



August 31, 2018

For immediate distribution

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## **Columbus Botanical Garden Formalizes Partnership with Blanchard Elementary** *PIE CBG To Serve as Chamber Partner At Large to be Resource for Entire Community*

**Columbus, Ga., August 31, 2018** – To fulfill its strategic vision and realize its mission to develop gardens, protect woodlands, and provide educational programs that stimulate the imagination and deepen the understanding and appreciation of nature, the Columbus Botanical Garden (CBG) proudly announces its Partner In Education (PIE) relationship with Blanchard Elementary. In addition to its role as one of Blanchard's Partners, the Garden will also serve as a Partner At Large, thereby enabling it to serve as a resource for all school districts under the Partners In Education program.

CBG Interim Director Bruce Howard said, "The Master Plan for The Garden is designed to meet a variety of needs in our community and serve all ages. Great thought and planning have gone into how the expanded Garden will enhance our commitment to children's education. For many years because we're neighbors, Blanchard and the Garden have enjoyed a very informal relationship with the school children regularly enjoying nature, sightseeing, engaging in field trips and learning activities. We have long considered the Garden to be the 'outside classroom' for our beloved neighbor Blanchard."

He continued, "Nothing would make us happier than to have every teacher and student in the district here learning and enjoying their Garden. The Garden is never more alive than when our children are here."

"I think that it is important that young people see themselves in their community," said Dawn L. Grantham, Principal, Blanchard Elementary. "Columbus is a beautiful city, in part, because of the incredible variety of indigenous plant life and the value people, over the years, have placed in maintaining the thoughtful landscape of neighborhoods and city blocks. The Columbus Botanical Garden is truly an investment in historical preservation because as children learn about particular plants in a public garden, they easily connect to the personal green space of their surroundings. What could be more meaningful than to not only learn how to identify a gardenia but to see one growing in your own yard?!"

Children's Education Coordinator Ellen Lane echoed those sentiments. "We are so excited about formalizing our partnership with Blanchard Elementary. It makes me really proud to work for an organization which values the role of education and teachers. As a former teacher, I appreciate the discounted rate of \$25 that CBG provides teachers (normally \$35). Every little bit helps." She continued, "We look forward to supporting all faculty and staff, and we can't wait to watch the students grow and learn this year."

In addition to its adult educational programs, Columbus Botanical Garden regularly offers children's STEM-related, interactive, age-appropriate programming. "Discover Nature" is a series of guided programs which have been designed for Kindergarten and elementary age students with material tailored for the grade level of each group. Programs are inquiry-based, emphasize direct experience and teamwork AND support the Georgia Performance Science Standards. Each program is 60-75 minutes and can be customized to your curriculum requirements. So, "discover nature" at the Columbus Botanical Garden and give your students the opportunity to enjoy their classroom - outdoors! For more information, please contact the Garden at [education@columbusbotanicalgarden.org](mailto:education@columbusbotanicalgarden.org).



## Columbus Botanical Garden

### *PRESS RELEASE*

#### **About PIE**

The Greater Columbus "Partners in Education" (PIE) was established in 1987 as a joint venture of the Muscogee County School District and the Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce. Through individual partnerships with businesses, professional organizations, churches, civic clubs and military units, public and private schools are able to tap resources to meet the individual needs of participating schools, provide excellent educational programming, and recognize achievement. Find out more about the Chamber and the PIE program at [www.columbusgachamber.com/partners-in-education](http://www.columbusgachamber.com/partners-in-education).

#### **About the Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce:**

The Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce is an energetic and visionary organization in the Columbus Region that is committed to building a more prosperous community while preserving the democratic process. Learn more about the Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce at [www.columbusgachamber.com](http://www.columbusgachamber.com), or follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@colsgachamber | @growcolumbusga).

#### **About Blanchard Elementary School**

Blanchard Elementary School basks in a rich reputation as having a history of academic achievement and community support, and a history of producing community leadership, which has laid the groundwork to continuously attract new families to our school. Many of our Blanchard parents were once Blanchard students. Situated on an expansive, wooded corner close to a park and surrounded by an established neighborhood, Blanchard is one of the few Muscogee County elementary schools that remains a defined neighborhood school; that is, the neighborhood declares Blanchard as its own.

Students enjoy a balance of a traditional school day and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning in which they apply soft skills to active learning and brains-based strategies. Through partnerships with local business, the fine arts community, and Columbus State University, Blanchard encourages students to explore creative, innovative applications and collaborative problem-solving.

#### **About Columbus Botanical Garden**

Nestled in North Columbus amid shopping and eateries, Columbus Botanical Garden operates as a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to develop gardens, protect woodland, and provide educational programs that stimulate the imagination and deepen our understanding and appreciation of nature. This preserved jewel of pine and hardwood forest is a remnant reminder of the native Central Georgia landscape that is becoming more scarce as the region continues to develop. Since its founding in 1999 with a gift of acreage and buildings from the children and families of Lillie Belle Kimbrough Adams and later approved by the Columbus City Council, Columbus Botanical Garden (CBG) has been the steward of a 23-acre rolling property located about 6 miles northeast of downtown Columbus. With its recent expansion to 36 acres, CBG now encompasses four developed acres, with exciting plans for tremendous development over the next three years as a result of its current \$10 million *Growing Towards Greatness* Campaign.

For more information on how you can participate in programming, volunteer or donate, please visit [www.columbusbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.columbusbotanicalgarden.org), follow us on Instagram @Columbus\_Botanical\_Garden, like us on FaceBook at [www.facebook.com/columbusbotanicalgarden](http://www.facebook.com/columbusbotanicalgarden), contact our offices at 706.327.8400, email us at [contactus@columbusbotanicalgarden.org](mailto:contactus@columbusbotanicalgarden.org) or visit our offices at 3603 Weems Road, Columbus, Ga. 31909.

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