

Position: Nursery Horticulturist
Department: Horticulture and Garden Operations
Reports to: Director of Horticulture and Facilities
Status: Full Time, Non-exempt, 40 hours weekly

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Nursery Horticulturist is responsible for supporting and coordinating plant propagation needs for all sections of Descanso Gardens, including the Display, Rose, and Camellia and Native gardens. This position requires skill in scheduling, propagating and maintaining a wide variety of plant material in a nursery setting. The position requires the maintenance and operation of greenhouse, shade house and nursery beds. The position requires the ability to produce seasonably appropriate plants in a timely manner through a variety of propagation methods including seed, division, and cuttings and grafting. Candidates should possess the knowledge necessary to propagate plants across the spectrum of Descanso Gardens collections, including camellias, lilacs, cycads, California natives, vegetables and fruits, roses, Australian and other drought tolerant plants, and a wide array of ornamental annuals and perennials. The Nursery Horticulturist will be responsible for maintaining the genetic heritage of plants historically developed at Descanso. The candidate for this position must possess the ability to work cooperatively with all horticulture sections at the Gardens and works integrally with the Garden Records Coordinator. The position supports an array of activities conducted by the Education department, including integral support of the Education Programs Coordinator in the Harvest Garden. This position requires the candidate to direct a large volunteer workforce weekly and occasional weekend workshops and volunteer events.

JOB CLASSIFICATION:

This is a full-time hourly 40 hour per week non-exempt position and may include some evening and/or weekend hours depending on the needs of the organization.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES include but are not limited to:

- Implements proper plant propagation techniques, watering, fertilizing, pest control, spacing, sanitation, and other horticultural techniques for all nursery plants.
- In collaboration with the horticulture staff, plans for and produces seasonal display crops including but not limited to chrysanthemums, vegetables, bulbs, and perennial plants and trees.
- Provides training, oversight, support, direction, and encouragement for volunteers and their activities.
- Collaborates with the Director of Horticulture and Facilities to provide direction and training for the seasonal Ruth Borun Horticultural Intern (Oct-May)
- Grows and maintains records of plants for collections including seasonal container plants from cuttings, seeds and bulbs.
- Maintains greenhouse, propagation facility, including irrigation, and propagation beds. Ensures that all plant production areas are kept clean and organized and are operating properly.
- Determines growing schedule for display, collections, including but not limited to camellias, roses, Japanese maples, lilacs, and cherry trees.
- Updates Director, Plant Records Coordinator, and Horticulturists when materials are ready for planting in the collections.
- Responsible for prioritizing and accomplishing daily individual assignments as well as participating in group work projects.
- Coordinates with Horticultural staff to determine best course of direction for control of weeds and pests. Practices integrated pest management and organic pest control as needed.
- Prepares purchase orders for materials and supplies.
- Learns plant identification and botanical names, as appropriate.
- Responsible for maintenance of tools, water features, and hardscape as assigned.

- Identifies items in the landscape that need attention and brings to staff attention through written work order forms.
- Responsible for adhering to Descanso Gardens' guidelines for worker safety.
- Adheres to established Code of Safe practices when performing various jobs and duties which also includes the safety of staff, visitors, volunteers, and communicates any hazard concerns as needed.

Other Responsibilities:

- Participates in public education programs as they relate to the Collection and the landscape. Works with Public Programs in the presentation of horticulture talks, the offering of tours, classes, and docent training. Occasionally this position is responsible for writing articles that appear in the Descanso Gardens Newsletter, or other publications.
- Provides public information about the plants in the collection. Furnishes information to the Plant Records Coordinator to facilitate accessioning of new plants, deaccessioning of dead plants, mapping, and the production of public identification labels and accession tags.
- Meets regularly with the Director of Horticulture and Facilities and other Horticulturists to address the management of the Descanso Gardens landscape and collections.
- Assists in the production and maintenance of healthy compost for use in the gardens.
- Minor irrigation repairs.
- Completion of other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- Degree in horticulture, botany, plant science, or equivalent experience.
- Minimum of three years of increasing responsibility in a public horticulture setting.
- Strong knowledge of and previous work experience in the care and presentation of a diverse collection of trees, shrubs, and perennials using organic horticultural techniques.
- Demonstrated experience, planning tasks and organizing projects.
- Knowledge of use and safe operation of manual and power gardening tools.
- Ability to effectively lead and work in teams.
- Strong interpersonal communication skills.
- Basic computer skills including MS Office.
- Valid Class C California Driver's License.

EQUIPMENT USED and PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

This position is responsible for the safe operation and maintenance of a full range of manual and power tools; standard manual and gas powered gardening equipment and tools including hedge trimmer, extendable gas-powered tree trimmer, soil tiller, compactor, seated lawn mower, bypass pruner, lopper and folding saw; vehicles, bobcat, tractor, computer and two-way radio.

This is an outdoor physically-orientated and demanding position which requires:

- Ability to move equipment to various locations within the Gardens which may not be accessible via motor vehicle or paved road.
- Must be able to walk long distances and access various areas of the Gardens including areas not accessible by paved roads or dirt trails.
- The ability to lift and carry 50 lbs.
- The ability to walk, kneel, bend, stoop, sit, crouch, drive vehicles, and climb ladders on regular and ongoing basis.
- Exposure to various noise levels on a daily basis.

- Working outdoors in inclement weather, including cold, rain and heat, as well as night time conditions.

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change or new ones may be assigned at any time with or without notice.

COMPENSATION: \$24-\$26 per hour depending on experience

TO APPLY: Interested parties may apply by submitting a MS Word or PDF **Letter of Interest** and **Resume** to jobs@descansogardens.org with “NURSERYHORT2025” in the subject line. We will accept resumes until the position is filled.

No phone calls, please.

Descanso Gardens Foundation acknowledges that equal opportunity for all persons is a fundamental human value. Each employee will be considered based on individual ability and merit, without regard to race, color, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status.