



PHILADELPHIA ORCHARD PROJECT AND THE WOODLANDS ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIP AND PLANS FOR DEMONSTRATION ORCHARD, NURSERY, AND GREENHOUSE

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 30, 2020 — The Woodlands and the Philadelphia Orchard Project (POP) are excited to announce a new partnership and the establishment of the POP Learning Orchard at The Woodlands, a space designed for education, inspiration, and interaction with the environment.

POP will be planting a one-acre demonstration orchard in the northwest quadrant of The Woodlands along Woodland Ave, containing 60 fruit and nut trees, pollinator plants, and berry gardens. POP will expand its edible plant nursery and build a high tunnel to further its mission of educating the public about the range of edible plants that can be grown in this region. POP also plans to use this space, beginning this spring, to grow annual crops for donation to emergency food services to help alleviate increasing food insecurity during the current pandemic.

Kim Jordan and Phil Forsyth, POP's Co-Executive Directors, are thrilled to see this project come to life. "We're grateful to The Woodlands for partnering with us on this shared vision. In times of special need, such as we are experiencing now, it serves as a valuable reminder that educational programs excel when they serve a dual purpose for their communities." Additional plans for the site include an innovative climate battery greenhouse structure that will dramatically reduce fossil fuel use while demonstrating new crops and season extension possibilities. The greenhouse will also be used by The Woodlands to grow plant material to support their Grave Gardeners Program.

In addition to providing valuable food resources, the orchard plantings will enliven the streetscape, and expanded joint programming will uplift The Woodlands' rich horticultural history. Leveraging the power of food-based programs will enhance cultural and recreational opportunities for West Philadelphia residents, and attract a wide cross-section of users to this extraordinary green space.

Jamie Gauthier, Councilmember for Philadelphia's 3rd Council District covering West and Southwest Philadelphia, says "POP and The Woodlands are each indispensable organizations that connect our communities to nature and horticulture. Their new partnership will provide Philadelphia residents with rich resources—educationally, aesthetically, and nutritionally. I look forward to seeing the POP Learning Orchard grow over the months and years to come."

POP, which has been growing its programming and staff in recent years, now works with 65 community partners and offers a wide range of orchard-based educational initiatives to its varied partners and the public. POP hired its second Orchard Director, Alkebu-Lan Marcus, in January 2020 to lead management of the new orchard and nursery, and provide support to other community orchards in West Philadelphia.

POP is grateful for funding from the Junior League of Philadelphia, Inc.'s Blossom Fund and the Arbor Day Foundation in support of this project. POP is a community partner of the Junior League as part of their Apple a Day Healthy Living Initiative™ which aims to create a positive impact on the health and wellness of adults and children in the Greater Philadelphia area through interactive educational curriculum and increasing the region's capacity to supply and distribute healthy food to families in need.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUNDS & CONTACT INFORMATION

The Woodlands' 54-acre undulating landscape is at once a one-of-a-kind 18th-century English pleasure garden, 19th-century rural cemetery, and a modern green oasis for its neighbors in bustling University City and West Philadelphia. The Woodlands was designated a National Historic Landmark District in recognition of its unique history and rich resources. Today, the mission of The Woodlands is to enrich the lives of area residents and visitors by serving as a hub for activities and educational programs that interpret, celebrate and make available to the public The Woodlands' historic buildings and rich and tranquil green space.

More information about The Woodlands is available via the organization's website: www.woodlandsphila.org or on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter @woodlandsphila

The Philadelphia Orchard Project was founded in 2007 with a mission to plant and support community orchards in the city of Philadelphia, improving access to nutritious food and creating beautiful and bountiful green spaces. Orchards, primarily located in low-wealth neighborhoods, are owned, maintained, and harvested by the community. POP orchards contain a variety of fruit and nut trees, berry bushes and vines, herbs, pollinator gardens, and other useful and edible perennials. For more information, visit www.phillyorchards.org, on Facebook @PhiladelphiaOrchardProject, or on Instagram and Twitter @phillyorchards.

Founded in 1912, the Junior League of Philadelphia (JLP) is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. The JLP is also a member of the Association of Junior Leagues International (AJLI), with 291 Leagues globally.

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