

# PARKSIDE

HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

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in the park

A magical  
snow day graced  
Hermann Park  
(Pg. 4-5)



**MISSION**  
Hermann Park  
Conservancy is a  
citizens' organization  
dedicated to the  
stewardship and  
improvement of  
Hermann Park—  
today and for  
generations to  
come.

  
**HERMANN PARK**  
CONSERVANCY

[hermannpark.org](http://hermannpark.org)

Japanese  
Garden hosts  
Japan Team for  
their annual visit  
(Pg. 10-11)





Dear Friends,

As spring has settled into Hermann Park, I find myself grateful for the incredible journey that has brought me back home to Houston. It is a joy and a privilege to serve as the new President and CEO of Hermann Park Conservancy, a place that holds such deep personal significance for me. Like so many Houstonians, I have cherished memories here—riding the train with my four amazing children, enjoying the tranquility of the Japanese Garden, and long walks with my mother, who was fortunate to be a neighbor of the Park. These moments have shaped my love for this remarkable green space, and I am honored to now play a role in stewarding its future.

I follow in the footsteps of the extraordinary Doreen Stoller, whose leadership over more than two decades transformed Hermann Park into the dynamic, welcoming, and beautiful space we know today. Under her guidance, the Conservancy has achieved an unparalleled record of success—expanding green spaces, improving visitor amenities, and ensuring that generations to come can experience the Park as a place of respite, recreation, and community. I am deeply grateful for the foundation she built and eager to build upon it as we continue our work to enhance and protect this treasured urban oasis.

This spring has been an especially exciting time in Hermann Park as we marked the first anniversary of the opening of the Commons! This vibrant and inviting space, designed to bring people together through play, relaxation, and connection with nature, has quickly become one of the most beloved areas in the Park. We hope you will continue to join us in celebrating the Commons and all that it has brought to our community.

Adding to the excitement, we welcomed a truly spectacular event this spring—*The Great Elephant Migration*. Hermann Park played host to this inspiring installation throughout the month of April, highlighting the importance



of conservation and the impact of invasive species. This one-of-a-kind experience captivated visitors and also served as a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to protect our planet's biodiversity. We appreciate how the elephants sparked conversations and inspired action among all who encountered them.

As we move forward, the Conservancy remains steadfast in our mission to enhance, maintain, and advocate for Hermann Park. None of this work would be possible without the support of our generous donors, dedicated volunteers, and passionate community members. Your commitment fuels everything we do, from landscape restorations and new plantings to educational programming and sustainable initiatives. Together, we are ensuring that Hermann Park continues to be a place of beauty, joy, and belonging for all.

I hope to see you out in the Park this season—whether riding the train, exploring McGovern Centennial Gardens, or simply enjoying a peaceful moment under the oaks. Please know how grateful I am for your support, and how excited I am for the bright future we are building together in Hermann Park.

With gratitude,

*Cara Lambright*

Cara Lambright  
President & CEO  
Hermann Park Conservancy

## DONORS

The names listed below and on the following pages include donors who made gifts or pledges of \$100 or more between July 1, 2024, and February 28, 2025, as well as all *Hats in the Park* and *The Great Elephant Migration* donors.

### *The Great Elephant Migration*

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## HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY

## What's Blooming?

Who doesn't love spring in Hermann Park? The colorful blooms and various greenery are a welcome sight of warmer days returning to Houston.

In order to get through the winter that saw fluctuating temperatures week to week, our horticulture team worked diligently to care for plant life throughout the Park in spite of the unpredictability. It is through the support of Conservancy members that we are able to be prepared all year long to keep the Park looking its best. Learn how you can make an impact at [hermannpark.org/membership](https://hermannpark.org/membership).

Canna Lily (*Canna sp.*)



Iris (*Iris sp.*)



Orange Peel Cestrum (*Cestrum 'Orange Peel'*)



Pickerelweed (*Pondetaria cordata*)



## Hermann Park – A Winter Wonderland!

On January 21, Hermann Park was transformed into a winter wonderland, blanketed in a thick layer of snow that delighted visitors of all ages. The scene was nothing short of magical, with the usual greenery and pathways now covered in pristine white. People flocked to the Park to enjoy the rare sight, with many heading straight for Miller Hill to experience the joy of sledding down in whatever household item they could repurpose into a sled. An abundance of joy was in the air as families and friends made the most of the unexpected snowfall, creating memories in the beauty of the snowy Park.





