



ALL-AMERICA SELECTIONS®

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Winners of the “Get Social” Landscape Design Challenge Announced By All-America Selections

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – October 22, 2018 – All-America Selections, for the 2018 Landscape Design Challenge, went a bit out of the traditional garden comfort zone with a new theme. This year’s theme was “Get Social in the Garden” and it we left up to each garden to interpret how to carry out this theme. Using social media was certainly well-used but many gardens went above and beyond with the social them, which is explained in each garden’s description below.

For this challenge, AAS provided the gardens with Winner seed from the last five years. They also had the option to incorporate any older AAS Winners from the past 85 years. Gardens not only had to create and execute a design based on this year’s theme, but were also encouraged to generate publicity via social media and “real life” social events.

Gardens were divided into three categories based on the number of visitors per year:

Category I: fewer than 10,000 visitors per year

Category II: 10,001 – 100,000 visitors per year

Category III: Over 100,000 visitors per year

All-America Selections recognizes and thanks the contest judges (two long-time judges and two brand new judges!) who are industry experts in the field of horticulture and landscaping:

Jeff Gibson, Landscape Business Manager, Ball Horticultural Company

Sean James, Owner, Sean James Consulting and Design

Danilo Maffei, APLD, Principal, Maffei Landscape Design, LLC

Barbara Wise, Sales and Marketing Manager, Crescent Garden

Click here to see [Rules and Regulations](#) for the Landscape Design Challenge.

THE WINNING GARDENS ARE:

Category I: fewer than 10,000 visitors per year

First Place Winner: MSU-South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station, Poplarville, Mississippi.

MSU’s Display Garden has some very good, permanent design features such as the gazebo, which provide a strong focal point. Surrounding the gazebo is an orderly arrangement of AAS Winner plants and engaging features such as the bridge, river bed and fountain. This backdrop provides a great location for photography and selfies, promoting the “Get Social” theme. Judges gave high points for both plant health and garden quality. Volunteers provided substantial documentation of their social media activities and described the numerous events they promoted on Facebook. The theme hashtag, #AASWinner, and signage were prominently displayed in printed media and in the garden. Additionally, the inclusion of local garden personalities and businesses adds a sense of community and extends the reach of their efforts, especially via videos.

Second Place Winner: Kenosha County Center AAS Display & Demonstration Garden, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

"I scream. You scream. We all scream for ice cream!" ... and AAS Winners! With a slight twist to the theme, visitors to the Kenosha County Center were treated to an AAS Display garden tastefully decorated as an old-fashioned ice cream social. By combining an old-fashioned "social" event with the modern interpretation of "social", Kenosha provided a fun and refreshing break from our fast-paced world. Colorful plastic shaped waffle cones and ice cream cone sip cups served as planting containers as did an ice cream bucket and base of an ice cream maker resembling a cake cone. The repurposed satellite dish became a super-sized Delizz strawberry sundae. With inverted cone hats, gnome shaped signs were sprinkled throughout the garden's raised beds to share the scoop on the history of ice cream gardens and the many different "flavors" of AAS Winners. Judges felt that the plantings of AAS Winners were dense, colorful and in good health plus the garden location was quite prominent and well used.

Third Place Winner: Master Gardener Association at Tippecanoe County (MGATC) Display Gardens, Lafayette, Indiana.

The Master Gardeners at Tippecanoe used a party theme which tied together multiple mini-themes in this year's garden. Strategically placed picture frames with attractive backgrounds throughout the garden created multiple "selfie-ready" spots for garden visitors. A "Pathways for Pollinators" gateway provided another attractive theme garden, equally ready for photos. A tomato tasting with garden visitors further educated the public and provided fodder for social media posts. The MGATC posted their garden regularly on Facebook and consistently used the #AASWinners hashtag. All in all, MGATC used a variety of media to promote the garden and made good use of materials and ideas provided by All-America Selections.

Category 1 Honorable Mention Winners:

Honorable Mention, "Good use of AAS Variety Markers": Hendricks County Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden, Avon, Indiana.

Honorable Mention, "Prominent AAS Garden Placement": Miami University Hamilton Conservatory, Hamilton, Ohio.

Honorable Mention, "Creative Use of AAS Winners": Morris Horticulture Display Garden, Morris, Minnesota.

Honorable Mention, "Use of Amazon Reviews": Southwest Indiana Master Gardener Demonstration Gardens, Evansville, Indiana.

Honorable Mention, "Community/Group Involvement": UW Spooner Ag Research Station Teaching and Display Garden, Spooner, Wisconsin.

Honorable Mention, "First Time Participant": Willow Oaks Country Club, Richmond, Virginia.

Honorable Mention, "Tea Social Theme": River Valley Extension District Master Gardeners, Belleville, Kansas.

Category II: 10,001 – 100,000 visitors per year

First Place Winner: Purdue Extension-Marion County Demonstration Garden, Indianapolis, Indiana.

For the second year in a row, the Purdue Extension in Marion County has excelled at the AAS Display Garden Challenge! Their application did a wonderful job of describing the garden, giving relevant details about how the garden embraced the "Get Social" theme as well as evidence about the numbers of AAS Winners used in the garden.

