



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



By the Numbers

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

1,207,652

visits to the Gardens, half of which were free of charge



14,301

Accessions in the living collection

15,597

hours contributed by volunteers to virtually every aspect of the Gardens' operations — a 17% increase year over year

21,579

plants sold to the community — a 14% increase year over year

9,192

different kinds of plants, 10% of which are of wild collected origin

1,303

volunteers participated individually or in corporate, school, and service organization projects—a 89% increase year over year



\$7.9M

total admissions revenue from nonresident ticket sales

36,608

Gardens of Golden Gate Park Passes sold for visitors to enjoy all three Gardens over three days

7,862

member households



23,877

children served through experiential programs

126,000

individuals served through public programs beyond youth education



To everyone who enjoys and supports the Gardens,

Thank you for all you do to help the Gardens grow and thrive!

This past year marked our second as the Gardens of Golden Gate Park, combining the Conservatory of Flowers, Japanese Tea Garden, and San Francisco Botanical Garden under a unified public/private partnership. Thanks to the hard work and support of our donors, members, volunteers, board, staff, and partners, we've accomplished quite a lot in two years.

We were thrilled to be recognized among the Top Ten Gardens according to CultureComp by Morey Consulting, a leading firm researching and serving cultural institutions who seek to improve visitor experience. While we continue to have record-breaking attendance and are now among the top ten most visited public gardens in the United States, attendance isn't the only metric considered for this ranking. Our score also included market capture, admission price, Google rating, and visit frequency. CultureComp included 83 gardens, arboretums, and conservatories in their analysis.

We're already making good progress on our comprehensive joint strategic plan. Our new brand identity system designed by Office has received multiple industry awards. Membership at the Gardens is at an all-time high. New programs and partnerships are attracting new and diverse audiences to the Gardens.

We celebrated the 20th anniversary of the reopening of the Conservatory of Flowers with historian and author Chris Pollock. Twenty years after the city and donors came together to save the Conservatory following a devastating windstorm, we expressed our appreciation and commitment to continued stewardship of this extraordinary place. We've undertaken many critical maintenance projects and started installing new interpretive signage with more to come.

At the Japanese Tea Garden, the stunning Pagoda Plaza designed by Hoichi Kurisu is now complete and open to the public, and new accessible pathways have been created opening new vistas and enhancing visitor experience. This important work was funded through admissions revenue and through the efforts of the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden, who we honored at our annual Gala for the Gardens.

Staff are now using our new nursery as the horticultural hub of activity at the Botanical Garden. Extensive tree pruning is improving the health and safety of our aging tree canopy. More than 73,000 attendees joined us for the ninth annual Flower Piano music festival, which we extended from five to ten days to ease crowding, making this beloved event even more enjoyable for everyone. This unique event captured the attention of the national media when the PBS News Hour ran a lengthy segment on Flower Piano during their evening broadcast.

While we're proud of all that we achieved together over the past year, we're even more excited about what the future holds for these incredible Gardens. We look forward to seeing you in the Gardens!

With gratitude,

Stephanie Linder
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Joseph Rothleutner
GARDEN DIRECTOR

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STEPHANIE LINDER, CEO

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GARDEN DIRECTOR



Leadership Transitions

DR. JOANNE WHITNEY RETIRES FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Joanne Whitney retired from the Gardens' Board of Directors in June 2024. Joanne served on the Board since 2018 and has been a volunteer since 2010. Over her tenure, Joanne led public and private tours of the Botanical Garden for more than 4,000 visitors as well as engaged visitors at Interpretation Stations. As a leader in the volunteer community, Joanne supported continuing education of volunteers by sharing her wide expertise around plant adaptations, plant evolution, medicinal plants, orchids, proteas, and other plant families. Joanne served on the Board of Directors as a member of the Audit Committee, Program Committee, Governance Committee, and Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Sub-Committee for Strategic Planning. Joanne has been a generous donor to the Gardens



and a Leadership Circle member for many years, and we are grateful for her service and lasting contributions and generosity to the Gardens' collections and mission.

