

Complete Online Application by January 9, 2017

November 8, 2016

Thank you for your interest in our 2017 UC Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program! If you enjoy gardening, and want to teach others how to garden sustainably, this may be the program for you! Please read below to learn more about the program and whether it may be a match for you.

UC Master Gardeners extend research-based information by conducting workshops and demonstrations, diagnosing plant and pest problems, speaking to community groups, educating teachers and parents at school gardens, and answering gardening questions at fairs and farmers markets as well as on our email and phone helplines. By training Master Gardener volunteers, we empower neighborhoods to create their own solutions and foster healthier gardens, communities and a sustainable environment.

Since 1993, we have trained 1233 Master Gardener volunteers who have served 1,540,559 Los Angeles County residents and earned 66,558 continuing education hours.

In 2015-2016, our 285 Master Gardener volunteers logged 17,604 volunteer hours and 4,211 continuing education hours helping 119,789 Los Angeles County residents at 311 locations (96 community gardens, 127 school gardens, 10 senior gardens, 8 homeless and battered-women's shelters, and 70 fairs, farmers markets and phone and email helplines).

Overview

- Our program is open to Los Angeles County residents over 18 years of age.
- We're looking for 1) experienced community volunteers who already 2) know the basics of gardening, 3) have given public presentations, 4) have worked with people of diverse backgrounds, 5) have initiated and carried through with successful projects, and 6) have access to a computer and have basic working familiarity with internet and email.
- We'll present University of California research-based information to promote sustainable horticultural practices in home, community and school landscapes.
- Classes will meet for 13 weeks on every Saturday from February 18 through May 20, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Pasadena. Meetings start promptly at 9:00 am. You must attend the first class on February 18. After the first class, you can miss only one meeting with prior notice.
- Instruction in English will include lectures, hands-on activities, and field trips to area botanical gardens and other sites (carpooling is recommended).
- Acceptance letters will be emailed January 23, 2017.

If you are accepted into our 2017 Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program

- You will be emailed an acceptance letter on January 23 with your first class assignments and due dates – all to be completed prior to the first day of class.
- You will be emailed a Live Scan form and list of Live Scan locations in L.A. County for required fingerprinting and criminal background check by the California Department of Justice. Fingerprinting will need to be completed no later than February 10.
- **By February 10, you will need to** pay the \$275 course fee online by credit card or by check. Partial scholarships are available upon approval.

Class Session

- Class members are called “Master Gardener Trainees” while they attend the 13-week, 78-hour training course.
- Major class topics are basic plant science, propagation, fertilization, soils, irrigation, composting, vegetable and herb and fruit gardening, ornamental plants and trees gardening, Integrated Pest Management (diseases, insects, weeds, small animals), tools, how to start community and school gardens, and community outreach techniques.
- Graduation from the class session requires 1) attendance at each week’s class (you may miss only one class with prior notice) and 2) a passing grade of at least 70% on the take-home, open-book final examination.

Volunteering

- A minimum of 50 hours of volunteering by June 30, 2018 can be accomplished in these areas:
 - Community and school gardens, farmers markets and fairs — giving workshops, responding to gardening questions.
 - Phone and e-mail helplines — answering questions.
 - Other projects you develop, which have been approved.
- While no minimum "Continuing Education" hours are required by June 30, 2018, 12 hours will be required the second and subsequent years.
- MGs must post all of their volunteer and continuing education hours onto the online MG Statewide Master Gardener Volunteer Management System. Instructions will be provided.
- For MGs to maintain active status, they must post a minimum of 25 volunteer and 12 continuing education hours annually.

Monthly Meetings

Monthly Continuing Education meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month between class sessions (June through February) from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at different garden locations.

Graduation

On the last day of class, May 20, 2017, “Master Gardener Trainees” who have completed their final exam, class evaluation, and commitment form become “First-Year Master Gardeners” and receive a Certificate of Completion of Class Instruction and Master Gardener identification badges. Passage of the final exam by at least 70% and class attendance will be confirmed later.

We hope you’ll want to continue volunteering in our program long after you’ve completed your initial minimum requirements. We have active Master Gardeners from every year’s class since 1990; they’ve volunteered thousands of hours!

Application Survey Submission

- Complete and submit the online application survey by 6:00 pm on January 9, 2017.
- The link is: <http://ucanr.edu/survey/survey.cfm?surveynumber=19238>
- If you have questions, please contact Program Coordinator Valerie Borel at vtborel@ucanr.edu by 3pm on Monday, January 9, 2017.

Regards,

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