MEET YOUR NOMINEES & INCUMBENTS FOR THE 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS!



Katherine Ennis - Nominee to join the Board as President

After retiring in December of 2020, Katherine fulfilled a long-time dream and graduated from the 2021 Master Gardener course in Jefferson County. Growing up in Kentucky, her family gardened for food and, while her mother loved geraniums, there really wasn't a great deal of flower gardening in her life. So her interests now lean mostly to flower gardening. She loves the color and movement they add to her yard not to mention all the butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds that visit every day. During the Master Gardener internship, her group worked on a teaching garden for the Grace Klein Community. She met a fellow Master Gardener living in her hometown of Helena and together they helped restore the teaching garden for a day school at Riverchase United Methodist Church and manned a Master Gardener booth at the Helena Farmers Market. Katherine said one of her favorite things has been serving on the Hospitality Committee with a group of dedicated and talented women, a position that has allowed her to meet many fellow Master Gardeners and learn about all of the interesting things everyone is doing and growing. She says that interaction keeps her constantly wanting to try something new! During her career she served in several positions, over a span of 14 years, on the Executive Committee of the Alabama Chapter of the American Planning Association. Her experience has certainly helped her develop the organizational and leadership skills needed to lead the Jefferson County Master Gardener Board of Directors.



Judith Rives - Advancing to Vice President of the Board from At-Large.

Judith graduated from the Master Gardener course in Tuscaloosa in 2009. She is a native of Cherokee County, but had lived in Blount County for the past 30+ years while working in Birmingham as a medical technologist. She served the Tuscaloosa County Master Gardeners as Vice President for two years, President for one year, and Advisory Council Representative for two years. During this time she completed the course in Native Plant Studies at Birmingham Botanical Gardens and fulfilled the requirements for Advanced Master Gardener in both Native Plants and Herb Gardening. After her husband retired eight years ago, they moved back to Birmingham. During Covid she began genealogical research and self-published a book for her family members on seven generations of her family. Now she is consumed with planting her entire backyard with native plants and trying to teach her three grandsons about nature. Judith joined in 2024 to fill the two-year unexpired term of Hana Berres.



Carlton 'Skip' Craig - Advancing to Treasurer in his 2nd Year on the Board of Directors.
Skip graduated from the Master Gardener program in 2018. His interests are vegetable gardening, lawn care, composting, ornamental shrubs, and fruit trees. Recently, he became involved in a community garden at his church that participates in Grow More Give More. He enjoys consulting with gardeners who are starting out with lawn and ornamental shrubbery propagation. He has plenty of help from his wife, Marsha (a fellow Master Gardener), who provides input for flowers and small plants. In his career at UAB, he was responsible for the finances and administration for the Department of Emergency Medicine in the School of Medicine; total budget for the department exceeded seven million. Skip joined the board as an At-Large Director in 2024 assisting Treasurer, Cynthia Funderburk, in 2024 and will be serving as Treasurer in 2025.



Cynthia 'Cindy' Funderburk - Moving into Assistant Treasurer in her final year on the Board.
As a young adult, Cindy started creating beds of flowers. She says, “I have to admit, I just like the smell of dirt (and I also like to weed)! The first flowers I grew from seed were zinnias - what a wonderment! From then on, I knew I would always have a small vegetable garden and colorful flowers in the yard.” Cindy graduated from the Master Gardener Program in 2022, after retiring in 2019, but is quick to tell you that she is still learning. She always tells people, “I’ve learned enough to know that I need to learn more, and the best way to learn, for me, is to do.” Cindy was part of the Master Gardener Intern group that planned and executed an enjoyable area for the people at Eastside Mental Health Center. She has worked with the Perennial Group and Plant Sales at Birmingham Botanical Gardens and with St. Stephens Episcopal Church. Beyond the Master Gardener Program, and like so many Master Gardener Volunteers, Cindy has always been in some kind of service to others, from hospital work to bookstore and church work, and often in a finance position. So it was an easy decision for her to step into a leadership role on the Board as Treasurer. After two years as Treasurer, she will continue to support Skip as they swap places for 2025, her final year on the Board.



Jennye McCreary - Nominee to join the Board as Secretary
Jenny is a lifelong gardener. She says, "I have always had a garden, planted my mother's garden when she could no longer participate, and have tried to learn more and more about plants." Jenny runs her own business, so as soon as she was able to go part-time, she got into the Master Gardener Program. She graduated in 2022 and immediately began volunteering with the natives plant group at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens every Tuesday and participating in the Spring and Fall plant sales. She also got involved in the Helpline and writing the greeting cards for JCMGA Membership! She truly has a servant's heart as not only is she involved in these and various other Master Gardener projects, but she has been delivering Meals on Wheels for over 30 years! She was thrilled to accept her nomination to the Board with an interest in becoming the Secretary. She said that "seems a good next step."



Angela Fuller Grace - Nominee to join the Board as At-Large Director
A graduate of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), Angela where she worked for 30 years, the last 15 years of which she was Program Manager to the Chairman of the Department of Health Services Administration. Afterwards, she served as assistant to the first black Dean in the history of The School of Public Health at Samford University. After COVID in 2022, she retired from the workplace entirely and became a Certified Master Gardener Volunteer in 2023. The story behind that is best told by Angela herself: "*Dr. Mike Honan and a group of retired cardiologists with the ANNO (Alabama Not Number One) initiative visited my church, Mt. Canaan Full Gospel, where I serve in a ministerial capacity. To be exact, Bunny Fite and Laura Kezar were a part of this group. Bunny was so enthusiastic about what both she and Laura did that I became interested in knowing more about Master Gardeners. Immediately, I started a community garden at my church that participates in Grow More, Give More. Soon afterwards, I enrolled in the Master Gardener Course. Honestly, I'm excited to join the JCMGA Board because I have a strong desire to perform in environments that are conducive for both my spiritual and emotional growth. Furthermore, I'm honored to be married to Randall Grace for 28 years, mother of three sons and grandmother of three grandchildren.*"

Last and anything but least!



Hana Berres - Nominee to rejoin the Board as At-Large Director, after a 1-year hiatus.
Hana is locally known as Jefferson County's Water-Woman having created many fun and engaging stormwater educations programs over the last 26 years. Her programs include the annual rain barrel workshops and the brown bag lunch and learn series held at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. She is currently the Education Training Manager in the Jefferson County Roads and Transportation Department responsible for the Waste Diversion Program which include the Household Hazardous Waste and Electronic Recycling Events, volunteer roadside litter cleanups and stormwater education programs for students from Kindergarten to 12th grade. Hana has graciously agreed to rejoin the Board as an At-Large Director in 2025 supporting our new President and VP with her experience. Hana sees herself as more of a 'hoarder' culturist in gardening. She adores a garden that lets rainwater soak into the ground and is brimming with plants that provide wildlife food, shelter, and colorful beauty all year round. Her closest buddies are from the Master Gardener Program. She completed the program in 2018 and earned her Native Plant Certification in 2019. Hana has been deeply involved in the JCMGA ever since, having mentored the 2020 and 2021 projects, and serving as Vice President in 2023.