



# 3rd Annual Grow Community Gardens & Garden Steps Conference

Done virtually via Webinar.



**COALITION OF  
COMMUNITY GARDENS**  
TAMPA BAY - FLORIDA



**Hillsborough MPO**  
Metropolitan Planning  
for Transportation

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Grow Community Gardens & Garden Steps Conference,  
May 15, 2020  
Conference Program**

**Session 1: Community Gardens impact HEALTH**

**FACILITATOR Renée E. Wallace, MPH, CPH**

**Renée Wallace** is a Tampa native and recent graduate of USF's College of Public Health, Master of Public Health program. Her background includes fitness, health education and promotion, adolescent behavioral health, along with program development and evaluation. Renée values community engagement, building relationships, mentorship, and giving back. Her prior work has included partnerships with Champions for Children, Hillsborough County's Healthy Living Programs, Hillsborough County Children Services, Camelot Community Care, and recently, USF's Center for the Advancement of Food Security and Healthy Communities. As a lover of dance, cultural diversity, nature, and fun, Renée has many hobbies. She can often be found attending local Latin Dance socials, bike riding, cooking, hiking, or relaxing at the beach.

**PRESENTER Monica Petrella, Food System Program Coordinator, Hillsborough County**

**Monica Petrella** is a passionate advocate for regional food systems. She first learned about the power of regional economic systems while attending the Small Farms Conference hosted by UF IFAS in 2012. She attended the University of Florida where she graduated with her B.S. in Food and Resource Economics supplemented with a minor in Organic and Sustainable Crop Production. She then later attended the University of Vermont to earn a M.S. in Community Development and Applied Economics, specializing in Community Food Systems. She has worked on small farms, in farm-to-table restaurants, volunteered in community gardens, and met a variety of stakeholders in the Tampa Bay Food System. Previously she has been involved in community organizing and political advocacy but recently started a new position at Hillsborough County as the Food System Coordinator.

**PRESENTER: Ayesha Johnson, Ph.D.**

A St. Andrew, Jamaica native, **Dr. Ayesha Johnson** currently works in the Office of Health Equity, at the Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County (Tampa, FL). There she leads the Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Planning processes, as well as Florida Healthy Babies projects. She enjoys community engagement, working with community partners and getting lost in data exploration. In her spare time, she likes watching movies, reading and playing chess.

## **Session 2: Community Resources support Community Gardening**

### **FACILITATOR: Susan Webb**

Susan Webb is a Florida native who enjoys eating, growing, and sharing food. Since 2009, Susan has been engaged in food systems work with diverse communities. She lived and worked on an educational farm for Heifer International as part of a residential volunteer program. In addition, Susan completed internships with a CSA and a community garden in Florida. In August of 2014, Susan earned dual Master of Anthropology and a Master of Public Health degrees. She currently works as a regional extension agent for UF/IFAS Extension serving eleven counties in Southwest Florida. In this position, Susan works with UF/IFAS Extension Faculty and Staff, teachers, and community members to create and sustain school and community gardens. In her free time, Susan can be found exploring Central Florida with her husband, Tyler, and son, Ollie. She loves earl grey tea, lentils, British crime dramas, and yes, rainy afternoons.

### **PRESENTER: Ardell O'Neal, R.N.**

Ardell O'Neal grew up in Iowa – with real soil, growing lots of vegetables in his parent's very large garden ... freshly harvest and eaten. He is a registered nurse for over 30 years at University Community Hospital. Master Gardener for 20+ years, currently the leader of the garden ministry at the Lutz Community Church. He helped to establish the Mustard Seed Garden in 2014. They grow vegetables to donate to a soup kitchen and a food bank. The garden produces approximately 300 lbs of produce in their 1000 sq ft. He is advisor for Maniscalco school garden. IFAS has lessons that elementary teachers can access. As an example, the second grade planted radishes....and then made salad with their radishes and shared with another group of children...planted, harvested, shared & ate. A beautiful example.

### **PRESENTER: Karen Elizabeth**

Originally from the Akron, Ohio area, **Karen** moved to Florida in 1985, and has lived in Plant City since 2002. After 25+ years in business in Florida, Karen Elizabeth (Bornstine) has returned to a lifetime path of personal enrichment with a focus on nutrition, health and well-being. Karen's 20+ years of research and education led her earn her certification as a Holistic Health Counselor from the *Institute for Integrative Nutrition*. She provides her clients with individual guidance, support and accountability as they move towards their unique and specific whole-wellness goals. She is a passionate advocate for living an energized, vibrant, happy, healthy and organic life. She is active in the Plant City community. She initiated the Plant City Local Harvest Market, and has served on two advisory boards for local income challenged families. She is a founding member and President of and actively participates in Plant City Commons Community Garden. The garden was started in March, 2012.

### **Session 3: Policy impacts community gardening**

#### **FACILITATOR: Toni Young**

**Toni Young** is a former communications consultant and founder of Young Editorial Group. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of South Florida where her research bridges her knowledge and experience in communication with community, sustainability and global citizenship.

#### **PRESENTER: Michele Ogilvie**

Michele Ogilvie, Executive Planner for the Hillsborough MPO, has more than 33 years of community, land use and transportation planning. Ms. Ogilvie holds a BA in Anthropology from Eckerd College and a MA in Applied Anthropology from the University of South Florida. She lead the Garden Steps project (2016-18) in the Healthiest Cities/Counties Challenge to a successful 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish in the national competition.

#### **PRESENTER: Dell deChant**

Dell deChant is the Associate Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida. He is a Master Instructor and has served at USF since 1986. The author of three books, and many articles, deChant's specialization is religion and contemporary cultures. His current research focuses on religious, literary, and ecological expressions of Agrarianism as they manifest in American popular culture. deChant is Chair of the Environmental Committee of the City of New Port Richey, a founding member of Food Policy Council of Pasco County, a member of the Florida Food Policy Council and the Board of Directors of Ecology Florida. Mr. DeChant will discuss how food policy impacts community gardening, recognizing the role of food sovereignty.

#### **PRESENTER: Lena Young Green**

Lena Young Green is a longtime community activist who resides in Tampa, Florida. She was worked in the Florida Legislature's House of Representative and Florida Senate as Chief Legislative Aide for almost twenty years where she assisted in passage of many laws and state policies for community improvement. She has dedicated many years to assist in enhancing the quality of life for citizens and served as a member of citizen advisory committees with Hillsborough Planning Commission's (HPC) Comprehensive Planning, among others. She worked with the HPC to create the Tampa Heights Neighborhood Plan which was the first in the City of Tampa to be ratified by Tampa City Council and signed by the mayor. She is founder of the award-winning Tampa Heights Community Garden and cofounder of Coalition of Community Gardens – Tampa Bay. The Coalition is Garden Steps' community partner under the leadership of Metropolitan Planning Organization. Health Department, City of Tampa and HART are also partners. Garden Steps serves as the platform for the creation of Healthy Hillsborough Alliance. Email: lenayoung@thjca.org

