If I were to characterize 2018 at Descanso Gardens in one word, it would be “planning.” Planning is, of course, something every institution engages in. But in 2018, we were more deeply immersed in mapping out the way forward for the institution than at any time in recent memory. As I look through the pages of this annual report, I am reminded of how much we accomplished in 2018, and how we are moving through 2019 guided by all those plans we made.

We achieved a major milestone in July 2018 when Descanso Gardens was reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums. First accredited in 2003, we are proud to be designated as a museum. While the public might view Descanso Gardens as a park, the institution is guided by a broad educational mission that extends beyond recreation. To maintain this important designation, museums must go through an intense review process. The self-study review began in 2017 and took several months, and was followed by a site visit by our peers from AAM. Through the reaccreditation process, we compared our operations to best practices in the museum industry, and we have subsequently made some tweaks to the way we do business.

For example, in 2018 we revised our emergency preparedness plan. Besides completely overhauling our emergency handbook, Descanso Gardens’ staff and volunteers participated in our first large-scale safety drill in February 2018, which simulated a devastating earthquake. Since then, we have conducted first aid and CPR training for staff and volunteers. Thanks to a grant from The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation, we purchased three automated external defibrillators to be used in a cardiac emergency. I hope we never have to use the AEDs, but it’s good to know they are ready to help save a life.

With visitation surpassing the half million mark, we worked on initiatives in 2018 to help make every visit more meaningful. We created a better visitor map to guide our guests as they explored the gardens. We created new “wayfinding” and storytelling signage, and visitors have shared positive feedback to these projects.

We welcomed our first artist-in-residence in 2018, thanks to lengthy planning on the part of the Sturt Haaga Gallery’s curatorial committee. Carole Kim is an interdisciplinary artist who spent the better part of a year talking to visitors and members about their Descanso experiences. In the dark of night, when Descanso was closed, she was busy photographing the gardens in amazing plays of light on dark. Her exhibition, *Shine a Light*, is currently on view in the Sturt Haaga Gallery through Oct. 27.

And of course, planning played a major role in the new camellia display located near Feather Falls. With grant funds from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, staff created an ornamental garden that allows visitors to experience the diversity and beauty of the camellia collection in a concentrated area. We are eager to see how this garden shapes up in the future.

When 2018 was over, we looked back on all those plans – and we kept planning right through 2019! A garden is constantly changing, and planning helps direct that evolution. As our founder, E. Manchester Boddy, wrote decades ago: “Descanso Gardens, of course, will never know completion … I hope you will not only learn to know and enjoy the gardens, but that you will share the spirit that sustains them.”

_If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else._

– Yogi Berra

_Juliann Rooke, Executive Director_
Welcome

2018 Board of Trustees

Amy Lamb, Chair
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James Levin, Treasurer
Ann Murphy, Secretary
Richard Atwater
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John D’Angona
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Laura Furey
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Katie King
Wendy Lees
Kay Linden
Ben Logan
Sandra Mays
Greg McLemore
Peggy Miller
Timothy Morphy
Rick Neumann
Blythe Haaga Parker
Ned Russell
Carin Salter
Brad Schwartz
Juliann Rooke (Ex Officio Trustee)
Executive Director, Descanso Gardens

2018 Senior Managers

Juliann Rooke
Executive Director

Jenina Garrett
Chief Financial Officer

Cristeen Martinez
Director of Membership and Guest Experience
Sturt Haaga Gallery Manager

Somer Sherwood-White
Director of Advancement

Emi Yoshimura
Director of Education

Rachel Young
Director of Horticulture & Garden Operations

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Our Mission

Descanso Gardens is a unique Southern California landscape distinguished by its specialized botanic collections, historical significance, and rare natural beauty. Our mission is to practice exemplary stewardship of Descanso’s distinctive character and assets; offer people an experience close to nature; and cultivate understanding of the natural world and people’s place in it through inspiration, education and example.

Share your photos online and see what other visitors are up to:
#exploredescanso

descansogardens.org
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descansogardens

descansogardens

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Photos by Shannon Dillon © Descanso Gardens, except where noted.
Looking back at the year, we count these among our achievements for the year.

- **Descanso was reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums** in July following an intensive self-study process and onsite visit by AAM representatives. First accredited in 2003, we are proud to be designated as a museum, guided by a broad educational mission.

- **We began working on a master plan with the design firm of Rios Clemente Hale Studios.** This plan will guide development at Descanso through the next decade.

