

March 31 2021

Dear prospective Master Gardener Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program! In this packet you will find:

1. The history of the Florida Master Gardener program
2. The Master Gardener Volunteer Application
3. Master Gardener Volunteer Responsibilities
4. Florida Master Gardener Annual Volunteer Agreement

This year we will select 25 candidates to participate in the Master Gardener Volunteer training program scheduled to begin on February 2022 and that will take place Wednesday night from 6:00PM- 8:00PM. and Saturdays through May 2022 It is our intent to conduct this as a virtual class. We will utilize a variety of formats, zoom, Microsoft teams, and campus extension. Therefore, participants in our 2022 class must have proficient computer skills to participate. To be considered for this year's program, you will need to complete the following:

- Application form
- Select your choices of dates/times for an interview
- Return all forms by December 2021.

If you have any questions, please contact Anthony Gross at (954) 756-8525 or [anthony.gross@ufl.edu](mailto:anthony.gross@ufl.edu). If your application is accepted. We will call and confirm an interview time during the third week of January. At current, interviews will be conducted via a zoom call.

Sincerely,

**Lorna Bravo, LEED, AP, BD+C**  
UF/IFAS Extension Broward County Director  
Urban Horticulture Agent II

## The History of the Master Gardener Program

The rapid urban growth in many areas of the United States coupled with increased interest in the environment and home gardening have prompted ever-increasing numbers of homeowner questions to County Extension Service agents. Many of these questions are seasonal in nature and are relatively easily answered assuming that one has horticultural training.

In 1972, an innovative Extension Agent in the State of Washington reasoned that well-trained volunteers could respond to many of the everyday homeowner questions freeing him and his colleagues for more technical and difficult problems. Volunteers, such as Extension Homemakers and 4-H Leaders had always been a part of the Extension Service but never in the area of homeowner horticulture. The Extension agent selected, trained, and certified volunteers as Master Gardeners. They soon succeeded in meeting his desired objectives - in fact they exceeded his expectations. This led to the genesis of the Master Gardener Volunteer program.

Since that time, the Master Gardener Volunteer program has grown and is now active in all 50 states. Florida's began in 1979. The program has been a tremendous success and is now active in most of Florida's 67 counties. The Florida Master Gardener Program is sponsored by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) of which the Cooperative Extension Service is a part.

Just what is the Cooperative Extension Service? For a more complete understanding of this unique organization, we must go back to 1862 when the U.S. Congress passed the Morrill Act which established colleges in each state to be financed through grants of land from the Federal government. They became known as "land grant colleges," a name which persists today. These colleges would emphasize teaching practical subjects such as agriculture and home economics. The 1887 Hatch Act provided for experimental stations at Land Grant Colleges to conduct research for those colleges' agricultural problems.

Then in 1914 the Smith-Lever Act created the Extension Service as a part of these colleges as a means of disseminating the practical knowledge gained through agricultural research. The University of Florida at Gainesville is Florida's land grant college; The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is that part of the university which has responsibility for the Cooperative Extension Service.

The term "cooperative" refers to the method by which extension services are funded. In Florida, three cooperating tax sources provide funds: the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State through legislative appropriations, and the counties through appropriations by county governments. The word "cooperative" also implies a sharing of information generated through sound research programs at the federal and state levels. The term "extension" defines this organization's purpose -- to extend the information generated at the state and federal level to people at the county level in the form of a "service." The Cooperative Extension Service is an informal education organization which provides information in three main areas: agriculture, human and natural resources, and the life sciences.

The motto and goal of the Cooperative Extension Service is "Helping People Help Themselves." Thus, you can see how well the Master Gardener Volunteer concept fits into the ultimate objectives and goals of the Extension Service.

**Florida Master Gardener  
Volunteer Application**

Citizens interested in volunteering for the UF/IFAS Extension Florida Master Gardener Volunteer program must complete this application. Acceptance is contingent on return of this form to your county Extension office for submission and clearance through appropriate screening processes. These processes are in place to help ensure the safety and well-being of all Extension program participants.

General Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you lived at this address? \_\_\_ years \_\_\_ months

(If less than five years, attach a sheet listing all previous addresses for the past five years.)

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Shirt Size: \_\_\_ S \_\_\_ M \_\_\_ L \_\_\_ XL \_\_\_ XXL \_\_\_ XXXL ( shirts tend to run small )

Have you ever applied for the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program before? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

If so, where \_\_\_\_\_?

List work experience during the past 5 years, with most recent experiences first.

Add a page if needed.

Employer	Position/Title	City/State	Years

List volunteer experience during the past five years, with current or most recent experiences first. Identify work with youth and community groups. Add a page if needed

Organization/Group	Role/Title	City/State	Years

**Personal Interest**

Why do you want to become a Florida Master Gardener Volunteer?

Please list any training and/or practical experience you have had in gardening, horticulture, farming, or related fields:

What, if any, gardening groups do you belong to, e.g., garden clubs, horticultural societies, etc.?

What ideas do you have of the type of volunteer work you can do toward completion of your commitment?  
(e.g., answering calls, preparing news releases, making home visits, etc.):

How did you learn about the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program?