WENDY BEAR JOINS THE GARDENS

Wendy Bear joined the Gardens in January 2024 as the Director of Finance. Wendy is an experienced non-profit professional, focused for the past ten years in managing finance, accounting, and operations in diverse non-profits with multiple programs, integrated revenue streams, and diverse reporting requirements. Wendy has proven to be a collaborative partner, strategic and analytical thinker, and a hands-on manager. Her previous positions include Chief Financial and Administrative Officer at the Children's Council of San Francisco and Associate Director at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco.



IN MEMORY OF SUE ANN LEVIN SCHIFF

Sue Ann Levin Schiff, former Executive Director of San Francisco Botanical Garden Society, passed away this year after a long battle with cancer. Sue Ann's many contributions to the Botanical Garden included her work on the Lease & Management Agreement between San Francisco Recreation and Parks and the nonprofit that continues to serve as the basis for our expanded partnership of the Gardens of Golden Gate Park. Sue Ann oversaw the creation of our most popular public program, Flower Piano, and continued to support the event as a sponsor after her retirement. We remembered and celebrated Sue Ann, dedicating the opening night of Flower Piano in her honor. May her memory be a blessing to all who knew her.





Youth in the Garden

The Gardens of Golden Gate Park provided a range of engaging learning experiences for children of all ages this year. At the Conservatory of Flowers, school groups sniffed tropical spices, measured themselves against a giant philodendron leaf, and discovered how some plants turn the tables on animals by eating them. At the Japanese Tea Garden, kids from the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department Junior Guides program enjoyed sketching activities led by our high school interns. And at San Francisco Botanical Garden, a new Story Book Stroll in the Children's Garden opened many new opportunities for families to enjoy the interactive green space!

A generous gift from Maggie Gosselin and family, who are fans of the Children's Garden, allowed Garden Educator Erick Monroy to construct a flexible system to display books for children and families to enjoy as they walk around the Children's Garden. The first book to be displayed was *Señorita Mariposa* by Ben Gundersheimer, a bilingual book featuring both Spanish and English text, following monarch butterflies through their migration. In a stroke of serendipity, the author, a Latin Grammy award-winning



musician also known as MISTER G, performed in the Celebration Garden in January and encouraged the crowd of 200 to check out the Stroll.

When a pair of local author/illustrators, Eunice and Sabrina Moyle, reached out to see about working together to promote their book called *A Seed Will Grow* they immediately saw the potential for the Story Book Stroll. The authors modified their pop-up book to fit the display, provided

translations in Chinese and Spanish, and joined us in the Botanical Garden for an Earth Day event that attracted more than 500 people to the Great Meadow.

The Story Book Stroll just received yet another update, following a recent reading by local children's author Kellie Menéndez, sponsored by the Garden's Library. Go see *Patterns, Patterns Everywhere* in the Children's Garden this winter for children of all ages to enjoy.

"We've had the pleasure of seeing how many communities are using the books as Story Walks, but your [Story Book Stroll] is the most comprehensive and compelling. In addition to the QR code component, the integrated setting of San Francisco Botanical Garden can't be beat!" — BEN GUNDERSHEIMER (MISTER G)





Plant Collections

NEW NURSERY

Much is happening behind the fence of our new nursery facility, and there is plenty more to come. This past year the head house has been fully furnished and is growing into its role as a center of operations for both the Horticulture team at the Botanical Garden and the Collections & Conservation team.

The offices have been outfitted, supplies stocked, and ample, thoughtfully designed storage has been provided for equipment. With the new nursery operating entirely electrically, there is a fleet of electric battery charging stations for electric power tools, and plenty of room to clean and store them. There is also space to have meetings to plan all of the great work happening in the Gardens.

