In 2017, the Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH) celebrated 40 years of cultivating a greener community. Over the past four decades, we have worked to transform communities by focusing on the livelihoods of neighborhoods and the lives of individuals. DCH’s education and outreach programs continue to motivate people to become gardeners and horticulturists in their own right. Equipped with a renewed mission to inspire individuals and communities through the power of plants, 2017 was a year of extended success and a focus on strengthening the organization from the inside out. With our staff expertise and professional partners throughout the state, we continue to elevate the public consciousness and understanding of why horticulture is so important – the proven health benefits to our minds and bodies; the proven environmental benefits to our air, water, and land; and the proven economic and civic benefits within our neighborhoods statewide. On behalf of DCH’s Board of Directors and staff, I want to thank each of you for creating, supporting, and sustaining this historic organization, and I ask you to continue on this exciting path forward as we look to the future.

Sincerely,
Vikram Krishnamurthy, Executive Director

**2017 IMPACT**

- **382** DCH volunteers with 3,835 hours of service in 2017
- **280** kids impacted by DCH programs in 2017
- **303** trees planted in 2017 through volunteer, corporate, and government-sponsored events and programs
- **30** different varieties of vegetable crops grown at the E.D. Robinson Urban Farm
Community Forestry

Collaborations are at the heart of DCH’s tree stewardship efforts. Through partnerships with schools, corporations, state and local government, industry partners, neighborhood residents and DCH’s Branches to Chances program, in 2017 we brought people together to plant over 300 trees in New Castle County. Far more than simply increasing the region’s canopy coverage, trees provide livable wage job opportunities, become a highly engaging learning opportunity for middle school children, support the stabilization of vacant and abandoned lots, and are instrumental in supporting overall health and wellness.

Urban Farm

The E. D. Robinson Urban Farm at 12th and Brandywine streets continued its vital role as a primary producer of fresh and locally-grown fruits and vegetables for the residents of the 11th Street Bridge community and other Wilmington neighborhoods. Under the guidance of our urban farmer, the farm started specializing in the production of blackberries in 2017, which has become a signature crop for DCH. In addition to expanding our satellite locations in conjunction with other local nonprofits, we also partnered with more local businesses and corporations to grow our network of volunteers.

Volunteers

As one of DCH’s most vital assets in spreading our mission and our work, our deep and expansive volunteer corps exceeded expectations once again in 2017 by surpassing the number of hours volunteered in 2016 by more than 150 hours. Whether it was through a corporate-sponsored day of service or a personal interest driving them to volunteer with DCH, we took their clean hands and fresh legs and put them to work in our DCH gardens, roadside landscapes, local cemeteries, our urban farm, city parks, county parcels, and anywhere in between. Thank you!

www.thedch.org
Branches to Chances
Graduating our 66th trainee from the Branches to Chances Return to Work program, 2017 was a pivotal year thanks to the financial support we received from the Delaware Criminal Justice Council and Comenity Bank. With this financial support, DCH was able to augment the training curriculum with additional professional program partners, expand employment opportunities and hire all of our trainees throughout the 12-week program. All of the graduates successfully found employment at the conclusion of the program, creating a strong foundation for a bright future.

Community Gardens
Public interest in community gardening continues to grow. To keep pace, in 2017 DCH’s role shifted to an increased focus on providing resources for technical expertise, hands-on instruction, and material support for community garden design, start-up, and maintenance. Through strengthening existing programs such as Clarence Fraim Boys and Girls Club and the Ministry of Caring’s Secret Garden, as well as our leadership role in the DE Urban Farm and Food Coalition, DCH has continued as a leading voice for food justice at the state and local levels.

Public Landscapes
In 2017, our Public Landscapes team designed, developed, and maintained more than 40 public sites and rights-of-way throughout the city of Wilmington and parts of New Castle County. By beautifying traffic medians, urban highways and byways, and public spaces with native plants and attractive designs, DCH not only provided motorists and pedestrians alike with a cheery welcome on their morning commute or evening drive home, but we also provided a needed habitat for crucially-important local pollinators.
In 2017, DCH lost a true champion of our mission and values with the passing of Helen L. Eliason. Over the years, Helen was a prominent member of our volunteer corps and a leading force in bringing horticulture to those who may not otherwise be exposed to its power and beauty. She created DCH’s partnership and gardening program with the Fraim Boys & Girls Club through a combination of passion, persistence, and strong will and encouraged a greater expansion of our community gardens program throughout the city, reflecting her passion for the interconnections among our natural world and children’s education programming. DCH is in good company with other local youth education and literacy organizations, causes she cared about deeply, as well as University of Delaware’s Goodstay Gardens, which she helped restore, preserve, and maintain. As a major supporter of DCH, Helen was instrumental in establishing our major endowments with the Delaware Community Foundation, including the Greening & Education Fund and Tree Endowment, which provide direct operational and programmatic support on an annual basis. Through her generosity and active membership in the Helen Ayers Detchon Society for planned giving, Helen continues to support DCH and the programs she helped mold over her more than 30 years of involvement with our organization. She will be greatly missed, and her memory will always be at the forefront of our work in the years to come.

FA 2017 FINANCIALS

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE
$1,546,600
October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017
- Program Service - $564,142
- Contributions & Grants - $531,961
- Other - $328,518
- Fundraising Events - $121,973

OPERATING EXPENSES
$1,487,755
October 1, 2016 - September 30, 2017
- Program Services - $1,020,812
- Fundraising Expenses - $280,677
- Administration & Management - $186,266

For more information, please visit our profile at www.guidestar.org/profile/51-0252857.

IN RECOGNITION | HELEN L. ELIASON

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The Helen Ayers Detchon Society exists to recognize friends who include DCH in their long-term financial plans. For information about planned giving, please contact Marcia Stephenson, Director of Advancement at mstephenson@thedch.org.