- **Staff and volunteers participated in Descanso’s first safety drill** in February, which simulated a devastating earthquake. Local first responders gave feedback on our readiness to deal with a major emergency. The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation funded the purchase of additional first aid equipment.

- **Interdisciplinary artist Carole Kim began her yearlong tenure as Descanso’s first artist-in-residence.** Photographing gardens after hours at night, she created works for her 2019 exhibition *Shine a Light*, a reference to both her use of light as a medium and a means of focusing one’s attention.

- **Record-setting attendance passed the half-million mark.** To make each visit more meaningful for this influx of visitors, a permanent information table was installed as part of the Center Circle renovation. Knowledgeable volunteers provide a warm welcome, give directions and answer questions for visitors.

- **An expanded volunteer program** that included Community Service and Student Community Service Days gave would-be helpers more options to provide much needed “people power” for Descanso. In all, 383 people participated in these special single-day events or in our regular volunteer program.

- **A new camellia garden was installed in the Camellia Forest in spring, with funding from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust.** The first phase of the garden focused on camellias with links to China, including Yunnan reticulata camellias, as well as Japanese Higo camellias. The area below the Boddy House was also replanted with several camellias in fall. In all, 188 of our signature flowers were planted in the gardens.

- **An exhibition at the Sturt Haaga Gallery underscored Descanso’s commitment to the wildlife that call this garden home.** *Growing Habitat: LA’s Wildlife and Descanso* was curated by the Education Department with support from several outside organizations, including the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and the Arroyos and Foothills Conservancy.
From a brutal heatwave to a plethora of projects, here are some of the facts and figures that made 2018 memorable at Descanso Gardens.

| **123** pieces of art on view in the Sturt Haaga Gallery |
| **Visitors came from 12 countries and 48 U.S. states** (North Dakota and Mississippi, please come see us!) |
| **Admissions reached an all-time high of 581,545** |
| **Tulips** planted for spring |
| **Visitors came from** |
| **248,320** member visits |
| **Temperatures soared to 113° on July 6, 2018, scorching camellias and oaks (most recovered)** |
| **23,000** tulip bulbs planted for spring |
| **383 volunteers doing 16,540 hours of service** |
| **3.81** = the score teachers gave field trips (on a scale of 1 to 4) |
| **96** spring bloom walks |
| **1 new entry for the Rose Garden** |
| **20,253 came to 23 spring & summer evening events** |

(opposite top) May 9, 2016, by Helen Rae was one of the artworks featured in the exhibition Beyond the Bouquet in the Sturt Haaga Gallery.
Below is a snapshot of our operating budget for 2018. Audited financial statements are available at descansogardens.org.

### 2018 Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>$1,320,232</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enchanted ticket sales</td>
<td>$3,708,794</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales, rentals and programs</td>
<td>$1,930,796</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other revenue</td>
<td>$3,862</td>
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<td><strong>Total revenues</strong></td>
<td>$6,963,684</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contributions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td>$1,309,104</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-kind donations</td>
<td>$5,192</td>
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<td><strong>Total contributions</strong></td>
<td>$2,129,934</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>LA County management fee</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
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<td>Investment income</td>
<td>$58,981</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total other</strong></td>
<td>$328,981</td>
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| Total income             | $9,422,599   |

### 2018 Expenses

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<tr>
<td>Program services</td>
<td>$7,514,465</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>$935,706</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising and marketing</td>
<td>$860,275</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Total expenses           | $9,310,446   |

---

81%  | 10%  | 9%
---

- **Program services**: 81%
- **Management and general**: 10%
- **Fundraising and Marketing**: 9%

---

**Revenue**  | **Contributions**  | **Other**  |
---           |                   |           |
74%          | 23%                | 3%        |
**Supporters**

**Enchanted Forest of Light Sponsors**

We are grateful to these individuals and organizations who helped ensure the success of *Enchanted Forest of Light* by providing sponsorship support in 2018.

