August 19, 2022

It was my pleasure to spend some time with our two summer horticulture interns and hear their thoughts on their work in our gardens and how it will help direct their academic studies as they progress through university.

Maia and Jonah at work in the colorful Sundial Bed

We welcome back **Maia Kessler,** who also joined us last summer. Maia is from near Philadelphia and is a rising senior in the University of Maryland's program in Landscape Architecture. She was happy to return to the Close because of her very positive experience in the summer of 2021. Maia loved the work and being outdoors, and especially the wonderful people on our staff.

Maia has found the experience she has gained here in plant identification to be invaluable. She has 18 people in her studio in her UMD program and says most do not know the plants. As much as the plant ID had benefited her, she says the practical elements of the gardening work, of maintenance needs (such as where to place a hose spigot) will be critical for her planned work as a landscape architect.

Maia’s summer work here has confirmed that she likes outside work more than sitting at a desk working at a computer with CAD [computer-aided design]. Perhaps we will find Maia ensconced in Shadow House with her laptop, designing a new space somewhere, having the best of both worlds.

Maia’s favorite space is the Bishop’s Garden, and feeling some ownership of it, given her two summers working here. She loves planting and even finds weeding satisfying, and loves watering the roses in the early morning when all is fresh. It does seem Maia has taken “ownership” of these gardens – thank you for your work, Maia!

Maia and Jonah with Persimmon Tree and Sundial

Unloading Plants from the Delivery Truck

Jonah Webb of nearby Silver Spring, Maryland, also attends University of Maryland and is a rising sophomore in the Ornamental Horticulture program. Fortunately, the posting for this internship was sent to his college advisors, to pave the way for Jonah's arrival here. Jonah always knew he would work with plants, but his summer job has opened his horizons to other opportunities in the field; it has given him an interest in Landscape Architecture as well. Like so many of our other interns over the years, Jonah says the day-to-day exposure to plant identification is invaluable, and the work has solidified his focus on horticulture while revealing how many different aspects there are to the field.

Jonah has joined with the Wednesday Olmsted Woods Crew in pulling invasive plants, chiefly English Ivy, to allow tree roots to breathe and to clear areas where

native wildflowers can then flourish. This stalwart crew works so hard to help revive our native woodland and our interns are pulled in to aid this wonderful effort. Happily Jonah reports that working in the Woods is his favorite task. And we much appreciate your help in this never-ending job, Jonah.

The historic Wayside Cross at the Heart of the Garden

Our interns have traditionally had access to select horticulture seminars and special tours of nearby public gardens; during the pandemic these opportunities were either canceled or severely curtailed. However, this summer Maia and Jonah have had a chance to tour both Hillwood and Tudor Place.

Each summer our interns are given a project for which they plan a garden design, and specify, source, and price the plants. They present the entire plan to our horticulturists for critique, and then to All Hallows Guild Garden Committee for

approval and funding. This year Maia and Jonah are designing the 2023 displays in the very popular **Sundial Bed** – the spring tulip show and the bold summer annuals. We look forward to reviewing their plans and ideas.

All Hallows Guild is justifiably proud of our longstanding program of supporting summer horticulture interns. The landscape certainly benefits from youthful energy, enthusiasm, and new ideas, and we know the experience of gardening and working with our outstanding horticulture staff will guide them in both their studies and a future career. Without programs like ours, where will we find the gardeners of tomorrow?

Pool of St. Catherine in Full Summer