An exciting new feature is the seed room which is equipped with various tools to weigh, clean, process, and store seeds for the living collection. This room will be vital for preserving the viability of seeds collected from the Gardens and received from outside institutions and researchers. A refrigerator is also available to facilitate stratification, improving germination for certain plant species.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, we are proud to share that we have hired Plant Propagation Manager Jessica Fernandez. Jessica is responsible for relaunching the new nursery volunteer program to support the propagation of plants for retail sale,



and work in partnership with the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Nursery Specialist to manage volunteers and maintain the nursery facility. Since starting, there has been a lot of work to prepare for the program such as developing a business plan, trialing soil medias, developing phytosanitary procedures, and making production lists. We know that our volunteers are eager to help us grow plants so that our visitors and greater community can bring a piece of the Gardens home with plants propagated on site.

TREE WORK

The Living Collection of the Gardens features hundreds of trees across three distinct locations. From the magnificent magnolias at the Botanical Garden to sculpted pines at the Japanese Tea Garden and cocoa-bearing trees with potential for chocolate at the Conservatory, these trees are integral to the Gardens' unique narrative and serve as iconic ambassadors.

Trees have played a pivotal role in shaping the ecology of Golden Gate Park, which was established on shifting sand dunes. Initial plantings commenced in 1871; as the root systems expanded, they stabilized the landscape, and their canopies provided protection against environmental elements. This facilitated the establishment of layers of smaller, more sensitive tree plantings below, enhancing the park's pastoral aesthetic.

These original tree plantings occurred eight years before the construction of the Conservatory of Flowers and twenty-three years prior to the opening of the Japanese Tea Garden. The site for the Japanese Tea Garden was influenced by the presence of a knoll with established Monterey pines (*Pinus radiata*), which provided a natural framework for the garden's design.



Now, 130 years after the Japanese Tea Garden opened its gates, ongoing arboricultural management practices—including routine pruning, disease management, and structural training—preserve the aesthetic appeal of these pines while promoting their longevity. Several of the cherished pines framing the tea house and gift shop are from earliest plantings in the Park.

Among the diverse tree species throughout the Park, the Monterey cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) is perhaps the most iconic. While these trees are known for their dramatic, windswept forms along the immediate coast, most of the Monterey cypress in the Park exhibit towering, straight trunks with their first limbs rising 40 feet or more above the ground. This unique form results from planting young trees in groves, where competition for light encourages upward growth. Today, many of these cypress at the Botanical Garden remain in their prime—tall, robust, and generally

healthy—though some display signs of wear from two significant challenges: gravity and storm winds.

To enhance the resilience of the Botanical Garden's cypress against their own weight and storm damage, many underwent structural pruning in the past year. The objectives of this pruning included reducing weight on overloaded limbs, removing weakly attached branches, and eliminating unsightly deadwood. These crown restorations serve a crucial role; by lightening the load, they protect not only the individual trees but also the layers of other plants within our museum-quality living collection.

Ongoing stewardship of these towering giants adds a sense of grandeur and history, reminding visitors of the Park's rich botanical heritage. As we continue to nurture our heritage trees and expand our living collection, we invite visitors to develop a deep appreciation for these trees. Together, they form a living testament to the beauty and resilience of nature, inviting exploration, reflection, and inspiration for generations to come.



Flower Piano

For its ninth year, Flower Piano transformed San Francisco Botanical Garden into the city's own alfresco concert hall, where everyone was invited to play and listen. This year, the Gardens extended this beloved festival for a ten-day run September 13-22, 2024.



The Gardens of Golden Gate Park are deeply grateful to our generous lead sponsors, including presenting sponsor Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, as well as the John and Marcia Goldman Foundation, Elman Legacy Foundation, and Ingrid Tauber and Frank Taforo, and all the sponsors who make Flower Piano possible. The generous support of sponsors and partners is crucial to the success of this event.

In 2024, Flower Piano once again attracted thousands of visitors, enhanced community engagement, and garnered positive media coverage. With expanded programming and a longer duration, this year's event solidified its place as a staple in San Francisco's cultural landscape. We remain thankful to our partners at Sunset Piano, along with the many musicians, performers, community partners, and volunteers who made this event possible.

