can be developed, including field training courses and public programs, as well as negotiable consulting hours for planning during the winter months.

The Old Stone House & Washington Park is an Equal Opportunity Employer and all activities are conducted without discrimination based on race, color, genetics, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, age or status as a protected veteran. OSH is also committed to compliance with all fair employment practices regarding citizenship and immigration status.

Please email a cover letter expressing interest and a resume, including three references to: info@theoldstonehouse.org.