To encourage photography and posting on social media, their design featured masses of color and an inviting garden atmosphere. The garden added three types of seating areas to encourage relaxation and a longer visit to the garden. "Photo ops" were created with a vertical wall garden, and two archways made from metal fencing for climbing plants (one arch with a 9-foot span featured two Jasper tomato plants). Additional "Get Social" signs with the hashtag #AASWinners were sprinkled throughout the garden as additional reminders. All AAS winners had variety markers which goes a long way with the challenge's judges. Those judges also praised how well explained and documented the Social media postings were. Lastly, a lunchtime lecture on "Plants We Liked This Year" promoted their favorite AAS Winners in the 2018 garden.

Second Place Winner: Jardin Daniel A Sequin, Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada.

Another multiple year winner is Jardin Daniel A Sequin! The AAS Display garden was located in the "agora" site right at the entrance of the garden which is a social gathering place large enough to accommodate a lot of people. To showcase the All-America Selections Winners, a blend of flowers and vegetables were interplanted in the terraced flowerbed of the agora with each plant clearly identified. Challenge judges noted how the attractive design came together because of careful attention to color, form, texture and variety. Signage in the garden promotes AAS and the competition including a nice selfie poster used by garden visitors then posted to Social media.

Third Place Winner: Clark Botanic Garden, Albertson, New York.

Clark Botanic Garden is a hidden treasure among the suburban sprawl of northwest Long Island. This year, just beyond the main entry gates, was a garden overflowing with All-America Selection Winners. It was well-conceived for color, form, texture and variety. Garden staff created a large kiosk with information about how to "Get Social In the Garden". Behind the stunning entry is the Family Community Garden with display beds of AAS Vegetables. Clark Botanic concentrated their efforts for the challenge at the entrance annual beds since visitors take pictures upon entering the garden. Throughout the summer, they found visitors were commenting about how they had seen pictures on social media and heard how beautiful the garden was which resulted in more events booked at the garden. In addition, more people were asking to volunteer in the gardens. The power of Social media!

Category III: Over 100,000 visitors per year

First Place Winner: The Annuals Garden & Pavilion (Denver Botanic Gardens), Denver, Colorado.

Denver Botanic Gardens' Horticulturist used 80's music to bring the "Get Social in the Garden" to life. Each garden bed was designed around, and named for, a pop song from the 1980's. Flower varieties were chosen based on color or texture that gave a visual of the song such as Salvia Sumer Jewel White for Billy Idol's "White Wedding." A song list played as they planted the garden last spring and as visitors strolled through, were delighted upon learning about the design theme. Once the plants grew in, garden visitors were encouraged to take selfies then post them on Social media with the hashtag #AASWinners. DBG clearly had a strong social media presence before this competition and is highly competent in engaging the online public. We applaud their ideas, engagement and execution of this year's Challenge theme.

Second Place Winner: Norseco at Montreal Botanical Garden, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Norseco decided to carry out this year's design theme by bringing people together. They created places for garden visitors to sit down, relax, take a photo or selfie, and post it to social media. They integrated the AAS flower bed into the Novelty garden of the Montreal Botanical Garden, using 25 AAS Winner plants, both ornamental and vegetables that bloom all season. The design was divided into several color schemes from pink, orange and reds to blues and whites, all offering different textures like the vertical stems of Allium 'Bunching Warrior' that contrast with Cuphea 'Flori Glory Diana' or Capsicum 'Onyx Red'. Metal structures were also integrated to support the tomatoes and the beans.

The crowning glory was the majestic blooming arch made of Petunia 'Evening Scentsation' and Gypsophila 'Gypsy White Improved' representing the blue and white colors of Facebook. The blue arch became the hot spot in the garden when three blue Adirondack chairs (with #AASWINNERS printed on the arms) were installed on the lawn behind the arch. These chairs are the focus point of the arch which makes a perfectly framed photo when visitors are sitting in the chairs.

Third Place Winner: Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Throughout the summer of 2018, visitors to Green Bay Botanical Garden were enthralled by their first-ever visiting exhibit, Nature Connects®: Art with LEGO® bricks which featured larger-than-life LEGO brick sculptures. While they searched the Garden for these sculptures, they also discovered a variety of incredibly beautiful plants and blooms including AAS Winners in spaces throughout the garden. The snap and share stations, or "Selfie Stations", were a huge hit for visitors to share their experience with the garden and promote #AASWinners on social media. Each station was built of decorative wood pieces with trough planters which create a frame of AAS Winners around the viewing window. By placing a number of snap and share stations that highlighted AAS Winners and providing visitors with a white flag to vote on their favorites plant varieties in their AAS Trial Gardens, they calculated that more than 45,500 visitors this summer got social in the garden!

Category III Honorable Mention "Quilting Theme": Boerner Botanical Gardens, Hales Corners, Wisconsin.

Each of these contest winners are profiled on the AAS website, under "[Display Gardens](#)"

A complete collection of photos from all contest entrants can be found on the All-America Selections [Flickr](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts.

For more information about the contest winners or how to participate in 2019, contact [Diane Blazek](#), All-America Selections.

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All-America Selections is a non-profit organization founded in 1932 to anonymously test new plants for home gardening. We utilize a network of 80+ volunteer judges in over 40 trials grounds across North America to rate entries against comparisons. We then use an active publicity program to promote the best performers that are declared AAS Winners.