The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and the University of Minnesota Master Gardeners are providing several free and friendly drop-in programs to help people connect with plants. You can volunteer with us, enhance your plant knowledge by attending free training opportunities, and share your love of plants and gardening with the public. There are two program areas that have been especially popular and need more volunteer help, the Garden Demonstrations and Plant Maker Studio. See the program details below. Help us get to know you better by filling out the attached volunteer application. Applications can be mailed to the arboretum or emailed to:

ltplants@umn.edu

Let’s Talk Plants attn: Ariel Dressler
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum
3675 Arboretum Drive
Chaska, MN 55318

MN Landscape Arboretum – “Let’s Talk Plants”
Volunteer Job Description
GARDEN DEMONSTRATION VOLUNTEER

What is the teaching schedule and time commitment?
The garden demonstration shifts are June - September on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Herbs will be taught on Wednesdays and Sundays. Vegetable garden shifts will be offered on Saturdays. Each shift runs from 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (the three hour period allows for set-up before and clean-up after demonstrations). Demo Volunteers are asked to sign up for a minimum of four shifts (average 1 per month).

What is a Let’s Talk Plants Garden Demonstration?
A Let’s Talk Plants Demo is a volunteer-led discovery station in Arboretum gardens where visitors are invited to hear a short presentation on a garden topic and participate in related hands-on sensory experiences. Each demonstration covers information based on questions visitors frequently ask, and uses the garden itself as a teaching tool. For example, visitors may see six favorite, easy-to-grow herbs for beginning gardeners, how to harvest and dry herbs, or how to plant a beginner’s vegetable garden.

What is the role of a Let’s Talk Plants Garden Demonstration Volunteer?
Demo Volunteers set up and present informal demonstrations and information stops in high-interest gardens through four months of the growing season (June-September). They present demonstrations lasting 10-15 minutes at the station, repeating them three times per hour. They also greet visitors as they arrive at the station with an invitation to take part in a sensory experience such as looking closely at fragrant oil glands with a microscope, tasting a frosty herbal elixir, taking part in a tomato taste testing panel, or harvesting beans.

MN Landscape Arboretum – “Let’s Talk Plants” Volunteer Job Description

PLANT-MAKER STUDIO VOLUNTEER

What is the Plant-maker Studio?

Plant-maker Studio is a place for Arboretum guests of all ages and gardening abilities to get their hands dirty by making a take-home product from a featured plant or by planting a featured plant to grow at home. Activities are designed to help people get to know plants through sensory-rich, hands-on experiences with them. Activity themes will change with the seasons. For example: planting seeds in spring, fresh flower and vegetable art activities in summer, harvest activities in fall, and evergreen tree activities in winter. Each theme will run for 1-2 months.

When is Plant-maker Studio offered to visitors?

This weekend program runs year-round. It is held 12-4pm Saturdays and Sundays at the Learning Center.

What is the role of a Studio Volunteer?

Studio Volunteers serve as ambassadors for the Arboretum and help visitors connect to the world of plants through activities that get visitors growing their own plants and using materials gleaned from the garden. Activities may feature planting, propagating, weaving, braiding, dying, printing, building, carving, mosaics, mud pies and more. Studio Volunteers will set up activities and restock learning stations as needed. They will coach Arboretum guests as they participate
by providing tips for activities and also suggestions for choosing other features and resources to enjoy during their visit. They will answer questions about culture, harvest and traditional uses of featured plants.

Thank you for your interest in volunteering in the Plant Maker’s Studio as part of the free and friendly Let’s Talk Plants programming at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. The next training session is Saturday August 22, 9 a.m.- 11 a.m. in the Arboretum Learning Center.

**Studio Volunteers should plan to attend the training session for any theme they plan to help deliver.**

**Wild Seed Cakes** Saturday August 22 - Sunday September 27
Form a cake made of soil and seeds, ready to plant wherever you find a place in need of pollinator-friendly plants

Questions? Contact Ariel Dressler  ltplants@umn.edu