

MT. CUBA CENTER

<https://mtcubacenter.org/>

POSITION: Director of Conservation and Research

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

LOCATION: Hockessin, Delaware



MT. CUBA CENTER

MISSION

Our mission is to inspire an appreciation for the beauty and value of native plants and a commitment to protect the habitats that sustain them.

VISION

Mr. and Mrs. Lammot du Pont Copeland were visionary in their approach to conservation, and in their vision for Mt. Cuba Center. Mrs. Copeland summed up their ambition for Mt. Cuba Center in what has become our founding intention:

“I want this to be a place where people will learn to appreciate our native plants and to see how these plants can enrich their lives so that they, in turn, will become conservators of our natural habitats.”

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Mt. Cuba Center (MCC) began participating in the OF/BY/FOR ALL Program in October 2019. The OF/BY/FOR ALL program is a global network for civic and cultural organizations of all sizes and sectors. It provides an intentional framework to make organizations more inclusive, relevant, and sustainable. Through the program, MCC gained tools that assisted in the initiation of ongoing efforts to enhance the diversity of MCC’s staff, guests, and community partners.

Mt. Cuba’s staff and volunteers are expected to promote the organization’s core values, including Respect for the Individual, through an accepting and welcoming environment: Our staff, board, and committees respect differences, value diversity, and treat each individual with kindness and respect. Collaboration, another core value, is relied upon to include everyone in working toward a common purpose. MCC aims to remove barriers, recognize and utilize diverse talents, assist one another, and foster a supportive and encouraging environment.

ABOUT MT. CUBA CENTER



Mt. Cuba Center (MCC) is a botanical garden that inspires an appreciation for the beauty and value of native plants and a commitment to protect the habitats that sustain them. Located in Hockessin, Delaware, near Wilmington, in the Delaware Piedmont region, MCC has over 50 acres of display gardens and over 1,000 acres of natural lands. MCC's team includes expert researchers, passionate horticulturists, and extraordinary staff who seek to expand the knowledge and appreciation of native plants. MCC collaborates with diverse organizations, researchers, and individuals that are working to help the public understand conservation through public programs, community outreach, landscape design and more.



MCC's history began in 1935, when Mr. and Mrs. Lammot du Pont Copeland purchased 126.7 acres of farmland near the village of Mt. Cuba to develop their home. In 1949, renowned landscape designer Marian Coffin made her first visit to Mt. Cuba and planning began for expansion of the formal gardens. The following year, the

Copelands purchased 17.72 adjacent acres, which became the site of their naturalistic gardens. The design of these gardens began in 1965 under landscape architect Seth Kelsey. In 1983, Mr. Copeland passed away and Dr. Richard Lighty joined as the first Director of Mt. Cuba Center. Dr. Lighty was succeeded in 1999 by Rick Lewandowski and two years later Mrs. Copeland passed away. In 2002, the first native plant trial began at the Cut Flower Garden and Mt. Cuba Center began its transition to a public garden. MCC began offering education classes in 2006. In 2012, Jeff Downing assumed the role of Executive Director. Under Downing's leadership, the Ecological Gardening Certificate program was established, the South Gardens were renovated based on Marian Coffin's design, and general admission for the public was initiated. In 2018, Mt. Cuba Center and Red Clay Reservation merged, combining conservation efforts in northern Delaware, with a total of 1,083 acres.

THE OPPORTUNITY



The Director of Conservation & Research will lead all current conservation and research initiatives at Mt. Cuba Center, and will envision and develop new efforts consistent with the institutional mission. They will be responsible for producing results that advance understanding of native plants and healthy ecosystems, further

conservation efforts, and effectively engage the public and professional community in Mt. Cuba Center's mission and vision. As a member of the senior leadership team, this individual will collaborate in leading the organization in carrying out the mission and strategic goals of Mt. Cuba Center, which include 1) Inspiring an appreciation for the beauty and value of native plants, 2) Motivating conservation action, 3) Measurably improving the health of habitats and ecosystems, and 4) Advancing organizational effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

THE POSITION SUMMARY

Lead Mt. Cuba's Conservation and Research Programs: Provide strategic direction and leadership to ongoing research programs including: documenting the ecological benefits and horticultural performance of native species, studying the impact of ongoing adaptive natural lands management and innovative reforestation strategies, inventorying and monitoring flora and fauna on MCC's campus and regionally, identifying propagation



protocols for native plant species, further developing MCC's living collections, and monitoring local water quality.

Collaborate with staff, universities, organizations, community, and others to advance Mt. Cuba's research objectives; oversee contracts, budgets, and project management of fellowships and university collaborations; oversee research publications.

Provide Oversight to Trial Garden, Collections, Greenhouse & Natural Lands: Oversee the operation of our

renowned trial garden, over 1,000 acres of natural lands, horticultural collections, and soon to be built, state of the art, net-zero energy, production greenhouse and propagation lab.

Staff Leadership: Recruit, lead, train, and inspire staff to realize the core objectives of our organization's ambitions, collaborating with internal teams and external constituencies; ensure clear communication and accountability across the team.

Program and Project Administration: Contribute to the envisioning, development, implementation and evaluation of strategies to advance MCC's overall vision, mission and program goals, and direct all aspects of the execution of those strategies as they relate to this position.

Professional Relationships: Expand and deepen Mt. Cuba's relationships with multiple external parties by interpreting and explaining MCC and its programs. Represent MCC in professional organizations and at professional and community meetings and events. Collaborate with the Board of Managers and serve on Board Committees to carry out the organization's mission and goals.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

We are seeking an individual with demonstrated experience as an exceptional researcher and leader; with sound reasoning and judgment in making practical organizational decisions; in organizing, managing, and motivating others; and in building meaningful partnerships. Ideal candidates will have an entrepreneurial spirit, curiosity and enthusiasm, and the ability to adapt and work effectively in a competitive environment.

The successful candidate must have exceptional written, verbal, and communication skills, be proficient in broad horticultural and plant identification knowledge, particularly plants of the eastern United States, and have proficiency with the most up-to-date plant research techniques.

Minimum requirements include a master's degree in horticulture, ecology, botany or related plant science field from an accredited university and 8 years' experience in horticultural, ecological, or conservation research with at least 5 years' management experience. Ph.D. degree highly desirable.

Mt. Cuba Center is committed to inclusivity and encourages qualified candidates from all cultures and communities to apply.

To apply, please submit a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC at <https://bit.ly/3xL4izN> (click on the Apply button at the bottom of the page).

To learn more about the programs and activities at Mt. Cuba Center, please go to the following link: <https://mtcubacenter.org/>