Yew Dell Botanical Gardens Apprenticeship Program

Program Overview:
This program is designed to provide a vehicle for transfer of horticultural knowledge from Yew Dell’s professional horticulture staff to horticulture students newly graduated from either 2 or 4-year horticulture programs. This program will ensure that practical knowledge is successfully transferred from current to developing professionals and provides apprentices a springboard to a creative and productive career in various horticultural fields.

The general framework of the program is to annually bring to Yew Dell, a contingent of energetic horticulture students for a 1-year fixed-length position. During that 12-month experience, the apprentices will operate as regular full-time horticulture staff members. They will work with and learn from Yew Dell’s staff of experienced horticulturists, work periodically with other horticulture professionals in the region and attend professional meetings and other activities in order to help the apprentices develop a professional network. Each apprentice will work with their supervisor to develop and complete an independent project during the program. Independent projects can take a variety of forms from field research to development of a particular expertise (grafting, irrigation design etc.), creation of educational materials, garden construction etc. Applicants should have recently completed a 2 or 4-year academic program in horticulture or a related field.

Yew Dell Apprentices will work closely with Yew Dell’s staff of horticulturists, development and marketing staff, operations and office staff and event/program planners, providing exposure to all aspects of the organization's operations. In addition to the full-year apprentice positions, Yew Dell also hires each year 2-4 summer interns in both the horticulture and marketing/development departments.

Apprentices are provided:
- free housing on the grounds including all utilities except telephone
- a stipend of $10,000 for a full year paid at $750/month, with the remainder paid at the completion of the 12-month apprenticeship
- Yew Dell shirts to be worn during work hours
- Support for attendance at green industry conferences, programs and events

Apprentices are expected to:
- Complete the 12-month program
- Provide appropriate transportation
- Assist other Yew Dell staff with occasional program staffing outside normal work hours
- Complete an independent project (arranged with program supervisor) during the 12-month program

The Institution:
Yew Dell, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit corporation that was founded in 2001 to purchase and develop into a public botanical garden, the former Theodore Klein Nursery, family farm and homestead. The organization has grown to include a board of directors (21) full (5) and part-time (10) staff, over 1400 members and 250 volunteers. Yew Dell offers extensive education programs for audiences ranging from families and school groups to homeowners, avid amateurs
and green-industry professionals. The research program concentrates on collection and evaluation of plants with potential for the region and breeding/selection of new plants for introduction to the landscape industry. Yew Dell offers a year-long calendar of community events and rental facilities for private events. The institution’s operating budget is supported by membership, facility rentals, garden shop and event income, donations and foundation grants.

The Gardens:
Yew Dell Botanical Gardens occupies a 60-acre site which is comprised of approximately half cultivated areas and half natural areas. The garden acreage covers the former Theodore Klein Nursery, family farm and homestead which operated between 1941 and 1998 when Mr Klein passed away. The site includes extensive garden areas in varied styles, all operated as sites for evaluation of a wide variety of garden plants. The existing plant collection of approximately 11,000 specimens includes substantial collections if Cercis, Ilex, Fagus, Magnolia, Viburnum, Helleborus, Hosta and Carex. The collection grows each year through local/regional/international seed collection efforts, exchanges with collectors and breeders throughout the world, and exchanges with other botanical and conservation organizations.

In addition to the gardens, Yew Dell's site is adorned with a collection of unique historic buildings that were designed and constructed by Theodore Klein and today, serve to support the current institution. Yew Dell Botanical Gardens is a preservation project of the Garden Conservancy, a national non-profit dedicated to rescue and rehabilitation of America's best historic gardens. Yew Dell is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

To Apply:
Submit via email (paulc@yewdellgardens.org) by (March 15, 2015):

- Resume
- Letter from academic advisor
- Two letters of reference from former or current employers