Do you have experience teaching adults?      \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

Do you have experience teaching children?      \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

Do you have experience in corporate training?      \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

Becoming a Certified Master Gardener Volunteer is important to me because: (Check all that apply)

- I will have an opportunity to receive useful training
- I will have an opportunity to share my knowledge with other gardeners
- I will gain practical experience that will help me get a job
- I will be able to provide a service to other people in my community and/or neighborhood
- I can get a tax credit for my volunteer work
- I will receive instructional materials and resources
- I will be able to increase my knowledge in the area of gardening/horticulture
- I will gain a great deal of personal satisfaction
- I will be recognized by people in my community
- I will be able to creatively use my free time
- I will be able to gain new skills
- Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviews will take place Mon, Wed, Thur, Friday from 6pm – 8pm Via a Zoom meeting**

**Dates to be updated**



## VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

**POSITION TITLE: FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER OF UF/IFAS EXTENSION EDUCATION BROWARD COUNTY**

**GOALS: TO FACILITATE THE EXECUTION OF THE URBAN HORTICULTURE PROGRAM OF THE UF- IFAS/BROWARD COUNTY EXTENSION EDUCATION THROUGH THE PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES LISTED UNDER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**QUALIFICATIONS: SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER TRAINING COURSE GIVEN BY UF- IFAS/BROWARD COUNTY EXTENSION EDUCATION, FOLLOWED BY 75 HOURS OF PRE-APPROVED VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES (40 OF WHICH MUST BE SERVED WITH A CERTIFIED MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER) BY SEPTEMBER OF THE SUBSEQUENT YEAR; SUBSEQUENT RE-CERTIFICATION CONSISTS OF A MINIMUM OF 35 PRE-APPROVED VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS AND 10 EDUCATIONAL HOURS ANNUALLY.**

**GUIDANCE AND SUPERVISION: URBAN HORTICULTURE Program Assistant; [Anthony.Gross@ufl.edu](mailto:Anthony.Gross@ufl.edu) [APPROVALS]; [Anthony.Gross@ufl.edu](mailto:Anthony.Gross@ufl.edu) [REPORTING HOURS] PHONE: (954)-756-8525**

### **Responsibilities:**

Each Florida Master Gardener Volunteer of Broward County shall follow policies set forth in the UF-IFAS Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Policies, in the most updated form posted on <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/> concomitant with all policies in the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Policy Statement. It is the responsibility of each Florida Master Gardener Volunteer of Broward County to be informed of any changes to those documents on the aforementioned website.

Hours required to obtain original certification after successful completion of the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Course by UF-IFAS/Broward County Extension shall be 75 (SEVENTY-FIVE) during the first 365 days after completion of the Final Course Exam, of which 40 MUST be with a Master Gardener Mentor. In subsequent years, 35 approved volunteer service hours and 10 educational hours are required in order to maintain Florida Master Gardener Volunteer certification.

Volunteer qualifying hours for events must be pre-approved a member of the UF-IFAS/Broward County Extension Urban Horticulture Program staff. Master Gardener Volunteer activities qualifying for volunteer hours may include any unremunerated pre-approved activity that assists the residents of Broward County Florida or the UF-IFAS Florida Master Gardener Volunteer organization including, but not limited to, the following:

- Participation at the Master Gardener Volunteer Helpdesks located at UF/IFAS Extension Education, Hillsboro Pineland Natural Area, C.B. Smith Park, Central Broward Regional Park and Tradewinds Park. Primary function at the helpdesk is to answer homeowner phone calls and walk-ins dispensing research-based Information on; flower & vegetable gardening, plant selection, insect, disease, & weed identification, low impact pesticide & fertilizer use, composting, recycling & mulching.
- Participation in plant shows, symposia, workshops or any local, municipal, Broward County, state, federal or research-based, Non-governmental organization, environmental education events where UF-IFAS research-based materials will be distributed, horticultural expertise is provided to residents, native plant materials are sold or given away on behalf of a governmental or nonprofit entity, sustainable landscape design or management, or Integrated Pest Management advice is shared, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ is installed, or other relevant pre-approved activity is conducted, as determined by the UF-IFAS/Broward County Urban Horticulture Extension Agent or his designee.

- Participation with approved NOT FOR PROFIT community gardens or urban vegetable farms.
- Participation in any local, municipal, Broward County, state or Federal environmental education events that involve information on or mitigation of areas affected by exotic invasive species. Participation in any meetings of a Homeowners' Association, Condo Association, local, municipal, Broward County, state or Federal Citizens' Environmental Boards and other activities wherein the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer educates the attendees on sustainable, Florida-Friendly landscaping, Integrated Pest Management principles with research-based, approved literature and other information from UF-IFAS Broward County Extension Education.
- Participation in meetings, conferences or classes, taken at the expense of the volunteer, in an area that will enhance the volunteer's skills as a Master Gardener Volunteer, (e.g., attendance at Master Gardener Volunteer, North American Butterfly, or Florida Native Plant Society meetings, a vocational, non-degree associated class at UF-IFAS Extension, FAU, Nova Southeastern, Broward College, Bonnet House or Flamingo Gardens) or as otherwise determined in advance by the Urban Horticulture Extension Agent or his designee.
- Up to 3 hours per month may be spent on independent Internet-related research where the latest EDIS and other approved publications are read, messages, photos or files are read, replied to or to update the respective Master Gardener Volunteer's training credentials.
- A minimum of 16 volunteer hours per month shall be logged for anyone elected to the Master Gardener Board and Urban Hort. Advisory - or Extension Overall Advisory Council.
- Pre-approved participation in the answering of public inquiries sent to the Broward County [BROWARDMG@IFAS.UFL.ED](mailto:BROWARDMG@IFAS.UFL.ED) webmail box, from the Extension Office.
- Pre-approved presentation of sustainable landscape or Integrated Pest Management programs before radio, television, newspaper, electronic or other mass media where UF-IFAS EDIS or Broward County Extension research-based educational materials and/or information is disseminated.
- Participation in formal or informal mentoring to other Florida Master Gardeners Volunteers, 4-H Junior Master Gardeners, National Wildlife Habitat Stewards, or others, as approved by UF-IFAS/Broward County Extension Urban Horticulture Program staff

**I have reviewed agree with the above description of the volunteer responsibilities.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date