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AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY HONORS BLOCKS IN BLOOM WITH COMMUNITY GREENING AWARD

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (May 19, 2020) -- [Blocks in Bloom](#)—a program established by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County—has been named the 2020 recipient of the [American Horticultural Society's](#) (AHS) Community Greening Award, which recognizes exemplary contributions by an individual, institution, or company demonstrating the application and value of horticulture to creating livable communities that are greener, healthier, and more equitable.

The accolade is one of the [Great American Gardeners Awards](#) that the AHS presents annually to individuals, organizations, and businesses that represent the best in American gardening. Each of the recipients has contributed significantly to fields such as scientific research, garden communication, landscape design, youth gardening, and conservation.

Blocks in Bloom began in 2015 as a pilot initiative of the [Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County's Master Gardener program](#). It aims to bring together low-income communities in the City of Rochester, N.Y. by providing free perennials to resident participants. Master Gardener volunteers educate residents in preparing, planting, and maintaining their front-yard flower gardens. In 2018, a leadership development component was added to the program, enabling local residents to become mentors to other community members just starting their gardens.

Blocks in Bloom has grown from serving two blocks with 15 households back in 2015 to serving 15 blocks with 135 households in 2019. The program is designed to be both sustainable—relying on volunteers and material donations—and replicable.

Because of the pandemic, this year's Great American Gardeners Awards ceremony, originally scheduled for June 18, had to be cancelled. Instead, AHS will be honoring the award winners from all around the country by way of video acceptance speeches that will be released on our website and social media starting in mid-June. For full descriptions of each award and brief biographies of this year's recipients, please visit our [2020 Award Winners](#).

Founded in 1922, the American Horticultural Society is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization committed to modeling, educating about, and advocating for earth-friendly and sustainable gardening practices. Our mission is to share with all Americans the critical role of plants, gardens, and green spaces in creating healthy, livable communities and a sustainable planet. Since 1973, we have been headquartered at River Farm, part of George Washington's original land holdings on a 25-acre site composed of gardens, meadows, and woodlands along the Potomac River in the Mount Vernon section of Fairfax County. To learn more, visit <https://ahsgardening.org>.