

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Green Bay Botanical Garden, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College Partner to Provide Students with Hands-On Job Training

Media Contacts:

Aubrey Brennan | 920.491.3691 ext. 101 | marketing@gbbg.org

Sue Markgraf | 847.917.9654 | smarkgraf@greenmarkpr.com

(Green Bay, WI) (May 6, 2019) – The holidays may be months away, but [Green Bay Botanical Garden](#) is giving students from [Northeast Wisconsin Technical College](#) (NWTC) skill and job training this spring that will serve the Garden well come winter. A team of 10 students built a new advance ticket shed, which will support staff and volunteers during the Garden's popular Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) Garden of Lights shows.

WPS Garden of Lights is one of northeast Wisconsin's most popular holiday lights events. More than 76,000 visitors from across the state, Midwest and country visit Green Bay Botanical Garden every November and December to celebrate the holiday season. To provide for increased demand and to support a busy volunteer service team, the Garden contacted NWTC for assistance.

Through its programs and events, Green Bay Botanical Garden raises funds year-round to support education-based initiatives, which annually connects 6,000 school-aged children with plants in a four-season environment that engages, inspires and refreshes. In addition to more than 900 volunteer shifts during the 20-night WPS Garden of Lights show, Garden staff and volunteers work year-round on related projects, including restringing lights, building displays and more.

Local nonprofits contact Jeff Schlag, NWTC carpentry instructor, when they have projects that need the students' skillset but are also looking to create learning opportunities. The college's student training program spans 30 weeks and is designed to provide skill and job training.

"It seemed very natural to connect NWTC's program with our service initiatives and to provide students with job skills and training," says Susan Garot, the Garden's executive director. "We are thrilled to partner with the college and are inspired by the students' talent."

Schlag says that the Garden's projects create valuable on-the-job training for his students, but they also stepped in to build the shed because "it's about giving back to the community and the students getting to learn."

Jaeger Brusky, student project manager, adds that projects like the Garden's provide hands-on skills that lead to future job opportunities.

"Materials used to build the shed were metal studs, plywood and a metal roof, and we had to make the shed movable," Brusky says. "A lot of the stuff I had never done before. I learned all the way through the project."

Brusky and the program's nine additional students are now certified and trained in a hands-on trade, ready to become established in their respective industries.

"When prospective employers look at them, they know these recent grads can jump right in and get started," Schlag says.

The advance ticket shed will be ready for this year's WPS Garden of Lights, which begins on Friday, Nov. 29, 2019. For more information, visit www.GBBG.org.

###

Editors, please note: Captions follow for photos above. Interviews and additional high-resolution photos are available by contacting the media representatives at the top of this release.



Left Photo Caption:

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College carpentry students collaborate on the design for the Green Bay Botanical Garden's ticket shed. (Green Bay Botanical Garden photo)



Right Photo Caption:

The new ticket shed will be used by Garden staff during 2019 WPS Garden of Lights. (Green Bay Botanical Garden photo)

About Green Bay Botanical Garden

Green Bay Botanical Garden is a 100-percent, community-supported nonprofit organization that connects people with plants in an environment that engages, inspires and refreshes. First opened in 1996 and now featuring 47-acres of display gardens and natural areas, the Garden touches the lives of more than 180,000 visitors annually from northeast Wisconsin and beyond. This summer, the Garden will welcome its first butterfly exhibit, Butterflies & Blooms, featuring more than 20 native butterfly species and the plants they love. For more information about other spring happenings, visit www.GBBG.org or call 920.490.9457.