Flower Piano 2024 welcomed more than 70,000 attendees. This was a 6% increase from the 2023 event and the largest event attendance ever to the San Francisco Botanical Garden.

As with previous years, Flower Piano was free for San Francisco residents, participants in the Museums for All program, veterans, and active-duty military personnel. We saw a 103% increase in member attendance this year, and an impressive 95% increase in admissions revenue from the prior year.

The event's volunteer participation was robust with 135 volunteers contributing more than 1,135 hours. Many were first-time volunteers, helping to create an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for all. In partnership with 14 community

organizations, we offered a wide range of programming designed to engage diverse audiences.

Continuing for its second year, the Flower Piano Lounge offered an intimate concert experience over two weekends. With food and drinks, comfortable lounge seating, and private access to performances, the Lounge generated \$141,000 in earned revenue from 3,800 attendees and hosted a sold-out opening night for an audience of more than 700.

The opening night event featured renowned artists, including tango pianist and composer Alejandro Del Valle and Orquesta La Moderna Tradición. Additional Lounge performances included Robert Dehlinger's Alpha Rhythm Kings, Martin Luther McCoy, and Lavay Smith and the Red Hot Skillet Lickers.

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More than 90 performances took place during the ten-day event, featuring musicians, poets, dancers, and ensembles from various genres, including classical, jazz, world music, and contemporary styles. One of the notable performances was a concert in the Redwood Grove by Kennedy Realness entitled *Soundcheck: Gardens of Golden Gate Park*. This original score was commissioned by Sunset Piano and honored the practice of conservation, preservation, and innovation for future generations.

Featured performers included talents like Van-Anh Nguyen, Kev Choice, and Tammy Hall alongside favorite artists such as Sixth Station Trio with a Studio Ghibli tribute and John Brothers Piano Company from Oakland. The second weekend highlighted our first Flower Piano Fashion Show produced in collaboration with fashion house Das Owl City, the City College of San Francisco, and the SF State University Fashion Department. Models walked a garden runway, with live piano music provided by Danny Sullivan of the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus. A key highlight of the fashion show was its focus on diversity and inclusion, with designers from a range of backgrounds and models of all ages, genders, and body types. This fusion of fashion and nature made the Flower Piano Fashion Show one of the most memorable new features of the 2024 event.

Flower Piano 2024 continued to build new partnerships with community and arts organizations, including the San Francisco Ballet who led us in a day-long series of programs on Friday, September 13. A daytime Family Dance-Along was followed by an evening performance by SF Ballet Orchestra which included a special intermission performance of chair dancing led by SF Ballet School faculty member Cecelia Beam, SF Ballet School pianist Billy Wolfe, and dancers from SF Ballet School's Dance Class for People with Parkinson's.

As in previous years, a visitor survey was conducted to gather feedback. Of 790 respondents, 93% rated their satisfaction with Flower Piano as positive to excellent with over 99% of respondents recommending this event to others. Respondents gave overwhelming positive comments professing their loyalty to Flower Piano, such as "It is a wonderful event, and I will be attending every year for as long as I can. It brings joy to everyone who hears the spontaneous performances and the prepared performances. It's creative and filled with love."

Thanks to generous support, the Gardens continue to connect people to both nature and music. We hope you will join us again for our 10th Anniversary of Flower Piano September 12-21, 2025.

For feedback, further information, and sponsorship details please contact Brendan Lange, Director of Advancement, at 415-661-1316 x416 or blange@gggp.org.



Sponsors

MAXWELL/HANRAHAN FOUNDATION
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INGRID TAUBER & FRANK TAFORO
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Volunteers & Interns



Volunteers and Interns are instrumental in the success of the Gardens of Golden Gate Park.



The Environmental Fellows Program at the Yale School of the Environment is a 12-week summer fellowship opportunity that seeks to diversify the environmental field by cultivating the career aspirations of master's and doctoral students from historically underrepresented groups by connecting students to work opportunities in environmental nonprofits, grantmakers, and government sectors.



