



The Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation
ANNUAL REPORT 2025

A Message from the President



Dear friends of the Cleveland Cultural Gardens,

Our gardens continue to grow and educate the community about the cultures that call Northeast Ohio home. The Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation's board and staff will build on the many successes of 2025 with a robust effort in this new year to celebrate both the 250th anniversary of America and the 80th One World Day celebration at the end of the summer.

In August 2025, we had our largest One World Day celebration, which included 55 communities marching in the colorful parade.

One important innovation is the new audio tour app that helps people visit and learn about the Gardens any time they want. Download the app from the [Google Play](#) or [Apple store](#) to explore the Cleveland Cultural Gardens.



Our Governance committee revamped the Constitution and Bylaws of the Federation, and we are looking forward to their final approval soon.

More communities are interested in having gardens. Four new ones were approved in 2025. This year we will also devote specific dollars to help established gardens add to their offerings and to help new gardens act on their vision to join our cultural tapestry. At the end of 2025, the board approved the distribution of funds from a Cuyahoga County grant that remained after the Federation used the grant to launch the audio tour app and to construct a permanent restroom facility. The remaining funds will be distributed to gardens who meet specific criteria for making longstanding improvements to their space, up to \$5,000 per established garden and up to \$4,000 for new ones, once confirmed.

The Cleveland Cultural Gardens, in their 110th year, are a living, growing space that offers peace and education to everyone in our community. This space is vibrant because of our volunteers. In 2025, hundreds of people came to the Gardens to weed, plant, mulch and clean the gorgeous landscape. Each new volunteer from the many schools, universities and corporations helps the Gardens grow. Thank you!

We hope to see you soon in the Cleveland Cultural Gardens,

Wael Khoury, MD
President



The Cleveland Cultural Gardens

African American	Albanian	American	Armenian	Azerbaijani	Bangladeshi
British	Carpatho-Rusyn	Croatian	Czech	Egyptian	Estonian
Ethiopian	Filipino	Finnish	French	German	Greek
Hebrew	Hungarian	India	Iranian	Iraqi	Irish
Kazakh	Korean	Latvia	Lebanese	Lithuanian	Mexican
Pakistani	Palestinian	Peace Garden of the Nations	Peruvian	Polish	Jordanian
Romanian	Russian	Scottish	Serbian	Slovak	Slovenian
Turkish	Ukrainian	Uzbek	Vietnamese		Syrian



Photo by Scott T. Morrison

In their 110th year, the Cleveland Cultural Gardens continue to promote an understanding of global cultures in the historic Rockefeller Park. The Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation is the non-profit organization that collaborates with cultural groups and governmental offices to preserve and promote the symbolic monuments and beautiful landscaping of this historic landmark.

ONE WORLD DAY

The 79th Annual One World Day on August 24, 2025, featured Cleveland baseball favorite Carlos Baerga as the Grand Marshal of the Parade of Flags and attracted more than 40,000 people on a warm, sunlit day. The cultural theme at the garden booths was the display of textiles from their cultural tradition—from decorative shirts and dresses to tablecloths, blankets and more.



AUDIO TOUR

People can now download a self-guided audio tour of the Cleveland Cultural Gardens to enjoy on their next visit. The app can be accessed from the CCGF website or downloaded from the [Apple](#) and [Google Play](#) stores. Once the app is downloaded to a phone or tablet, users select “take a public tour” to start and click on individual gardens to explore details of that community’s heritage.



Download the app
for Android here:



GARDEN IMPROVEMENTS

In 2025 the Federation reviewed design proposals from the Peruvian, Uzbek and Korean gardens and reviewed the final phase of the African American Garden, as well as smaller upgrades to established gardens.

TEACHING MATERIALS

In 2025, a Teachers’ Guide to the Cultural Gardens was added to the CCGF website for educators in the middle and high school grades. The free guide was produced in conjunction with Teaching Cleveland, a non-profit organization that promotes education about our city’s history. The curriculum materials feature case studies, global exploration, a scavenger hunt, historical research and the art activity to “Design Your Own Garden.” We are grateful to the Abington Foundation and Cleveland Foundation for making this educational material possible.

EXPANDED ACCESS

We consistently hear that parking and restroom facilities are an issue for people who want to travel from across Northeast Ohio to visit the Cleveland Cultural Gardens. The CCGF has collaborated with the City of Cleveland’s upgrade of Sowinski Park to address both issues. As of Labor Day 2025, 14 new parking spaces are available on the south side of St. Casimir Way, near our Centennial Peace Plaza. The space nearest to the plaza is a handicapped space. Construction work on Sowinski Park continues in 2026 and will include a permanent restroom easily accessible to visitors of the Gardens.



