



FY25

THE HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

ANNUAL REPORT

DRAFT

THE **HORT**
thehort.org

A close-up photograph of several yellow flowers, likely dill or fennel, with green foliage in the background. The flowers are in sharp focus, while the background is blurred.

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OUR MISSION

The Hort improves human life through horticulture.

- We create green spaces in all neighborhoods as a vital part of social infrastructure.
- We train people for jobs that grow and sustain green communities.
- We develop fresh approaches to improve New Yorkers' health, well-being, and environment through horticulture.



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Letter from the Chairman

Dear Friends,

Fiscal Year 2025 has been a year of transformation and tangible progress for The Hort—one shaped by vision, collaboration, and citywide impact. At the heart of our mission is a two-part model: we begin by transforming public and private spaces through resilient, climate-responsive urban greening. Then, we activate these spaces with robust community engagement—offering educational programs, therapeutic horticulture, public events, and job training that help New Yorkers connect with nature, each other, and the possibilities of green space.

Three years ago, we launched an ambitious strategic planning initiative to expand our reach and deepen our relevance across New York City. Today, I'm proud to share how far we've come in realizing that vision. From planting pollinator-friendly landscapes and building vibrant plazas, to educating the next generation of environmental stewards and connecting justice-involved youth with healing garden experiences, we are cultivating a greener, healthier city for all.

None of this would be possible without the steadfast support of our donors, program participants, partners, Board Members, and the extended Hort community. Your dedication brings our mission to life and propels us forward.

Thank you for being an essential part of this transformation.

With gratitude,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Jared Goss
Chairman of the Board

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey hoodie, a grey baseball cap, and work gloves, is leaning over a black metal fence. She is working on a garden bed filled with dark mulch and green plants, including tall green leafy plants and small yellow flowers. In the background, there is a city street with a traffic light, a 'No Left Turn' sign, and modern buildings.

URBAN GREENING

TRANSFORMING SPACE



URBAN GREENING


Urban Greening: Transforming Space

The Urban Greening team enhanced the sustainability, beauty, and biodiversity of New York City's built environment—turning underutilized public and private landscapes into resilient, nature-forward places. We deepened partnerships with DSNY and MWBE vendors, shaped the development of the Carol Pino Learning Farm, and ensured pollinator- and people-friendly plantings citywide.

In addition to these broader landscape efforts, The Hort's horticulture team provided comprehensive horticultural care for DOT's public plazas and Open Streets. This included the planting and maintenance of planters across all sites, with four seasonal change-outs each year to ensure color, vitality, and resilience throughout the seasons. These planters not only enhanced aesthetic appeal but also contribute to pollinator support, community pride, and environmental impact.

Highlights

- Planted thousands of native and climate-adapted plants across public spaces.
- Collaborated with NYCPS and SCA to design and maintain the new Carol Pino Learning Farm.
- Expanded composting partnerships with DSNY across four boroughs.
- Provided horticultural consulting and planting services for NYC-owned and private properties.

A man with a beard, wearing a yellow baseball cap with 'Hort' on it, a bright yellow safety vest over a blue t-shirt, and grey shorts, is working in a garden. He is looking down at some yellow flowers. In the background, there is a large brick building with many windows. The foreground is filled with green foliage and yellow and purple flowers.

I just wanted to take a moment to thank everyone from coming out yesterday morning, especially in such inclement weather.

You all are real TROOPERS.

The grounds really looks beautiful. The Horticulture Team, you are absolutely AMAZING!"

Angela, a community partner for a city council project in Brooklyn



FY25 Recap

This year was one of strong growth and coordination for the Horticulture Department. We filled key leadership roles, bringing stability and strategic support to our decentralized teams and complex logistical operations.

Among the highlights was our involvement in launching the Carol Pino Learning Farm with NYCPs. As a fully cross-departmental initiative, the Horticulture team played a central role in the farm's first season—contributing to its design, planting, and ongoing maintenance.