## Hats in the Park 2025

A little rainfall could not put a damper on the 17th annual *Hats in the Park*. This spectacular and stylish fundraiser in the McGovern Centennial Gardens remains one of the most impactful events for the betterment of Hermann Park. Event co-chairs Brooke Bentley Gunst, Holly Radom, and Carolyn Sabat orchestrated a remarkable day for the 590 guests—setting a record for the most-attended edition of the luncheon in its history. Thanks to the incredible generosity of the attendees and event supporters, the Conservancy raised over \$550,000 for the continued care and enhancement of Hermann Park.

This year's luncheon recognized Brittany Sakowitz Kushner and Katie Arnoldy for their unwavering dedication to the Park. As advocates for community involvement, Brittany and Katie have shown a deep passion for the Park through their contributions to the Conservancy and its community events. It was a true pleasure to honor their love of the Park!

**To everyone that supported the luncheon, thank you for making a difference in Hermann Park.**

Photos by Jenny Antill & Hung L. Truong



**1** Co-chairs Carolyn Sabat, Brooke Bentley Gunst, Holly Radom **2** Honorees Katie Arnoldy and Brittany Sakowitz Kushner **3** Laura McWilliams **4** Isabel David, Brooke Bentley Gunst, Holly Radom, Carolyn Sabat, Kristy Bradshaw **5** HPC President & CEO Cara Lambright **6** Rishma Mohamed **7** Mariana Torre, Monica Radoff, Jen Kavoussi **8** Carrin Patman and Franci Neely **9** Ila Gazzelle and Natalie Steen **10** Lauren Paine and Stephanie Tsuru **11** Katherine Whaley and Kathryn Boeker **12** Charlotte Calloway and Councilwoman Martha Castex-Tatum **13** Denise Monteleone, Jana Arnoldy, Fady Armanious **14** Emily Holden and Holly Alvis **15** Dina McMeen and Sharon Marie-Hogge **16** Morgan Neal, Skye Chao, Ashton Verrengia, Chiara Casiraghi Brody, Jessica Ludwig Bertuccio **17** Brigitte Kalai, Heather Almond, Kathy Leigh, Cheryl Byington **18** Jennine Hovell-Cox and Tina Peterman **19** Rebecca Mark-Jusbasche and HPC President & CEO Cara Lambright **20** Natalie Synnott, Blair Looche, Anooshea Taghdisi, Nicole Katz **21** HPC Board Chair Roslyn Bazzelle Mitchell **22** Meredith Marshall, Kelly Provenzano, Dee Dee Howes **23** Sandy Godfrey **24** Jayne Johnston and Allison Stasney **25** Sarah Haasist, Vanessa Tutos, Nicola Toubia **26** Amanda Boffone and Camille Connolly **27** Carolyn Sabat and Anne Chao **28** Susie and Sanford Criner **29** Lindley Arnoldy and Allie Fields **30** Vanessa Amest and Jordan Seff **31** Phoebe Tudor and Cynthia Petrello **32** Kelly Lubanko and Shawn Stephens



# Community Events

More than 1,430 people joined us at the Conservancy’s fall community events, raising over \$85,000 for the care of Hermann Park.

## Park to Port

At the 10th annual *Park to Port* bike ride, held on Saturday, Oct. 26, 450-plus cyclists embarked on a ride that raised more than \$20,000 for the Conservancy. These funds go towards the stewardship efforts for one of Houston’s most beloved parks, which includes the ever-growing Bayou Greenway trail system.

A beautiful fall morning kick-started the cyclists’ 20-mile round-trip ride from Hermann Park’s Bayou Parkland, along the Bayou Greenway Trail, to Mason Park near the Port of Houston, and back. A turn-around party, sponsored by Port Houston, was enjoyed at the halfway point at Mason Park where snacks, music, and activities were offered to the riders. In theme with this being the 10th edition of the ride, participants were encouraged to dress in their favorite decade’s attire for the chance to win prizes throughout the morning.

In each of the decade’s rides, Port Houston has been a fundamental partner in this event, showing these cyclists a unique and historic side of the bustling city they call home. “Port Houston enjoys celebrating our special partnership with Hermann Park Conservancy to help host this fun and engaging event for the past decade,” said Garret Berg, community relations manager at Port Houston. “We love seeing riders of all ages and backgrounds take advantage of our City’s great trail systems to explore neighborhoods and communities in the East End of Houston.”