Representatives of the Kazakh community present to the CCGF board.

NEW GARDENS

Individual gardens are sponsored and developed by the individual ethnic communities for which they’re named. A cultural organization works with the CCGF and the City of Cleveland to bring a cultural display to life. There are currently 38 built gardens, and 13 more are in fundraising and development. In 2025 the CCGF board approved park space for:

Iranian Cultural Garden: The American Iranian Community Association of Northeast Ohio (AICANO) has about 1,000 members and is leading efforts to build this new garden. Representatives of the Iranian community in Northeast Ohio have participated in several One World Day events.

Iraqi Cultural Garden: After being approved for a garden space, Al Bait Al Iraqi in Cleveland participated for the first time in One World Day in 2025. Its booth shared Iraq’s history, textiles, Samoon bread, and Kleecha, baked by women in the Iraqi community.

Jordanian Cultural Garden: The Unified Jordanian Community of Ohio organization is leading the garden design on behalf of 25,000 Jordanians in Ohio, most of whom live in Northeast Ohio. There are more than 75 Jordanian doctors working at Cleveland Clinic.

Kazakh Cultural Garden: The Kazakh community in Northeast Ohio includes about 100 people from 40 families. They began participating in local cultural events in 2023, including the 2023 One World Day and several Asian festivals.



Representatives of the Iraqi community prepare their textiles for OWD.



WORLD ON STAGE PROGRAMMING

CCGF expanded its World on Stage impact in 2025 by collaborating with the long-running Wade Oval Wednesday concert program offered by University Circle, Inc. CCGF co-hosted a Wade Oval Wednesday that focused on cultural groups performing music and dance from across the world. The collaboration promoted One World Day 2025 and World on Stage programs later in the season. The annual holiday celebration at the Centennial Peace Plaza in December featured the choir from Antioch Baptist Church and a visit from Santa to give presents to children from the neighborhoods near the Cleveland Cultural Gardens.



The Murphy Irish Dancers perform. Photo by Scott T. Morrison

EXPANDED SOCIAL MEDIA

The CCGF activated an Instagram account to expand the Gardens messaging on social media. By the end of 2025, it had more than 200 followers. The Instagram account – and a more active posting schedule on LinkedIn and Facebook – features a new historical education piece, #LearnAboutTheLand, to increase appreciation for the monuments and information found in the individual gardens. A TikTok channel was added late in 2025 to expand CCGF messaging to a younger audience.

CCGF also began a monthly e-newsletter to a general population, including donors and volunteers. The e-newsletter goes to more than 400 people—double the number that were in that database category at the beginning of 2025. The open rate for the e-newsletter is consistently at 25%.

MARKETING MANAGER

The expanded social media and management of the marketing survey were the work of the new CCGF Development and Marketing Manager, Bentley Boyd. Boyd worked for the Cleveland Museum of Art and Cleveland Clinic before joining the Federation to promote the Gardens yearround.