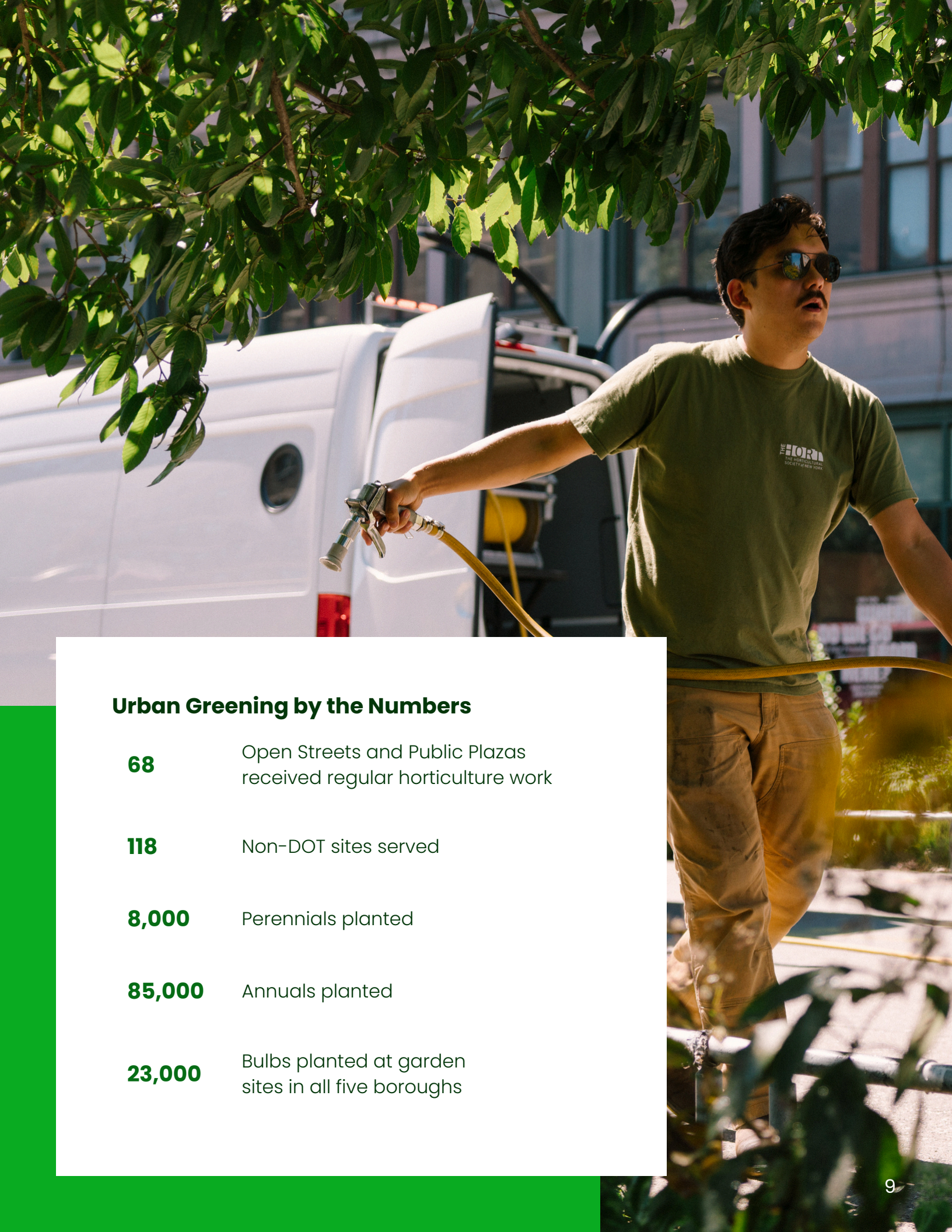
Expanding Our Landscape Design Portfolio

This spring, we worked quickly with the DOE to launch the Carol Pino Learning Farm in Brooklyn, navigating a complex network of partners including the SCA and multiple contractors. Planting began in April, and classes started on May 2.

The farm features an orchard, six crop fields, an herb garden, and a pollinator garden. The Hort provided consulting, design, and horticultural staffing to support planting and ongoing maintenance.

Sustainability

In October 2024, DSNY reopened composting routes in Manhattan and the Bronx, complementing existing service in Queens and Brooklyn. We quickly integrated this into our fall planting transitions, coordinating directly with DSNY to align pickups with their schedules. As a result, we're now able to compost the vast majority of our green waste across all boroughs we serve.



Urban Greening by the Numbers

68

Open Streets and Public Plazas
received regular horticulture work

118

Non-DOT sites served

8,000

Perennials planted

85,000

Annuals planted

23,000

Bulbs planted at garden
sites in all five boroughs



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ACTIVATING SPACE



Public Space Operations

Our expanded DOT contract enabled us to maintain and activate more public spaces than ever. With new hires, stronger vendor management, and added senior roles, we brought life and functionality to plazas, bike boulevards, and Open Streets—providing essential stewardship to the city’s in-between spaces.