AN EXCITING YEAR!

This year, we continued to engage our passionate community of volunteers and interns across all three gardens. Volunteers and interns were essential in helping to care for our plant collections, assisting with a wide variety of programs, and providing visitor support during key events. From educational tours to special programming, their dedication continues to drive our mission forward.

WELCOME NEW COLLEGE CORPS INTERNS

As we concluded the inaugural year of our nine College Corps interns from San Francisco State University, we were thrilled to expand the program by welcoming ten new interns for the upcoming fiscal year. This collaboration continues to offer students hands-on experience in climate action and conservation, allowing them to contribute meaningfully while earning academic credit.

YALE ENVIRONMENTAL FELLOW AT THE GARDENS

We were delighted to welcome our second Yale Environmental Fellow, Bennett Olupo, to the Programs & Partnerships team. We are grateful to the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation for sponsoring the Yale Environmental Fellows and initially providing this wonderful connection. Bennett used his background in environmental education, community organizing, and food sovereignty to deliver public programs for the people who visit the Gardens. Bennett played a crucial role in mentoring our summer College Corp interns while coordinating public programs including the popular Flower Piano festival.

CONNECTIONS WITH SERVICE GROUPS

Throughout the year, we had the pleasure of hosting 37 volunteer service events, partnering with organizations such as CISCO, Salesforce, Impact4Good, KPMG, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, and Perkins Coie. Collectively, these groups dedicated over 6,000 hours to the Gardens, contributing more than \$15,000 in support of our volunteer program. These service events offer a unique opportunity for corporations and community groups to connect with nature while giving back, and we look forward to fostering even more partnerships in the coming year.

Interested in volunteering?

Visit gggp.org/volunteer to learn more and to complete the online application. We have many opportunities!





Programs & Partnerships

BONPOP

On August 31, for the very first time, the Botanical Garden hosted the BonPOP Obon festival organized in partnership with KOHO SF. KOHO is a non-profit arts organization in San Francisco's Japantown that aims to revitalize the neighborhood through culture and community. BonPOP, now running in its third year, is a reimagined Obon Odori event that welcomed everyone to experience the rich Japanese tradition of honoring ancestors through dance, song, and rituals. This inclusive event invited people of all religions, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds to join in the festivities. More than 2,100 visitors came to BonPOP.



GAMELAN IN THE GARDEN

For the second year in a row, on June 8, the Botanical Garden hosted Gamelan in the Garden in partnership with Gamelan Sekar Jaya. Gamelan Sekar Jaya fosters artistic exchange between Bali and the United States through residencies, workshops, performances, and the creation of innovative new works for music and dance. Performances were held throughout the afternoon in different locations in the Botanical Garden featuring Gamelan Sekar Jaya's jegog ensemble and treating audiences to a wide array of family-friendly dance and music styles from across Bali.



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IN A LANDSCAPE

In May, the Gardens welcomed back In a Landscape: Classical Music in the Wild, a nonprofit outdoor concert series. Founded in 2016 by classical pianist Hunter Noack, In A Landscape transports a 9-foot Steinway grand piano on a flatbed trailer to scenic locations all over the Western US. This was the third performance offered by In A Landscape in the Botanical Garden to date, and this year Hunter graced us with a bonus performance at Flower Piano!



GIFT AT THE GARDENS: NEW SUSTAINABLE HOLIDAY MARKET

The Gardens hosted more than 70 exhibitors including makers of sustainable goods, plant societies and non-profits, alongside upwards of 20 program providers, with active participation from our Bookstore, Plant Shop, Education, and Library teams. More than 2,600 patrons attended and engaged with 30 volunteers and interns.



