



Foundation Plantings: *President's Letter*

...by Master Gardener Foundation President Carrie Hill



MGF Board President Carrie Hill

As we close down our clinics and gardens for the year and approach the holidays, I want to thank each of you for a successful 2018. If you are interested in being involved in the Foundation and its work, the Board meets monthly on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings start at 7 p.m. and are generally held at the Center for Urban Horticulture. Board meetings are open and we welcome visitors!

The 600 Master Gardeners in King County will volunteer over 30,000 hours this year — an average of over 50 hours per MG. We run nearly 40 clinics throughout King County and 14 demonstration gardens, and answer questions from tens of thousands of clients each year. The Foundation continues to invest so that our clinics are well-resourced and gardens upgraded where needed. This year we welcomed 89 interns. They are an exceptional group and

we applaud their wisdom in joining us! I had the pleasure of being one of the mentors for this year's class, a role I'd highly recommend; let me know if you're interested in mentoring the 2019 class.

One of the things I like to tell interns is that their first year with us is pretty prescriptive: five clinic shifts, several garden shifts, and 40 hours. But beginning in year two, it's time to be less constrained, to find your niche, expand your passions, explore new possibilities. As volunteers, we serve at OUR pleasure, not for a paycheck or because the "boss says so," so we each owe it to ourselves to find out what in the Master Gardener Program gives us the most pleasure and how to maximize that!

As you may know WSU has had some financial challenges in recent years. While there is still work to be done, the good news is that they are well on their way to recovery, and approval to fill the program coordinator position has been given. Just as importantly from my perspective is that a state leadership team for the Master Gardener Program was put together in 2018 that is all about ensuring a healthy program, positive change and leadership from within. Todd Murray, a senior director in WSU Extension, characterized the MG Program as the best example of a grass roots-led organization, and encouraged us to *"Remember our innovation is ground-up, not top down"*.

I want to leave you with the message that this is **OUR PROGRAM**. It's up to each of us to make sure it is the best it can be. If you see an opportunity to explore, a project that needs to be done, a process that needs to be fixed, please speak up, please step up, please make a

proposal, so that we stay vibrant and relevant, so that we are a place that people want to volunteer, and so that we have clients that highly value what we provide.