Highlights

- Supported dozens of Open Streets and plazas across the city.
- Launched new street seating and plaza spaces.
- Hired and promoted staff from HORTNYC cohorts into full-time roles.
- Recognized at the Equity in Motion conference for community-centered work.



FY25 Accomplishments

At the start of FY25, we proudly expanded our reach by operating at seasonal public space sites, with our team actively supporting Open Streets and plazas across the city. We contributed to the creation of a new street seat and a new plaza—adding to the vibrancy and accessibility of New York’s public realm.

We successfully onboarded and graduated two HORTNYC cohorts and hired several graduates into full-time public space roles, reinforcing our commitment to workforce development. Internally, we celebrated the growth of staff who joined during our 2021 expansion, many of whom have now advanced into leadership positions.

Our collaborations with NYC DOT, community-based public space partners, and MWBE subcontractors continued to grow—strengthening our impact and expanding opportunities across the city.

Growing Horticultural Access

- Introduced two senior roles in public space: Director of Public Space and Partner Engagement Manager.
- Expanded community engagement under the DOT contract—supporting partners with grant writing, programming, and technical assistance.
- Recognized at the Equity in Motion conference, where COO Liza spoke on community engagement in public space work.
- Built out a Quality Control and Procurement Team to manage five MWBE subcontractors for operations, including pest abatement, watering, power washing, and call center systems.



Public Space by the Numbers

- 35** Public plazas served
- 365** Days of operation
- 118** Total city blocks
- 45** Community partners



Education

Our Education Department brought hands-on learning to schoolyards and classrooms across the city, integrating food education, sustainability, and cultural relevance into dynamic garden-based lessons.

Highlights:

- Served 2200 students and 300 schools.
- Developed kinesthetic compost games, plant-based cooking classes, and student-led recipe votes.
- Planted culturally relevant crops to connect food with heritage.
- Supported NYCPS's Carol Pino Learning Farm with curriculum and program design.



FY25 Highlights

This year, our team provided dynamic programming during the school day, afterschool, over the summer, and through evening and weekend events for teachers and families. We served 2,200 students across 37 schools, along with 300 teachers and 1,000 family members. We created 10 new gardens and maintained 23 existing ones, transforming schoolyards into vibrant learning spaces.

Impact on Students

In Fiscal Year 2025, the Education unit launched hands-on, innovative programs that enriched student learning and engagement. Highlights included a kinesthetic compost game blending movement with environmental lessons, plant-based sushi workshops promoting healthy eating, and the cultivation of culturally relevant crops to connect food with heritage. Student-led recipe voting added excitement and ownership to the experience. These dynamic activities fostered nutritional literacy, environmental awareness, and community connection that spark curiosity, responsibility, and a lasting bond with nature.

Collaborating on Greenspaces

This year, we grew more than just gardens! A new partnership with from NYCPS's Office of Food Education yielded fresh funding, allowing us to plant roots in new schools—boosting both our reach and revenue. We also rolled out a one-day, whole-school workshop model, making the most of small grants (and our ability to serve as many children as possible!). And in an ongoing, synergistic collaboration with The Hort's horticultural team, we brought culturally relevant crops to our gardens—connecting students to their heritage, traditions, and each other. Growth never looked so good!

In FY25, we were proud to support the NYCPS staff of the Carol Pino Learning Farm project as they launched new farm and greenhouse learning spaces. Our team provided guidance on curriculum development, activity design, and the selection of materials and instructional methods tailored to their student population. We contributed meaningfully to both the conceptual planning and practical implementation, ensuring alignment between educational goals and hands-on experiences.



PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public Programs

From Open Streets to the Greenhouse, our public programs brought people and plants together across all seasons. We piloted new formats like 'festival-style' days, expanded Grow and Harvest programs, and launched a popular microgreens activity for take-home planting.

Highlights

- Implemented Grow and Harvest with The Hort across multiple boroughs.
- Hosted Trick or Streets festivals featuring 6-8 simultaneous programs.
- Distributed microgreen kits with planting instructions and custom postcards.