Photography by Voltz Photography

### In Memory of Ed Smith, continued

Andrea Greer  
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Doreen Stoller and Dan Piette  
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Charla Wilson  
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Lorraine Wulfe

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Cassie Baca  
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Steven Bradshaw  
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Angelo Mira  
Melinda and Matt Mogas  
Tricia Moody  
Kari Nakama  
Eduardo Nevado  
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Sharon Young

### Community Outreach

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### Habitat Restoration

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University of Houston Downtown  
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### Garden Conservancy Fund

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John E. Walsh, Jr. – In honor of  
Doreen Stoller

### General Endowment Fund

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### Habitat Conservancy Fund

\$100-\$499

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### Plant a Tree

\$500-\$999  
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Toussaint, and Hannibal  
Hansa Parikh – In memory of  
Divyakant S. Parikh  
PEM Division – In memory of  
Henry Douglas Timberlake  
\$100-\$499  
Joubin and Nick Aliakbari – In memory of  
Noori Jaan  
Amperon – In memory of  
Hamilton Jeffrey Price

## Run in the Park

On Saturday, Nov. 16, with nearly 730 runners from the Greater Houston area ranging from ages two to 85 participating in the 21st annual *Run in the Park* presented by Reliant, the Conservancy raised more than \$55,000 for the essential care needed to maintain the Park and its trail system.

A sunny morning kicked off the races in Hermann Park where the mix of competitive runners, dedicated joggers, and merry walkers followed the routes that took them through several Park destinations, including the recently opened Commons, the heart of the Park, and the live oak-shaded trail. Next up was the 1K Kids’ Run, sponsored by Sunnova, where runners ages 12 and under dashed to the finish line with the encouragement of their family and friends on the sidelines.

“As we celebrate the 21st *Run in the Park*, we are reminded of the power of community and the vital role our Park plays in connecting people to nature, recreation, and each other,” said Cara Lambright, president and CEO of Hermann Park Conservancy. “This annual event not only brings us together for a morning of fun and fitness but also raises essential funds that help preserve and enhance the Park, creating more opportunities for communal bonds to be established here.”

Photography by Voltz Photography



## Houston Rockets Dog Walk

Park patrons, Houston Rockets fans, and canine companions enjoyed a morning stroll around Hermann Park at the 12th annual Houston Rockets *Dog Walk*. Attendees, both two- and four-legged, enjoyed a scenic view throughout the pet-friendly trails followed by a post-walk party in Lake Plaza with music and refreshments—Tito’s Vodka beverages for the humans and tasty dog treats for the pups!



Photography by Houston Rockets



# Learning Lessons in the Japanese Garden

In February, garden specialist John Powell visited Hermann Park to spend time with the Conservancy's horticulture staff in the Japanese Garden. An expert in Japanese black pine pruning, he provided instrumental guidance with his hands-on lessons focusing on pruning techniques for various key plants in the Garden, including the 17 Japanese black pines on-site, the Japanese maples, and other flowering trees.

The next round of visitors arrived in March—Hiroshi Iwasaki and Taiki Iwasaki—for their annual trip to lend their expertise in our Japanese Garden. The mission of the Japan team is to ensure the Japanese concepts are accurately upheld throughout the space. During this year's visit, the team worked with Conservancy staff to complete an abundance of tree and shrub pruning. This work included the Japanese black pines, crape myrtles, wisteria arbor, and specimen plants around the tea house.

Continued, next page...



In addition to sharing his expertise on Japanese black pine pruning, John Powell also shared insight on how to prioritize work in the space—concentrating the most intense work around the key focal points of the garden.



Left: The working partnership between the Japan team, Hermann Park Conservancy, and the City of Houston has benefitted the Japanese Garden for over 15 years (left to right: HPC Senior Director of Greenspace Iris Clawson-Davis, HPC Landscape Horticulture Manager Caitlin Talkington, Taiki Iwasaki, and Hiroshi Iwasaki). Right: Hiroshi Iwasaki gives a hands-on shrub pruning demonstration to the Conservancy gardening team.

