



THE TRISH GIBSON MEMORIAL
HORTICULTURAL INTERNSHIP AT RIVER FARM
Summer 2026
Job Description

Position Summary

The American Horticultural Society (AHS), headquartered at River Farm in Alexandria, Virginia, is seeking a dedicated Horticulture Intern passionate about gardening and looking to obtain hands-on experience in the field. Reporting to the Chief Horticulturist, the Horticulture Intern will work alongside the horticulture staff and assist with garden management, maintenance, and design of the 25-acre historic garden property. The intern will acquire skills in native plant identification, invasive species management, and woody plant care, and learn about all aspects of garden management, care of the living collections, and maintaining ecologically balanced habitats.

The intern will perform regular horticulture maintenance duties, including planting, watering, weeding, pruning, and fertilizing. These duties involve manual labor, exposure to adverse weather conditions (particularly heat and humidity), dirt, and dust. The intern will be instructed in and exercise safe working practices.

Beyond the primary focus of contributing to a beautiful garden experience for every River Farm guest, this internship will provide the intern with many opportunities to broaden their experience within the horticulture field and to learn about different careers in Public Horticulture.

The horticulture internship is ideal for individuals currently enrolled in a college curriculum focused on horticulture, land conservation, biology, landscape architecture, botany, forestry, plant science, public gardens, parks and recreation, life sciences, health sciences, or related fields.

About The American Horticultural Society

Founded in 1922, AHS is a national organization with approximately 22,000 members. Our national programs include the Great American Gardeners Awards, the National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, an educational travel program, and the AHS Garden Network, among others. The AHS publishes *American Gardener* magazine six times per year as a primary membership benefit. The AHS website (www.ahsgardening.org) offers resources to

horticulturists, gardeners, and other constituents. AHS maintains an active presence across multiple social media platforms.

The Society is headquartered at River Farm, a 25-acre historic garden property overlooking the Potomac River in Alexandria, VA. By joining the AHS's outstanding team of professionals, you can help share the critical role of plants, gardens, and green spaces in creating healthy, livable communities and a sustainable planet.

Responsibilities

To perform this job successfully, an individual must perform essential duties to the expected performance standards. Reasonable accommodations are made as required for persons with disabilities as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The core duties and responsibilities of the Horticulture Intern revolve around supporting our gardens. Duties can vary widely – on any given day, various tasks may be performed, such as:

- Ornamental gardening, including planting, mulching, staking, dead-heading, pruning, watering, pest identification and integrated pest management, plant identification, and developing knowledge of plant, design, and material needs
- General maintenance of gardens, horticulture buildings, and equipment, including raking, sweeping, cleaning, and repairs as needed
- Propagation/Production, including collection, storage, and sowing of seed, cuttings, transplanting, watering, additional plant care, and greenhouse management
- Plant curation, including labeling, record-keeping, mapping, plant photography, and phenology
- Detecting possible disease, nutrient deficiency, or general plant unwellness and reporting damage to the supervisor
- Identify weeds and implement control methods
- Assist in supervising volunteers
- Other departmental and/or organizational duties as needed (e.g., special events, etc.)

Qualifications

The internship is appropriate for applicants enrolled in a university or college horticulture or related program, or who have recently graduated from one. In addition, other young adults who are not currently enrolled in college but are working in the field of horticulture may apply. Selection is based on both an evaluation of the candidate's application and available positions. The candidate must have educational and/or practical experience in horticulture, botany,

and/or landscape design/maintenance. They must be enthusiastic about plants, environmentally conscious, and willing to participate in all horticultural practices.

Working Conditions

- Ability to work in all types of weather, from heat to wind to wet and cold
- Exposed to weather, dirt, waste, odors, wildlife, and potentially harmful insects (bees, hornets, wasps, etc.)
- Physically able to bend over, kneel, or stand for extended periods of time, lift, push, pull objects up to 50 pounds safely
- Ability to perform diverse, sometimes repetitive, tasks that can be physically demanding, including kneeling, bending, stooping, and reaching

Position Schedule

- Horticulture Interns will work 32 hours per week for 10-12 weeks, ideally between May/June 2026 and August 2026.
- Typical hours: M-F 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Compensation

- This is a temporary, non-exempt, hourly position, which pays \$18/hr.
- This position does not include any benefits (health & vision, 401k, vacation, sick time off, transportation)

To Apply

- Qualified candidates should send a resume and a thoughtful cover letter describing their experience and interests to Peter Tajat, Managing Director, Property Operations, at ptajat@ahsgardening.org. Please submit all materials in Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word only.