Anonymous
Erin and Rich Atwater
Jennifer Kuo Baxter and Thomas Baxter
California School of the Arts – San Gabriel Valley
Cardinal Rule Winery
City of Hope
Gordon and Dona Crawford
John D’Angona
Georgianna B. Erskine
The Flashdance
Laura and Mark Furey
Gelsons
Elizabeth and Stephen Gleason
Golden Road Brewing
Goldstar
Heather Sturt Haaga and Paul Haaga, Jr.
Lovell Holder
HomeStreet Bank
Katie King and Torrey Sun
George Kunkel
Amy and David Lamb
Wendy Lees and Tom Boyle
James Levin and Sarah MacDowall
Margaret Leong and Michael Checca
Ben and Lucia Logan
Sandra Mays and John Marshall
Greg and Stephanie McLemore
Peggy Miller
Peter and Ann Murphy
Andy and Juliann Rooke
Carie and Andy Salter
Brad and Vicki Schwartz
Signature Party Rentals
Smilebooth

---

**2018 Grants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>Gift</th>
<th>Project</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rose Hills Foundation</td>
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<td>General operating support</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>World Rhythms concert series, visitor shuttle and safety equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust</td>
<td>$6,500</td>
<td>Native plant purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of La Cañada Flintridge</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Drinking fountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Water District of Southern California</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>Water programming and native plant purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$108,500</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**2018 In-Kind Donations**

Anne Caffey
Cardinal Rule Winery
Irene Chen
Jack F. Conley
The Flashdance
Golden Road Brewing

Ralh Malmquist
Nuccio’s Nurseries Inc.
Monica O’Horan-Ford
Signature Party Rentals
Smilebooth
Lisa Sola

(opposite) Date night, family night: *Enchanted Forest of Light* is fun for all.
Supporters

Center Circle Associates

Center Circle Associates is Descanso Gardens’ highest level of membership. CCA members provide philanthropic support to Descanso while enjoying exclusive benefits and special access to the Gardens.

Descanso Circle | $10,000+
Margaret Leong and Michael Checca
Rick Neumann
Heather Sturt Haaga and Paul Haaga, Jr.

Director’s Circle | $5,000
Kim and Ginger Caldwell
John D’Angona
Georgianna Erskine
Doug and Claudia Forbes
Gary and Sandy Hall
Wendy Lees and Tom Boyle
David and Kay Linden
Ben and Lucia Logan
Sarah Mac Dowall and James Levin
Greg and Stephanie McLemore
Peter and Ann Murphy
Blythe Haaga Parker and Tyler Parker
Susan Redpath
William and Noel Wade

Circle Associates | $1000+
Anonymous
Pilar Abrams
Guilford and Gwen Babcock
James V. Baldridge and Beverly Lazor
Bill and Susan Baribault
Olin and Ann Barrett
Dr. Dianne Barrett and Dr. Margaret Elfering
Sharon and Scott Bateman
Sue Beatty
Theresa Beland
Thomas and Marjorie Bickler
Michael and Tania Cahill
Eric and Elisa Callow
Frank and Margaret Campbell
Bill and Raissa Choi
John Clisham and Lu Kondor
Richard and Bonnie Cook
Kirk Dawson
Edwina and David Dedlow
Jane and Patrick Delahanty
Leo and Stephanie Dencik
Bruce and Lady Edwards
Barbara Eliades
Grant Frederick and Denise Hagan
Allyson and Frederick Gartsid
Gracelina Gibbs and Gene Wilcott
Stephen and Linda Gill
Craig and Janna Gosselin
Paul Haaga III and Catalina Haaga
Yvonne Haley
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Karen Howard
Ursula Hyman
Edward and Susan Johnson
Katie King and Torrey Sun
Harvey and Ellen Knell
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Carolyn Metcalf
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Lila Nastro
Michael and Sonia Newell
William and Laura Olhasso
Gary and Vicki Olson
John and Rose Orlandini
Christopher and Virginia Orndorff
Katie and Chris Poole
Kimberly Raisani
Daniel and Sarah Rothenberg
Ned and Shirley Russell
Brad and Vicki Schwartz
Somer Sherwood-White and Jeff White
Andrew and Katie Shipsides
Diana Singleton
Cameron and Doug Spitznagel
Bill and Carol Stafford
Alana Steele and Michael Anderson
Keith and Tracy Tobias
Jae Townsend and Ryan Jones
Scott and Mary Tracy
R. Scott and Lannette Turicchi
Betsey Tyler
Woody and Terry Walker
James and Mitzi Walters
Eric and Jill Weinlein
Robert and Karen Wicke
Phyllis Winnaman
Richard and Amy Wohl
Mike and Alice Zrodlo
Supporters

The following donors kept Descanso Gardens green and growing with their nonmembership donations of $500 or more in 2018.

