



Arboretum Outreach Center: Conservation Landscape Internship

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Introduction

Over the past three months, I have worked alongside **environmental specialists, arborists, and horticulturalists** to gain a stronger understanding of the biodiversity that exists within the green spaces of Maryland's Campus, and to learn more about our agricultural practices. I have had the opportunity to learn about **the native trees, flowers, and shrubs** on campus and the **natural processes** that occur within our gardens to keep water and nutrients cycling through changes in season. I have also had the opportunity to strengthen my plant and bird identification skills through research activities and observations from my time spent outdoors!



Image UMD Community Learning Garden
(<https://umdphgarden.wixsite.com/commlearninggarden>)



Image UMD Arboretum & Botanical Garden
(<https://arboretum.umd.edu/about/mission>)

Why does it matter?

- * This organization is largely responsible for the beautiful gardens and greenspaces that cover the UMD campus. Without them, these plants would not receive proper care and die with the change of season causing a reduction in the overall biodiversity on campus. The outreach center also shares a large role in educating students on how to garden and harvest their own food through the community learning garden.

Activities:

- Garden and tree maintenance activities such as weeding, planting, watering
- Supporting volunteer project days
- Plant propagation, GIS data work, and occasional social media content work
- Assisting in sustainability efforts for pollinators, native plants, and stormwater gardens
- Create educational activities for different age groups (ex. Tree scavenger hunt)



Image from the UMD Pollinator Garden at ESJ
(<https://arboretum.umd.edu/pollinator-garden-edward-st-john-learning-and-teaching-center>)

Site Information:

- * Arboretum Outreach Center
- * 3931 Stadium Dr, College Park, MD 20742-5025
- * Meg Smolinski
- * This site strives to be an instrument of horticultural distinction, landscape design and interpretation, and place-making reflecting the university's education, research, and service missions
- * Site Goals are to enhance the campus' aesthetic and promote awareness of the conservation and preservation of our natural environment

Future Work:

- * The center remains actively engaged in leading volunteer initiatives across campus. Their ongoing efforts involve cleaning up littered or overgrown areas.
- * A particularly noteworthy project they are currently undertaking and plan to continue in the upcoming semesters is the ban on mylar balloon use within the campus. As they strive toward this objective, they aim to raise awareness among students about alternative, more sustainable options!

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