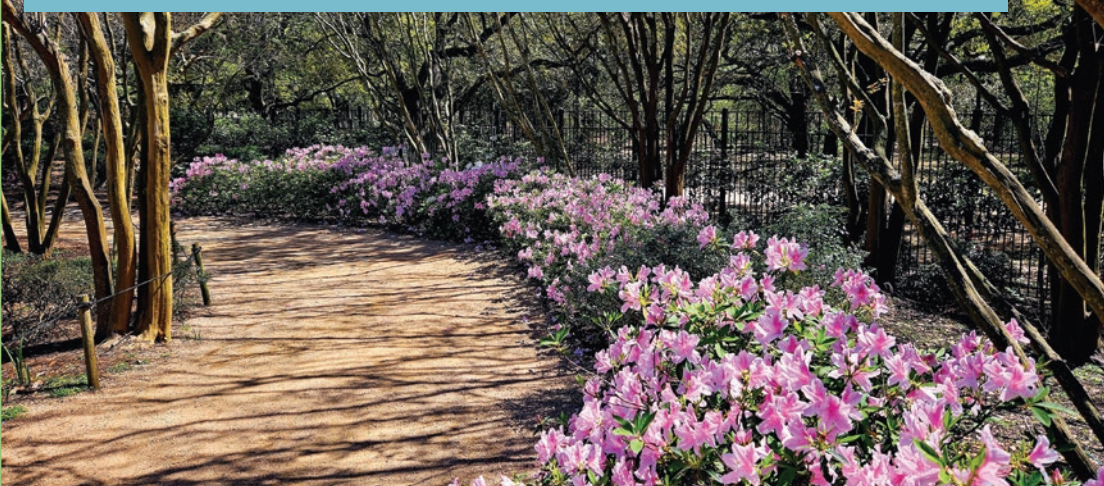
**Plant a Tree**, continued  
**\$100-\$499**  
Anonymous – In memory of Ruth Sylvester  
Melany Barlow – In memory of  
Glenda Lynn Hamilton Barrett  
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Suzanne Brooks – In memory of  
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Pamela and David Brown  
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**Hats in the Park Luncheon**  
*All gifts in honor of Katie Arnoldy and  
Brittany Sakowitz Kushner, honorees, and  
chairs Brooke Bentley Gunst, Holly Radom,  
and Carolyn Sabat*  
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Whitney Bossin Burns/Annie Criner Eifler/  
Allison Young Chavez  
Jan Cato  
CenterPoint Energy  
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Susie and Sanford Criner/  
Cece and Mack Fowler  
Isabel David/Monica Radoff  
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Adrienne Stokes  
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Azaleas and crape myrtles

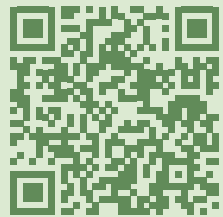
## Japanese Garden continued

During the Japan team's stay, members of Yotsuba Circle—the annual patronage group dedicated to supporting the Japanese Garden—gathered for an exclusive lunch in the Garden to meet Hiroshi and Taiki and celebrate this beloved retreat nestled within the city.

The Conservancy is once again grateful to have visits from John Powell and the Iwasakis where an abundance of knowledge is gained by our staff in order to preserve and improve the Japanese Garden.

## George Hermann Society—Leave Your Legacy

The George Hermann Society recognizes donors who have provided for the future of Hermann Park through bequests or life income gifts to Hermann Park Conservancy.



Anonymous	Sherry and Tommy Lott
Jack Bell	Jackie and Malcolm Mazow
Kathryn and Travis Boeker	Laura and Brad McWilliams
Robin <sup>†</sup> and Richard Brooks	Ron Misrack
Genevieve Lykes Duncan <sup>†</sup>	Terrylin G. Neale
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Cece and Mack Fowler	Megan and Jason Ryan
Steppie and Robert <sup>†</sup> Holsclaw	Karen and Howard Schneider
Demaris D. and C M Hudspeth <sup>†</sup>	Ann and Don Short
Linda Crooker Hunsaker	Doreen Stoller and Dan Piette
Ann Kennedy and Geoffrey Walker	John E. Walsh, Jr.
Carey Kirkpatrick	Pippa Wiley

<sup>†</sup>deceased

If you are interested in including the Conservancy in your giving plans, or if you have already done so, please call **713-360-1464** or e-mail **Meghan Miller** at [mmiller@hermannpark.org](mailto:mmiller@hermannpark.org).



DONORS

Hats in the Park, continued

**\$1,000–\$4,999**  
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Gail Viele  
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Marsherria and Gerald Wilson  
Susan Wilson – In honor of Laura McWilliams  
Hilary Ybarra  
**\$500–\$999**  
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McGovern Centennial Gardens offer a beautiful, garden-filled backdrop with lush greenery and vibrant florals, perfect for any occasion. Lott Hall combines historic charm with flexible indoor and outdoor spaces, accommodating up to 300 guests.

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[hermannpark.org/privateevents](http://hermannpark.org/privateevents)

Looking for a fun and meaningful way to connect with your community? Volunteer at Hermann Park!

Whether you're a group seeking a rewarding team-building experience or a student needing service hours, volunteering at Hermann Park is the perfect opportunity! With millions of visitors each year, the Park relies on volunteers to keep its trails, gardens, and green spaces thriving. Lend a hand, work with our team, and enjoy the outdoors while making a real impact!

Join us today! Email [volunteer@hermannpark.org](mailto:volunteer@hermannpark.org) or call **713-524-5876** to learn more about individual and group volunteer opportunities.