$50,000 and up
Margaret Leong and Michael Checca
The Rose Hills Foundation

$25,000 – $49,999
Insuk Copprell
Vieve Metcalfe and Jay Holladay
Peggy Miller
Heather Sturt Haaga and Paul Haaga, Jr.

$10,000 – $24,999
The Capital Group Companies
Charitable Foundation
Gordon and Dona Crawford
John D’Angona
Estate of Joanne Burns
Ben and Lucia Logan
Greg and Stephanie McLemore
Estate of Michael Parga
Peter and Ann Murphy
Rick Neumann
Andy and Juliann Rooke
Brad and Vicki Schwartz
William and Noel Wade

$5,000 – $9,999
Linda Andrade
Richard and Erin Atwater

Jennifer Kuo Baxter and Thomas Baxter
Kim and Ginger Caldwell
City of Hope
City of La Cañada Flintridge
Georgianna Erskine
Doug and Claudia Forbes
Laura and Mark Furey
Stephen and Liz Gleason
Gary and Sandy Hall
Lovell Holder
Katie King and Torrey Sun
La Cañada Kiwanis Foundation
David and Amy Lamb
Wendy Lees and Tom Boyle
James Levin and Sarah MacDowall
Ben and Lucia Logan
Sandra Mays and John Marshall
Wendy Munger and Leonard Gumport
Alex and Ameri Ramirez
Susan Redpath
Ned and Shirley Russell
Carin and Andrew Salter

$1,000 – $4,999
Anonymous
Guilford and Gwen Babcock
Marjorie Barbour
Dianne Barrett and Dr. Margaret Elfering
Sharon and Scott Bateman
Sue Beatty
Theresa Beland

David and Judith Brown
Frank and Margaret Campbell
Therese Carrabine
Bill and Raissa Choi
John Clisham and Lu Kondor
Richard and Bonnie Cook
Kirk Dawson
Edwina and David Dedlow
Jane and Patrick Delahanty
Leo and Stephanie Dencik
Barbara Eliades
Patrick and Kathy Feely

Allyson and Frederick Gartside
Gelson’s Markets
Gracella Gibbs and Gene Wilcott
Stephen and Linda Gill
Craig and Janna Gosselin
Nel Graham
Elinore Gyopyos
Yvonne Haley
Lawrence Hawley and Barbara Aran
HomeStreet Bank
Karen Howard
Ursula Hyman
Supporters

Edward and Susan Johnson
Betty Jones
Ruth and Jeremy Jones
Harvey and Ellen Knell
George and Lallie Kunkel
Lisa Kurstin and Davida Koren
La Cañada Pet Clinic
Wendy Lees and Tom Boyle
Carol Liu and Michael Peevey
Richard and Mary Mader
Julie and Lance Markowitz
Donna and Randall Melby
Carolyn Metcalf
Metropolitan Water District
MonteCedro
Lila Nastro
Leslie Nord and Steve Synnott
William and Laura Olhasso
Gary and Vicki Olson
Christopher and Virginia Orndorff
Katie and Chris Poole
Kimberly Raisani
Daniel and Sarah Rothenberg
Schneider Foundation
Somer Sherwood-White and Jeff White
Andrew and Katie Shipsides
Sony Pictures Entertainment, Inc.
Cameron and Doug Spitznagel
Bill and Carol Stafford
Eugene and Marilyn Stein
The Diggers Garden Club Pasadena
The Kunkel Family Trust
The Pasadena Garden Club
Brian and Shari Thomas
Keith and Tracy Tobias
Teresa Todaro and Dennis Bruce
Len Torres and Anita Brenner
Jae Townsend and Ryan Jones
Scott and Mary Tracy
Hope Tschopik Schneider
Betsey Tyler
User Error Productions
Karen and Peter Veloz
Lynn and Donald Voss
Woody and Terry Walker
James and Mitzi Walters
Eric and Jill Weinlein
Robert and Karen Wicke
Phyllis Winnaman
Richard and Amy Wohl
Mike and Alice Zrodlo

$500 – $999

Rebecca Bassin
Janet and Alex Boggs
Janice and Thomas Brown
Eric and Elisa Callow
Norman and Amy Cox
Olga Kendall
Lu Li and Xiujuan Zhao
Mediterranean Garden Society
Sylvia Osborne
Dario Perez
David Pierce and Jane Campbell
Joyce and Reid Samuelson
Sarina and Christopher Stogel
Teri Thomas
Dorothy and Gary Wood
a member-supported garden