



**Bennett's
Village**
a place for ALL to play

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FOR RELEASE

BOTANICAL GARDEN OF THE PIEDMONT PARTNERS WITH BENNETT'S VILLAGE

Charlottesville, VA (May 30, 2023) ... The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont (BGP) is partnering with Bennett's Village to share our mutual passion for making intentionally welcoming spaces for people of all abilities. The mission of Bennett's Village is to make the world a more inclusive place for all to play. The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont's core values are to inspire connection, learning, and joy for everyone through nature. Our missions will align in this Just Ask! in the Garden with Bennett's Village event on June 3 from 10am-noon. (Rain date June 10th).

Visitors to the Garden will discover Sonia Sotomayor's book inviting children to Just Ask! when they encounter someone who seems different. Outdoor activities that engage the senses and nature will follow. Visitors to the Garden will enjoy nature inspired sensory stations for hearing, sight, taste and touch, and will be able to learn more about the missions and plans of Bennett's Village and Botanical Garden of the Piedmont.

Activities will take place by the entrance to the Garden to increase accessibility and on-site parking will be available for anyone who has limited mobility. For questions or to reserve an on-site parking spot please contact Whitney at rsvp@piedmontgarden.org.

The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont is located on 14.74 acres in eastern McIntire Park in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Jill Trischman-Marks, Executive Director, says "Research is providing evidence that both physical and mental health outcomes improve with regular access to nature. It is our goal to make everyone feel welcome at the Garden so the entire community can experience the benefits of well-being through access to nature."

Bennett's Village President Kara McClurken says that Bennett's Village is delighted to be partnering with the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont on this program. "We know that

recreational play is important for physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Both of our organizations are working to lower barriers to recreational play and foster connection in outdoor spaces.”

The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont and Bennett’s Village is grateful to the financial support of Thrivent Financial Services, Public Lands, Blue Ridge Bank, and Wegmans for support of this free community event.

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About The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont

The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont is a 501(c)3 organization that is building an urban oasis and community resource for all residents of and visitors to Greater Central Virginia. The Garden will be an admission-free neighborhood hub and a discovery center, celebrating the flora of Central Virginia and offering learning and entertainment opportunities for ALL. Occupying a nearly 15-acre space in the northeastern section of McIntire Park, The Botanical Garden of the Piedmont is currently in the design phase, under the direction of the award-winning landscape architects Mikyoung Kim Design and Waterstreet Studio. For more information, please visit www.piedmontgarden.org.

Bennett’s Village is a 501(c)3 organization that is building a 3+ acre multigenerational all-abilities playspace at Pen Park. Designed by the award-winning landscape architects Mahan-Rykiel, the play space is being built in five phases. Phase One will include an accessible treehouse, designed by Challenge Access, Inc. and an ADA accessible path through the woods behind the current playground at Pen Park. For more information on how you can help Bennett’s Village make Charlottesville a place where all can play, visit us online at www.bennettsvillage.org.

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