



**New England  
Botanic Garden**  
AT TOWER HILL

## PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **Honorees recognized by New England Botanic Garden for innovative and impactful horticultural contributions**

**Awards presented on June 20 at Worcester County Horticultural Society's 183  
annual meeting**

**BOYLSTON, MA, June 24, 2024** – [New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill](#), a 200-acre garden owned and operated by the Worcester County Horticultural Society (WCHS), recently convened members and the public for its 183 annual meeting. A highlight of the event included the [presentation of a slate of awards](#) celebrating innovative and impactful horticultural contributions made by members of the community.

“Honoring those who share New England Botanic Garden’s passion for connecting people and plants is an important and deeply rooted tradition for our organization,” says Kentur Russell, Chair of the WCHS Board of Trustees. “These awards celebrate thoughtful, sustainable garden projects, individuals who are moving the field of horticulture forward, and friends of the Garden whose dedication and commitment moves our organization forward.”

**Community Greening Awards** honor the efforts of individuals, municipalities, nonprofits, or community groups using plants and gardening to bring people together or address a public need. Projects, which can take place across New England, must meet a variety of sustainability standards. Recipients are nominated each year by members of the public and selected in various categories. The 2024 Community Greening awardees include five municipalities and businesses in Massachusetts and beyond.

- **Town of Clinton, High Street Revitalization Project** – Honored as a “Best Municipally Sponsored Project,” the High Street Revitalization Project included renovating the streetscape, installing new shopfront signs, and planting wide variety of trees. The effort has enhanced the historic charm of the 19th-century town center with curb cuts and benches.
- **Town of Kennebunk, Main Street Beautification Project** – Also awarded “Best Municipally Sponsored Project,” the Town of Kennebunk is being recognized for the creation of beautiful gardens in the traffic bump-outs along Main Street. These impressive plantings enhance the experience of Main Street for residents and visitors alike.

- **Kennebunk Savings Bank** – Recognized with a Community Greening Award for “Best Storefront,” Kennebunk Savings Bank beautified their gardens with a mix of annuals, perennials, and shrubs. Their significant efforts inspired the Town of Kennebunk to take on the beautification of Main Street and demonstrate the positive impact an individual business can have on a community.
- **Page Chiropractic in Webster** – Also recognized with an award for “Best Storefront,” Page Chiropractic transformed a grass yard at their business location into a pollinator garden full of native plants that is also visually appealing for passersby. Their leadership and attention to the landscape in a heavily developed area sets an example for other individuals and businesses in the community to follow.
- **Watson Park Pollination Preservation Garden in Northborough** – Awarded for the “Best Innovative Use of Plants/Best Sustainable Use of Green Space,” this project, led by a group of dedicated individuals, involved the incorporation of native plants to a garden space at the entrance of Watson Park. The plantings support at-risk bees and butterflies.

While some of WCHS’s annual awards recognize community projects, others honor dedication to public gardens, lifetime achievement, and horticultural excellence. **The Silver Medal**, one of the organization’s highest honors recognizing commitment to WCHS over many years, was awarded to Frank Bissett. Bissett’s contributions to New England Botanic Garden are hard to overstate. He has been involved with the organization since the botanic garden was first established at Tower Hill and has contributed his time and talents in a variety of indispensable volunteer capacities over the years, tackling almost anything in his more than 5,000 hours of service. He is valued by staff for his deep knowledge of the organization and its history and is also a member of the Garden’s John Green Society. **The Alice B. Milton Award**, presented to a person for a lifetime achievement of excellence in horticulture design, honored [Julie Moir Messervy](#). Messervy is the founder and principal designer of [JMMDS](#), a landscape design studio with a commitment to sustainable and environmentally sensitive design. An author and lecturer with over three decades of experience and nine books to her name, Messervy leads the industry in landscape and garden design theory and practice.

The final category of WCHS awards recognizes the dedication and commitment of Garden volunteers. Each year, 275 people give their time to support horticultural work, educational programs, events, and more at the Garden. Joyce Hyde, of Shrewsbury was honored with the **Volunteer Award**. Hyde has dedicated roughly 280 hours in only two years’ time volunteering with the Garden. Her positivity and ability to connect with guests is valued by staff when she serves in support roles in the Garden’s Visitors Center. In addition to greeting and wayfinding, Hyde has supported programs, events, and the horticulture team.

“Our mission is to create experiences with plants that inspire people and improve the world. Whether out in the community, within the field of horticulture, or at our Garden, each of this year’s awardees helps make that mission possible,” says New England Botanic Garden CEO Grace Elton. “We hope each and every one of our celebrated awardees feels the gratitude we have for the incredible work they do.”

New England Botanic Garden is open to the public seven days from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit [nebg.org](http://nebg.org).

###

***Photo Caption and Credit:***

***About New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill***

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill is a nonprofit organization located at 11 French Drive in Boylston, Massachusetts. A regional destination, the Garden is operated on 200 acres by the Worcester County Horticultural Society, one of the oldest of its kind in the country, and is open to the public for garden viewing, trail walking, educational programs, private events, weddings, exhibitions, and more. In 2023, New England Botanic Garden was voted "Top Botanic Garden in the U.S." by *TravelAwaits*. New England Botanic Garden is an [AAM-accredited](#) museum that includes an irreplaceable collection of plants and creates opportunities for visitors to experience the wonder of plants, learn about the natural world, and make joyful connections. Learn all about New England Botanic Garden including its history, mission, and its staff at [www.nebg.org](http://www.nebg.org).

***Media Contact***

*Gitu Jain, Senior Marketing and Communications Manager  
New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill  
508-869-6111 ext. 142 | [gjain@nebg.org](mailto:gjain@nebg.org)*