

# HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

A Publication of the Colonial Williamsburg Landscape Department

## GARDEN INTERNSHIP AT COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Since 2014, our department has been fortunate to host 15 college students who served as interns in our work. We are grateful to these eager and energetic colleagues, and we are even more grateful to Barbara Chappell, whose generous donations have funded our internship program. The interns gain experience and knowledge, our department benefits from their work and support, and guests are able to enjoy the beautiful gardens they help us maintain. Everyone wins!

*Garden Interns, under the guidance of our senior horticulturists, perform entry level landscape tasks while receiving training in the art of fine gardening; plant identification; landscape construction and irrigation; small equipment operation and service; and most importantly, cultural practices of heirloom plants.*

### Meet the 2019 Garden Interns

#### ELIZABETH HECK



Ever since “Liz” joined the Garden Intern program in 2015 she has made herself a valued asset to the program. Her kind, quiet, teachable manner has earned her the respect of managers and her peers.

Liz wrote, “The greatest gift I received from this internship was the lifelong connection to the dedicated and hard-working personnel at Colonial Williamsburg. This has helped me foster my work ethic exponentially. Being able to work with people that are easy to work with, encourage my education of gardening, and that fully understanding the importance of maintaining colonial gardens has helped me continue to love the career path that I am on to this day. I’ve grown to respect the type of work and dedication that has gone into the gardens, for many generations, and hope that the next generation may be able to continue the legacy.”

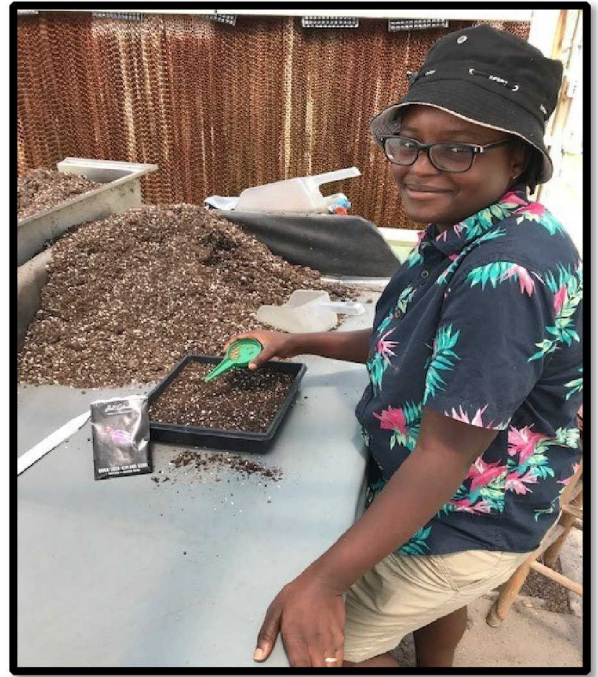


Liz with one of her mentors, horticulturist, **Preston Armstead**



## BRIANA JOHNSON

**Briana** joined the Garden Intern program in 2019. From the outset she has been an eager participant learning practical techniques from our experienced professionals. She quickly mastered the skills for approaching horticulture with a quality professional eye. When asked what was her favorite thing about her internship, Briana said, it was hard to choose, “Between working the vegetable gardens, transplanting seedlings, and helping cut down a sick tree, I can’t decide!” Her takeaway from this program is something she learned from lead horticulturist, Clyde Crew, “There is an art to everything you do in a garden”. Since then she tries to approach tasks she’s learned slower, with more detail.



**Briana** (above) contributing to our production nursery’s efforts of propagating and growing over 5,000 annuals, 1,500 vegetables and 100 herbs that will be planted in our gardens this fall.



**Briana** and **Melissa Sharifi**, IPM Technician (left photo) with harvested river cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*). Once prolific in the Southeast, large expanses of river cane (canebrakes) were often described by early explorers. Unfortunately, as European settlement increased, canebrakes decreased, resulting in the extinction of the Bachman’s warbler which was dependent upon this cane for nesting. Fortunately it still grows in the Williamsburg area and continues to be the habitat and food plant for many birds and insects.

Briana and Melissa harvested the river cane to make a bee hotel. Bee hotels, such as the one shown here at



The Williamsburg Botanic Garden, are constructed for native bee habitats (Native bees are not aggressive - they only sting if you bother them). Similar to birdhouses, bee hotels provide vital and missing nesting habitat for these important insects that are necessary to pollinate plants that produce our food. The majority of the harvested river cane will be used to make small bee hotels during a workshop that will be offered at our 74th Garden Symposium in April 2020.