Plant-Focused Community Engagement

FY25 saw the launch of our Grow with The Hort programs, along with expanded Harvest with The Hort programs! We continued to provide regular public space programming to DOT plazas and Open Streets to support the building of community partnerships in these spaces, as well as to connect people and plants. We also further built our capacity to provide these programs to non-DOT partners as well!

We were able to implement new and continued programs in FY25, utilizing the organization-wide planning and brainstorming process to build full, enriching programs. With the Pollinator Port Project, we implemented "Getting Down to Bees-ness," a program that brought education around native bees to the spaces where the pollinator ports were being installed. We hosted two larger, festival-style programs (Harvest with The Hort and Bloom with The Hort) that brought 6-8 programs to one block of an Open Street, serving hundreds of people in a day.

New Programming

- In FY25, we added exciting new programs! In our Grow season, we piloted a microgreens activity that included a custom postcard with instructions to grow at home after planting with us!. This activity gave people the chance to grow something quickly, and we received a number of photo updates from those that participated in the program.
- We hosted our 2nd annual Harvest with The Hort at NYC DOT's Trick or Streets Signature Events. These events were a full block that had multiple programs running simultaneously for 4-8 hours at a time. This "festival" style program not only had a big impact on the public, but also brought staff from different units together, contributing our signature Hort enthusiasm to communities throughout the city!





Public Programs by the Numbers

60

Public programs delivered through our contract with DOT and through smaller private contracts

5

Bloom with The Hort Events for Earth Day

11

Harvest with The Hort events in partnership with DOT



GREENHOUSE & EDUCATION CENTER

Greenhouse & Education Center

Our headquarters at Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park blossomed into a hub of learning, joy, and stewardship. Interns, volunteers, families, and new gardeners gathered to celebrate the seasons and care for shared spaces.

Highlights

- Started over 1,345 seedlings for distribution citywide.
- Hosted Bee Jubilee, Pride events, Harvest Festivals, and ethnobotany workshops.
- Offered Urban Gardening 101 with two learning tracks: technical skills and therapeutic gardening.

FY25 Highlights

This year, our Urban Gardening 101 was in high demand and welcomed gardeners of all levels to the Greenhouse for hands-on learning rooted in the rhythms of the seasons. Offered at no cost, the program provided two unique learning tracks: Greening the In-Between (Mondays), which builds technical skills for gardening in compact urban spaces, and Gardening for Healing (Saturdays), which combined foundational horticulture with principles of therapeutic gardening.

The Greenhouse & Education Center served as a vibrant hub for this program and many others. It also supported our broader horticultural efforts citywide—starting over 115 seed trays, totaling more than 1,345 seedlings. These plants were distributed to schools, supportive housing sites, community gardeners at Denny Farrell Riverbank State Park, and our own learning garden—growing not just gardens, but stronger, greener communities.

Inclusive Public Programs

We kicked off the fiscal year immersed in the learning garden, hosting our beloved core programs: the Bee Jubilee, summer camp, and collaborations with community partners. Our annual Pride celebration at the Greenhouse was bigger and more vibrant than ever, bringing people together in joyful connection.

As fall arrived, we welcomed back our HORT Greenhouse interns and explored the meaning of stewardship through seasonal events like the Harvest Festival and Market Bag Giveaways. In winter, we moved indoors and invited expert facilitators to lead enriching workshops on plant medicine, ethnobotany, eco-art, and more—keeping curiosity alive through the colder months.

By spring, the garden came alive once again with the help of our staff, dedicated interns, Urban Gardening 101 participants, and public program attendees—collectively tending to the space and ushering in a new season of growth and community.





Every time I go to the Greenhouse & Education Center, I am reminded that I can be deserving of beauty.

After the difficult times of the previous years, it is essential. The space is beautiful and relaxing. Everyone working there is always attentive, caring and knowledgeable, while remaining curious.”

**Nadia, Greenhouse and Education Center
program participant**



THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURE

Therapeutic Horticulture

We brought nature-based healing to some of NYC's most vulnerable communities—supportive housing residents, older adults, youth in detention, and patients in psychiatric care. With new programs, expanded training, and internal leadership development, we reaffirmed our role as a national leader in therapeutic horticulture.

Highlights

- Launched inpatient program at NYS Psychiatric Institute and returned to Rikers.
- Continued ACS contract serving up to 30 youth weekly.
- Grew 75% of plants for all supportive housing and detention programs at our Greenhouse.