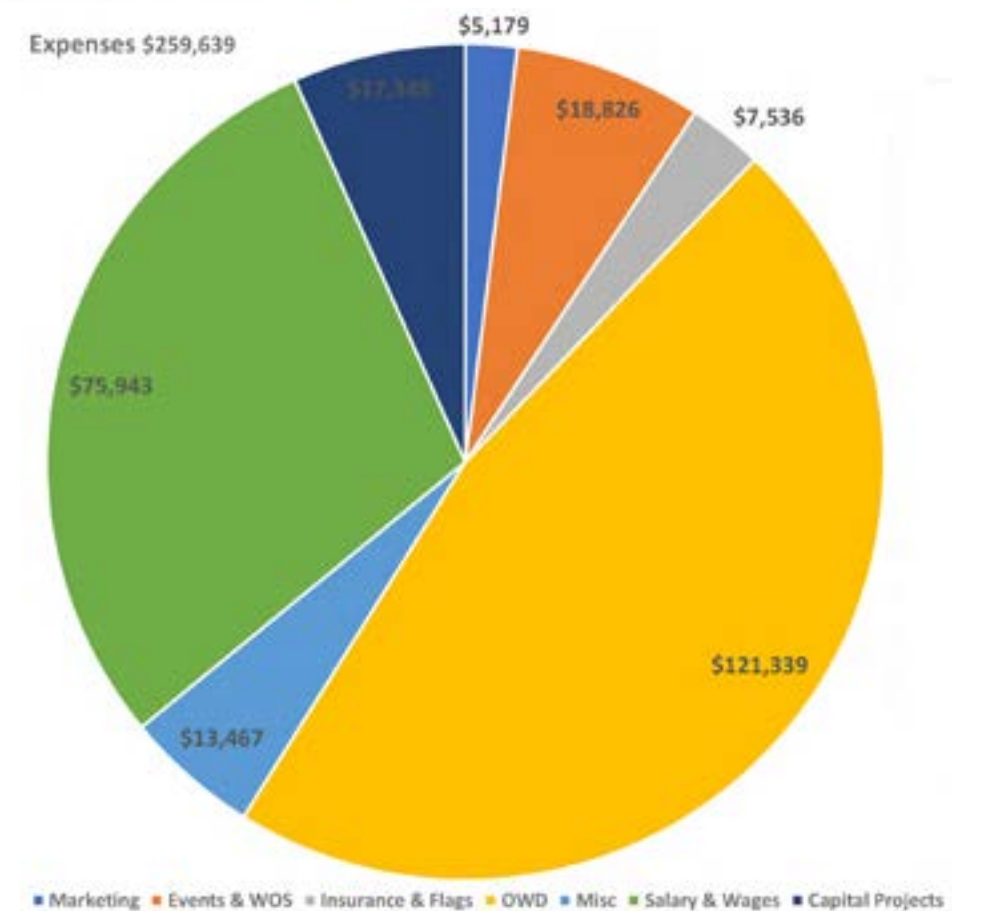
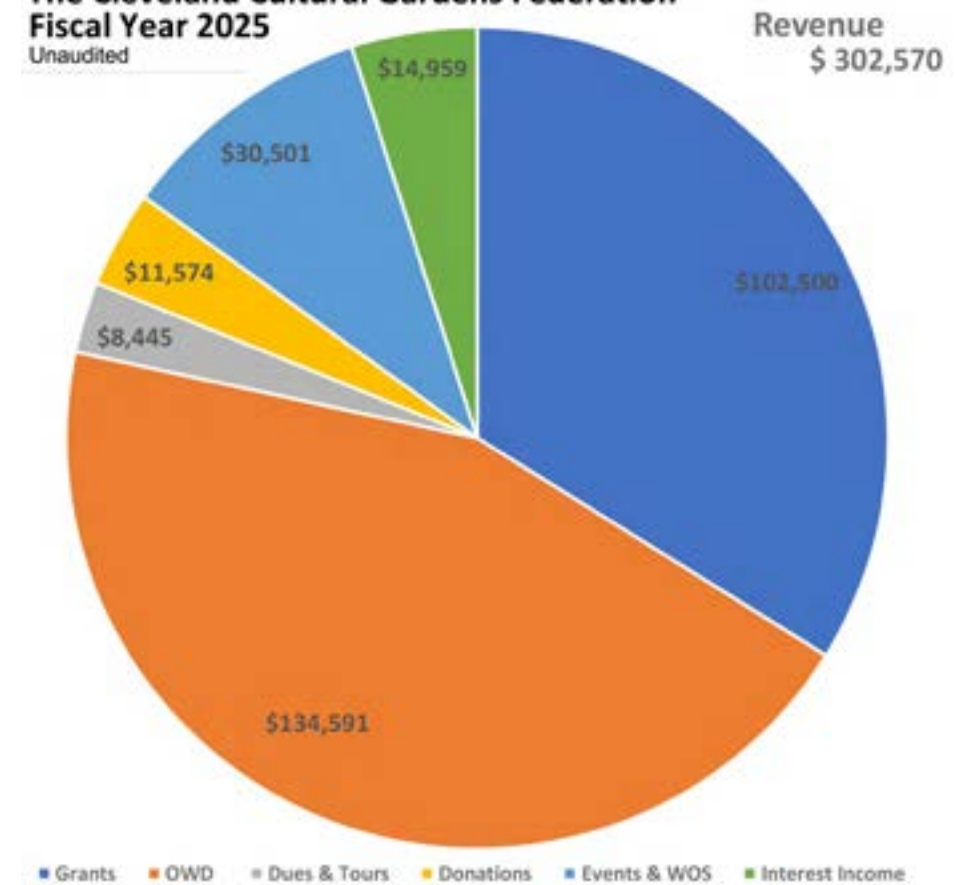
MARKETING SURVEY

With a grant from the Cleveland Foundation, CCGF conducted a market survey in 2025 to determine brand awareness and programming preferences in our target audience. Only 10% of the people answering the live survey said they are completely unfamiliar with the Gardens. Respondents confirmed that it's important to share the Gardens with their visitors from out-of-town and that live music and food truck programs would attract them to visit the Gardens more.



This word cloud shows the most popular descriptions of the Gardens in the marketing survey.

The Cleveland Cultural Gardens Federation Fiscal Year 2025 Unaudited



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