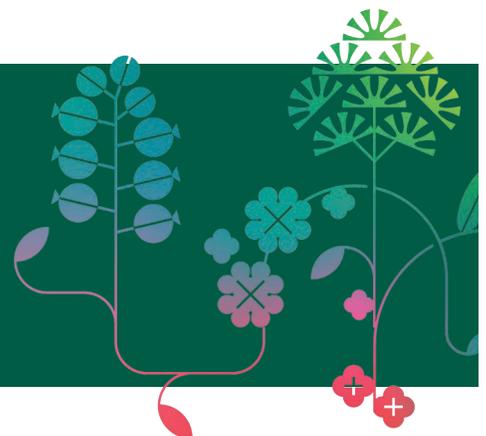
GALA FOR THE GARDENS

In May, supporters gathered for the Gala for the Gardens, the Gardens' signature fundraising event of the year, and raised \$527,000 to support plant conservation and collections, lifelong learning and engagement, and making the Gardens accessible to everyone.

The Gala was led by Committee Co-Chairs PWP Landscape Architecture Directing Partner Adam Greenspan and KPMG Lead Partner Susan Zetzer. State Senator Scott Wiener provided remarks and presented honorees Dr. Frank Almeda and the Friends of the Japanese Tea Garden with certificates of recognition for their contributions to the Gardens and community at-large. San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department General Manager Phil Ginsburg introduced Mayor London Breed, who provided an official welcome on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco. She also presented Gardens Board Chair Sarah Ryan and CEO Stephanie Linder an official proclamation making May 18, 2024 "Gardens of Golden Gate Park Day." Co-host of KQED's Forum Alexis Madrigal emceed the event and also shared remarks about the cultural power of plants.



Thank you to everyone who helped make our *Gala for the Gardens* a marvelous success! Together we raised \$527,000 for the Gardens of Golden Gate Park.





Financial Report

Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2023 and June 30, 2024

ASSETS	2024	2023
Cash & Investments	\$ 22,298,810	\$ 21,399,642
Accounts and Pledges Receivable	1,653,182	832,694
Property & Equipment	772,432	6,678,903
Other	508,343	484,580
Total Assets	\$ 25,232,767	\$ 29,395,819
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	2024	2023
Current Liabilities	\$ 2,083,969	\$ 2,145,142
Noncurrent Liabilities	37,946	126,096
Net Assets	23,110,852	27,124,581
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 25,232,767	\$ 29,395,819

Statement of Activities

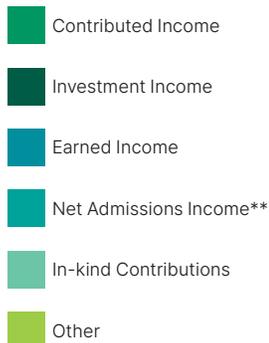
As of June 30, 2023 and June 30, 2024

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2024	2023
Contributed Income	\$ 4,900,706	\$ 3,123,280
Investment Income	1,785,321	1,369,745
Earned Income	1,296,364	1,373,962
Total Admissions Income*	7,945,896	7,728,007
In-kind Contributions	79,633	73,163
Other	300,635	26,697
Total Support and Revenue	\$ 16,308,555	\$ 13,694,854
Net Admissions Income due to SFRPD	\$ (5,830,239)	\$ (5,798,058)
Net Support and Revenue	\$ 10,478,316	\$ 7,896,796
EXPENSES	2024	2023
Program Services	\$ 6,023,182	\$ 5,256,586
Fundraising & Development	1,249,047	658,604
Management & General	1,117,607	960,920
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 8,389,836	\$ 6,876,110
Gift of New Nursery to City and County of San Francisco	\$ 6,102,209	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 14,492,045	\$ 6,876,110
Change in Net Assets	\$ (4,013,729)	\$ 1,020,686

