

The Oregon Garden

The Oregon Garden has become one of the Northwest's premier landscape display gardens. Designed to showcase the horticultural and agricultural heritage of Oregon, this 120-acre garden with currently 85 acres developed, features over 150,000 plants and hundreds of cultivars in both naturalistic and formal garden settings. This setting provides a unique opportunity for horticulture students to gain practical, hands-on experience in maintaining display gardens while learning about plants hardy to the Willamette Valley as well as cultural practices.

The Garden was previously home to an Arabian horse ranch and is now a non-profit foundation supported by memberships, gifts, grants and fundraising events. Nestled in the historic town of Silverton, surrounded by the rich agriculture of the Willamette Valley, The Oregon Garden is just minutes from Silver Falls State Park.

Internship Program Information

The program is open to current college students interested in horticulture and recent graduates with a horticulture degree or related field. Internships are available all 4 quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer). Interns are unpaid and should receive academic credit through their institutions. No housing is provided, however, we will assist when possible to find a suitable, affordable place near the Garden. Interns will have an opportunity to visit nearby gardens. At least two field trips will be scheduled during the 2 1/2 month internship during work hours. In addition, interns are encouraged to organize weekend trips to visit places of horticultural interest.

Responsibilities: The successful candidate will, gain hands-on experience by rotating through different garden areas working on groundskeeping of display gardens, spending two to three weeks with the horticulturists of each area. The intern will also be exposed to greenhouse and nursery operations as well as irrigation and water feature maintenance for a period of two to three weeks in each of these areas. This will give interns an opportunity to work within all areas of Horticulture, with different supervisors, giving the intern a broad perspective in maintaining public gardens. Interns will also work with volunteers, seasonals and may occasionally lead tours for the public.

Position Requirements: Candidate should be available to work for three months. He or she must be currently or recently enrolled in a college horticulture program or a related field. The ideal candidate will be flexible, able to work in a fast-paced environment and possess good communication and interpersonal skills. Candidates within a year of their graduation date will also be considered. Must be able and willing to work independently, do repetitive tasks, lift and carry 50 lbs, work in adverse weather conditions, and have a valid driver's license.

Gardener (1-3 weeks with each horticulturist)

Description: The Gardener Intern will mow turf, weed and edge beds, prune shrubs and trees, prepare soil and compost, and assist in other maintenance projects important to outdoor display horticulture.

Function: To learn proper turf grass management techniques through hands-on involvement in the day-to-day management of the turf, and to learn a variety of horticultural skills through hands-on work within The Oregon Garden.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Maintain lawns, including mowing and string trimming.
- Weed and edge beds.
- Perform turf repair, renovation, and fertilization.
- Prune and maintain woody shrubs, vines, small trees and hedges.
- Fertilize, water and mulch plants within assigned areas.
- Groom plants including deadheading, staking, pruning.
- Help with garden installations.
- Assist with fall clean up.
- Cover responsibilities of a full-time gardener as needed.

Greenhouse and Nursery (1-3 weeks)

Description: The Greenhouse and Nursery Intern gains practical experience in the growing of flowering, woody and herbaceous plants in a controlled greenhouse and nursery environment. The internship may include: propagation, potting, repotting, staking, tying, grooming, watering, fertilizing, labeling, record keeping, pruning, transplanting, sowing, seeding, handling seedlings, and transporting potted plants. This experience will be useful to someone who intends to grow plants for display gardens and small-scale commercial/wholesale purposes.

Function: To learn about the systems and horticultural skills needed to manage a container production greenhouse and woody plant nursery through hands-on involvement in the daily operation of a production facility.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Pots and repots plants of all sizes.
- Stakes, ties, and grooms plants for stability and aesthetics.
- Prunes and pinches plants to encourage proper form.
- Assist with labeling and record keeping.
- Transports plants to and from growing areas and spaces out plants on growing carts and benches.
- Waters and fertilizes plants by hose and automated systems.
- Assists in the upkeep and cleaning of the greenhouse and nursery including controlling weeds and mulching.
- Assists with the installation of displays and any special garden-wide projects.
- Assists with propagation by seed and vegetative means.
- Assists with the mixing of various types of media.
- Chemical application for IPM purposes.
- Performs primary plant care in absence of full-time staff.
- Cover responsibilities of a full-time gardener as needed.

Irrigation and Water Feature (1-3 weeks)

Description: The irrigation intern will manage and repair the existing irrigation system throughout the entire garden. Monitoring individual gardens for dryness or excess moisture. Requiring daily maintenance of irrigation nozzles and zones. The water feature intern will monitor and maintain existing water features throughout the garden. Daily and weekly cleaning schedules of all water features.

Function: To learn about the systems and skills needed to maintain and manage the many water features and irrigation usage at The Oregon Garden.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Maintain existing irrigation system.
- Clean nozzles.
- Monitor every irrigation zone at the garden.
- Monitor gardens for irrigation needs.
- Repair breaks or malfunctioning irrigation systems.
- Perform maintenance on Pump Station.
- Monitor incoming flow of effluent water.
- Become proficient at using irrigation computer program.
- Assist with the design and install any new irrigation projects.
- Maintain and monitor water features.
- Apply chemicals as necessary to water features.
- Perform daily or weekly cleaning for all water features.
- Troubleshoot irrigation or water feature problems.
- Cover responsibilities of a full-time gardener as needed.

Submit an employment application, resume, three letters of recommendation, and a letter of introduction describing: your strengths, areas of interest within the horticulture field, specific goals for this internship, and why you're interested in our internship program to:

The Oregon Garden
c/o Administration Department
PO BOX 155
Silverton, Oregon 97381