



Master Gardeners of Davidson County

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Education, Environmental Stewardship, and Volunteerism

Mentoring Program Guidelines

What is a mentor?

Mentors are an important asset for the Master Gardeners of Davidson County. Their role is to familiarize new interns with the Master Gardener Program and help them feel comfortable as they attend training and begin their volunteer service. The experience an intern has early in the program often impact their continued participation.

Mentors provide a welcoming atmosphere for new interns, and a positive, friendly mentor makes an intern know that they are welcome. The role of a mentor is simple but important: creating personal relationships while helping interns to achieve certification. The Mentoring Program is expected to create long-lasting friendships, strengthen participation, and improve retention of our members.

What are the responsibilities of a mentor?

- ✓ Upon meeting the intern, welcome them into the program and share your experiences. Your enthusiasm and excitement are important to making them feel good about their decision to join the Master Gardener Program.
- ✓ Learn the names of the interns as soon as possible as some may not wear their name badge.
- ✓ Encourage interns to contact you if there are concerns or questions throughout the year; share how you prefer to be contacted.
- ✓ Contact the intern at least twice a month for the first few months after training even if just to see how their experience is going.
- ✓ Help interns to complete their volunteer hours sheet for their first 10 hours. As soon as you notice the intern earning hours, help them to log their hours.
- ✓ Invite the intern to go with you to monthly meetings, educational workshops or volunteer at project sites.
- ✓ Signup together for at least one or two Master Gardener projects (e.g. work an information booth, teach/observe a class together)
- ✓ When an intern volunteers at a project or event, make a special effort to welcome and include them in what you are doing if possible.
- ✓ Review opportunities for fulfilling required volunteer (40) and continuing education (8) hours, i.e. booths, events, projects, classes, etc.
- ✓ Check-in to review the intern's progress on fulfilling volunteer and education hours; assist with online reporting if necessary.
- ✓ Remember back to when you were an intern and how you felt. Do for them what you would have wanted someone to do for you!