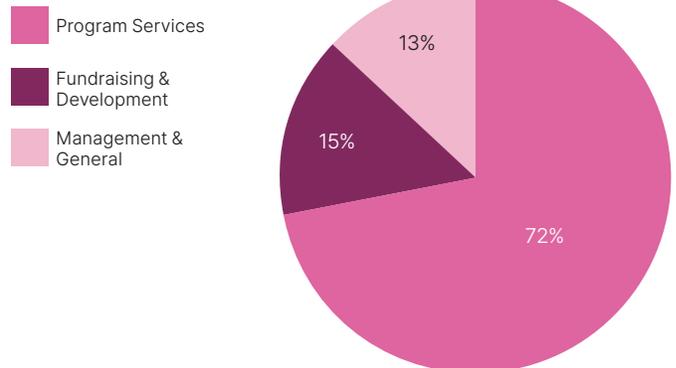
Sources & Uses of Funds

12 months ended June 30, 2024

SOURCES OF FUNDS



USES OF FUNDS



*Admissions receipts from Conservatory of Flowers, Japanese Tea Garden, and San Francisco Botanical Garden

**Total admissions income – net admissions income due to San Francisco Recreation and Parks, which provides horticulture and facilities operations for the Gardens



Donors

Thank you to our donors July 2023 - June 2024

\$100,000+

Judy Fayollat
Institute of Museum & Library Services
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The Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation

\$50,000-\$99,999

The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment
5 Ryan Foundation
The John & Marcia Goldman Foundation
The Kennedy Foundation
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Robert & Nancy Soper Trust

\$25,000-\$49,999

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\$5,000-\$9,999

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\$2,500-\$4,999

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Emily Brooke
Arden Bucklin-Sporer & Dr. Karl Sporer
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A LASTING LEGACY

The Gardens' Legacy Circle offers an opportunity to ensure future generations can experience the wonder of nature in the heart of San Francisco. As Ruth Wilcox shared, "Our family has always loved walking in the woods, and when we moved to San Francisco, we knew we needed to be near Golden Gate Park. The Gardens became a place of peace for us — a balm even after a grueling work week. As we became more involved as members and volunteers, it felt natural to make a provision in our estate for the Gardens."

For Ken and Ruth Wilcox, leaving a gift to the Gardens of Golden Gate Park is about sharing that same sense of wonder with future generations. "Our family has enjoyed the Gardens' special collections... and we want others to have similar experiences. You want to leave a gift for those you love, and for a place that holds meaning and memories."

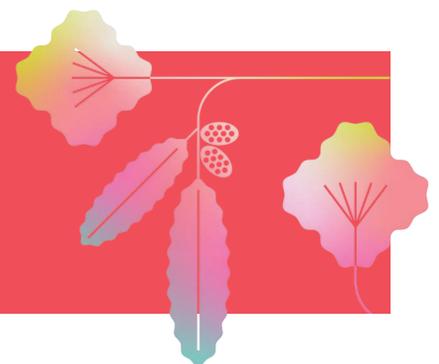
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We extend our deepest gratitude to the estates of our Legacy Circle members who thoughtfully included the Garden in their plans, leaving a lasting legacy that will support our mission for generations to come.

The Mitteness Barker Family Trust
The Brown Family Trust

Interested in joining the Legacy Circle?

Learn more about how you can help sustain this urban oasis for years to come by contacting Lynn Eve Komaromi, Director of Leadership Giving, at lekomaromi@ggpp.org or 415.661.1316 ext. 418.





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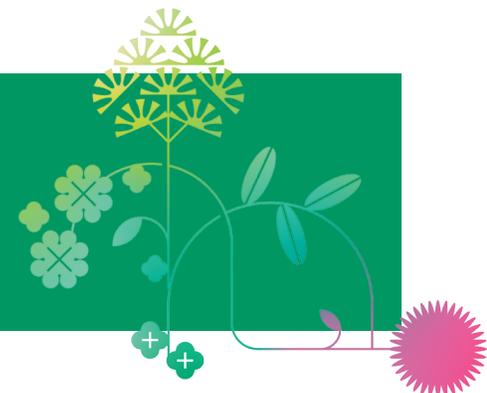


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Each gift enables us to offer unparalleled opportunities for inspiration and learning. We would like to extend our gratitude to those who generously contributed to the Gardens.



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