

Green Farmacy Garden carries on legacy of teaching healing through plants

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For nearly three decades, The Green Farmacy Garden in Fulton, Maryland, has served as a sanctuary for those interested in learning how to use plants for healing.

Established by Jim Duke, a U.S. Department of Agriculture botanist, and his wife, Peggy, the garden is home to more than 300 native and non-

native species of plants that have been researched or used traditionally for medicinal purposes, according to its website.

Named after Duke's book, "The Green Pharmacy," the farm was created by the couple by transforming part of their pastureland into a teaching garden highlighting the plants in the book. Now the garden has four terraces with 80 plots dedicated to growing plants that can be used for healing a number of conditions and diseases including diabetes, [heart disease](#), [high blood pressure](#) and obesity.

Duke was deeply devoted to communities of people and plants throughout his life, according to a note written by his daughter, Celia Larsen. His knowledge and love of plants and the people who use them for food and medicine spanned the entire world, she said.

Following his death on Dec. 10, 2017, the garden became operated by the Community Ecology Institute, a nonprofit whose mission is to cultivate communities where people and nature thrive together, according to its website.

Since its opening, the garden has hosted a number of events teaching the public about gardening.

One recent event was a mushroom log inoculation [workshop](#), held in December, during which participants learned how to grow their own mushrooms. The garden also recently held a pop-up Caribbean herbal medicine workshop, a pop-up foraging walk and a pop-up tropical plant sale.

Veri Tas serves as the events and communications coordinator at the garden and is also a gardener, a medicine maker and a workshop facilitator there. Having recently finished her fifth season as a workshop facilitator, she said the workshops provide the public with a new outlook

on gardening.

"Sometimes [gardening] doesn't mean [putting your plant] in a pot or in your yard or telling it to grow where you want it to," she said.

"Sometimes it means interacting with it or what's around it in a way that is conducive to its own thriving."

Annie-Sophie Simard serves as the garden director, a medicine maker and a workshop facilitator. She hosts tours, volunteer days and workshops at the garden, and said it means a lot to her to be carrying on Duke's legacy.

"To carry on his legacy is to keep rippling out this connection with the plants to the community," she said. "We'd be keeping [the garden] as a community space and teaching people about the plants and simple ways they can build their connection with nature and their environment."

Amy Boldt, 41, of Westminster, participated in a recent pop-up foraging walk and tour of the garden.

Working as an apothecary owner and clinical herbalist, she said she wanted to participate in the workshops to learn how to better take care of herself and others.

"Having The Green Pharmacy is incredibly crucial to the community for just the educational piece and letting people know and passing on this knowledge and taking care of themselves in the way that they were intended to be with this ancient wisdom that's been passed down for generations all over the world," she said.

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