“

The garden has transformed our community and has turned it into a place of healing and connection.

I love that tenants have the opportunity to transform the way they eat, live and interact.

This is such a great program!

Participant at a Supportive Housing site



Commitment to Therapeutic Horticulture

This year marked continued growth and a deepening of our strategic understanding of therapeutic horticulture at The Hort. We're especially proud to have steadily expanded our work in supportive housing and older adult centers, in close collaboration with our Development unit.

Three key developments stood out in FY25: the launch of our first inpatient hospital program at the NYS Psychiatric Institute; the thoughtful reimagining and relaunch of sustainable programming in justice-involved settings, grounded in The Hort's long-standing expertise in this area; and our participation in the Carol Pino Learning Farm through the NYCPS.

We also prioritized education and visibility—hosting informative sessions for partner organizations and prospective collaborators to highlight the benefits of therapeutic horticulture. These sessions were led by our full team and provided an opportunity to elevate our instructors, offering professional development and strengthening their roles within the organization.

Program Highlights

- After a successful pilot, we were contracted to continue programming in both ACS sites in an 18-month agreement, providing services to up to 30 young people every week.
- We're growing 75% of the vegetables, herbs, and flowers for all supportive housing/detention centers at the Greenhouse and Education Center at Riverbank State Park, thus creating an assortment of plants that's thoughtfully tailored towards the individual populations and the spaces where we work. This level of detailed knowledge is a valuable asset for The Hort, and the ability to provide such thoughtful programming within the many sites we serve is an accomplishment in itself, speaking to the quality of facilitators.
- We returned to providing programming in two facilities on Rikers Island with currently two groups on two individual days per week.
- We participated in the exciting full-organization-collaboration at the Carol-Pino-Learning Farm by ensuring the therapeutic horticulture elements are considered in all of the planning and implementation.
- We re-opened our internship program for TH students and currently have an intern from NYBG.



Therapeutic Horticulture by the Numbers

- 15** New partner sites
- 10,000** New Yorkers reached
- 2,517** Contact hours



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Development: HORTNYC

In its fourth year, HORTNYC trained New Yorkers for careers in green infrastructure and maintenance. Trainees gained real-world experience on Open Streets and plazas, received targeted training, and built workplace readiness with support from our new Career Coach.

Highlights

- Launched Cohorts 7 and 8; introduced watering intensives.
- Introduced Time Management & Productivity workshops.
- Promoted cross-program learning through 'What's Growing On?' development series.



Comprehensive Training and Skill Development

Completing its fourth year, HORTNYC has deepened its impact and strengthened referral partnerships to support a diverse pipeline of candidates from all boroughs. We refined our interview process to ensure fair, mission-aligned assessments. The past year focused on asking the right questions, expanding community connections, and preparing candidates for meaningful employment.

We welcomed our new Workforce Development Career Coach, whose role will support stronger employer partnerships and increase full-time job placements in green careers—bringing us closer to a more inclusive and sustainable workforce across New York City.

New Initiatives

In FY25, HORTNYC expanded its offerings to foster holistic growth and job readiness. New trainings included a specialized watering module focused on plant care in NYC’s unique urban settings—particularly where water access is limited. A Time Management & Productivity workshop was introduced to build strong workplace habits.

Participants also engaged in What’s Growing On?, our winter professional development series that promotes peer-led learning and collaboration across programs. Strategic midpoint evaluations were implemented to offer clear, actionable feedback throughout the training process.

Beginning with Cohorts 7 and 8, trainees were offered optional watering intensives and introduced to one of our MWBE sub-contractors, Adkins Landscaping, as a potential career pathway.



Workforce Development by the Numbers

50%	Placement rate
18	Partner organizations
320	Hours of training
89%	Retention rate



FINANCIALS

Unaudited Financials

FY2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025)

Revenue	
Earned Income	
Horticulture & Public Space	\$ 9,951,380
Education	\$ 468,338
Therapeutic Horticulture	\$ 508,299
Other	\$111,435
Contributions	
Government	\$1,448,339
Foundations	\$ 442,700
Individual Contributions	\$ 323,872
Corporations	\$ 79,000
Total Revenue	\$ 13,333,364
Expenses	
Programs	\$11,480,014
Fundraising & General	\$ 1,414,557
Total Expenses	\$ 12,894,572
<i>Net Income</i>	<i>\$ 438,792</i>



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