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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY

Save the Dates!



**Saturday, October 25 *Park to Port Bike Ride***  
Experience a bike's eye view of the city through the 11th annual *Park to Port Bike Ride*! Set for Saturday, Oct. 25, this 20-mile tour is a fun way to experience Houston, and we welcome everyone from experienced cyclists to those just looking for a bit of adventure. Plus, participants enjoy two parties along their journey featuring music, snacks and giveaways — one at the halfway turnaround point and one at Bill Coats Bridge just past the finish line! Registration will open in July, which will be available at [hermannpark.org/calendar](http://hermannpark.org/calendar).

**Saturday, November 8 *Run in the Park***  
Lace up your shoes for the 22nd annual *Run in the Park*! Whether you are a runner or a walker, join us on Saturday, Nov. 8, for this popular community event that features a 5K, 10K and 1K kids' run on the Park's shaded trails. After crossing the finish line, participants will be greeted by a post-race party with music, bites, refreshments and more at Molly Ann Smith Plaza. Registration will open in July, so keep an eye out on [hermannpark.org/calendar](http://hermannpark.org/calendar).

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Every Membership Counts at Hermann Park Conservancy

Hermann Park Conservancy memberships offer essential, year-round support for the upkeep and enhancement of the Park while also reflecting the deep affection people have for this cherished space. Members come from all over the Greater Houston area, each with their unique reason for contributing to the Park in this meaningful way. Whether you join to enjoy the benefits on the Hermann Park Railroad or simply to know that you are making a difference in one of the City's most treasured locations, the Conservancy values every member's contribution in preserving a place that many consider their personal retreat.

Each membership plays a crucial role, providing the necessary support for a variety of Park programs, from beautification efforts to ongoing maintenance. By becoming a member, you directly help the Conservancy maintain Hermann Park for today and for future generations. To learn more about how you can get involved, visit [hermannpark.org/membership](http://hermannpark.org/membership).





## Support the McWilliams Dog Park!

Help the Conservancy  
maintain and care for this  
special Park spot so that it can  
continue to bring joy to pups  
and their humans alike!

Visit  
[hermannpark.org/dogpark](http://hermannpark.org/dogpark)  
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Paul F. Egner III  
Campbell Eifler  
Inge Ford  
Kevin J. Foyle  
Ellie Francisco  
Brent Friedman  
J. Kent Friedman  
Cyndy Garza  
Wayne Gibbens

Stephen L. Goldberg  
Leisa Holland-Nelson  
Steppie F. Holsclaw  
Richard Holt  
Jennine Hovell-Cox  
Erik Ibarra  
Philip John  
Linda Kelly  
Sara Kelly  
Joy Klineberg  
Christopher Lykes Knapp  
Jordan Kozar  
Devorah R. Krieger  
Brittany A. Sakowitz  
Kushner  
Gregory D. Laake  
Elyse Lanier  
Tim Latimer  
Evelyn Leightman  
Nicole Longnecker  
Marley Lott  
Sherry A. Lott  
Nancy Manderson  
Matthew Marcinek  
Hiro Matsumura  
Jackie Wolens Mazow  
Ryan McCord  
Kristen W. McDonald  
Erol L. McLaughlin Jr.  
Erica Jordan Middleton  
Kunio Minami  
Peter Morris  
Sarah Newbery  
A. B. Nino-Rodriguez  
Judy Nyquist  
Kathleen O'Reilly  
Roz Pactor  
Adrian Patterson  
Mary Ladd Patton  
Winnie Phillips  
Carol S. Price  
Nina Rand  
Lauren Randle  
Ken Redding

Chris J. Reichert  
Shafik I. Rifaat  
Abbey Roberson  
Arielle Rogg  
Katherine Orellana Ross  
DeAndre Sam  
Lisa Forbes Satter  
Anne-Marie  
Schlumberger  
Shavonnah Roberts  
Schreiber  
Andrew Schwaartzberg  
Karla A. Sepulveda  
Louis Sklar  
Heidi M. Smith  
Allison Stasney  
S. Shawn Stephens  
Jennifer Stewart  
Ishwaria Subbiah, MD  
Michele Thompson  
Nanako Tingleaf  
Alyson Tran  
Alex Triantaphyllis  
Peter Tsan  
Hector Villarreal  
Landon Weis  
Katherine Whaley  
Barbara Evans Williams  
Daniel H. Williams  
Linden Nicosia Willis  
Shamsa Winnegar  
Hilary Zaic Ybarra  
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Conservancy leadership as of May 1, 2025