Position Title: System-Wide Gardener  
Reports To: Director of Operations  
Supervises: 1-3  
Requirements: City of Buffalo residency Valid NYS Driver’s License

Position Summary:

The Conservancy’s Gardener, under the supervision of the Director of Operations, is responsible for maintaining approximately twenty acres of certain special and high-profile gardens throughout the Buffalo Olmsted Park System, with a major focus on: The Japanese Garden, Marcy Casino Rose Garden, River Rock Garden, Cazenovia Casino Circle and South Park Circle; this position also assists with other focal gardens/beds system-wide as needed seasonally or as requested/assigned in each District. This is a hands-on position utilizing a mobile unit to serve the entire Olmsted system.

In correlation to the nonprofit mission of the Conservancy, the Gardener is responsible for supporting and implementing maintenance work and planting plans for the prioritized gardens and ensuring that horticultural best practices and Olmsted design elements are followed. Plantings and maintenance are to occur throughout the system on a routine basis, and seasonal staff are to be trained by the Gardener and mentored to perform accordingly. Peak use and visitation times of these special garden areas varies and requires vigilant planning, care and timely work to showcase their beauty.

Additional winter responsibilities, which may be more administrative in nature, will be assigned and identified based on needs, master planning priorities, special project funding availability, etc. All assignments and plans are reviewed by the Director of Operations in conjunction with the Director of Planning and Advocacy, and Director of Parks Administration.

This position is non-exempt according to the Fair Labor Standards Act and the NYS Department of Labor rules and regulations. The work week may include flexible schedules depending on the assigned workload and site conditions, with some weekend and holiday work possible.
Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- Overall daily care, hands-on maintenance, management and support for assigned special gardens in the Olmsted Park system
- Responsible for the inspection of all assigned garden areas, following a prescribed plan of work, and reporting any needs or deficiencies beyond the scope of general routine maintenance or set horticultural practices
- Provides input into the development of horticulture, planting and/or routine maintenance plans for the prioritized specialty gardens, and other focal gardens, in coordination with the Director of Operations and Director of Parks Administration
- In coordination with the MLK greenhouse staff, District Supervisors, and the Director of Operations assesses and prepares for annual plant material production for seasonal installation
- Assists District Supervisors via a team approach in supporting and further educating their staff in the ongoing maintenance of the garden areas assigned including clean-up, planting, weeding, pruning, watering, fertilization, etc. as required to sustain efforts
- Responsible for staying current with trends, gardening practices, plant health, infestations, etc., and relays findings as appropriate to workforce and staff
- Leads by example with quality work ethic, employee mentoring and training, including end of year evaluations of assigned seasonal staff
- Manages assigned workforce, including assistance and oversight with periodic volunteer efforts, interns, and assigned city employees, and ensures work assignments and expectations are met as set by the Director of Operations
- Coordinates and communicates with Community Outreach Manager on volunteer projects within the garden areas, identifying and communicating needs, developing work plans and assisting with volunteer oversight as needed
- Is knowledgeable of and follows safety standards and procedures; undergoes required trainings as necessary, and reports any/all issues or incidents
- Responsible for safe care and use of equipment utilized, as well as coordination for equipment usage and repair needs, and maintains such communication with the Director of Operations
- Is required to utilize a Conservancy vehicle; requiring a valid driver’s license.
- Attends Conservancy operational staff meetings or District meetings
- Any and all other duties as assigned by management or the Director of Operations
Qualifications and Attributes:

- At least 3 years of experience equivalent to job responsibilities.
- Knowledge of standard horticultural methods and industry techniques for park maintenance, floriculture, green sustainability, plus standards and requirements for related garden equipment and safety techniques.
- Knowledge of Olmsted design principles and preferences pertaining to garden features, and familiarization with the Olmsted park system.
- Management experience and track record of quality performance with effective team oversight and an ability to communicate and motivate others.
- Experience in training workforce personnel on-site, including volunteers, and developing appropriate job assignments, monitoring progress, and communicating effectively with superiors and team members.
- Flexible management style with workload revisions given changing priorities, weather, or critical need situations.
- Resourcefulness and creativity in utilizing staff, equipment and/or supplies approved within an annual budget.
- Holding a CDL is a plus.

Working Conditions:

- Primarily outdoor hands-on work. May perform in periodic heavy weather conditions. Some office work and paperwork may be required.
- Job duties may require an employee to bend, reach, stoop, stand and/or walk for extended periods, as well as lift and/or move heavy objects at times up to 50 lbs.
- Duties may require driving distances between gardens or system locations, and to potentially operate standard to heavy park or gardening machinery.
- Must continuously foster a team approach to working in the park environment.
- Must be able to adapt to ever changing resources and limited budget.

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. is committed to diversity in the workplace. Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer.

This job description is intended to identify and list the responsibilities, duties and qualifications for the position. It cannot be considered all-inclusive, however, as changing organizational circumstances can result in changes to some of those responsibilities, duties and qualifications. Further, every task supporting the functioning of the position may not be listed or not listed in detail. This job description does not constitute a contract of employment.

Updated: March 6, 2020