Relationships in Bloom:
Growing a Development Department in Challenging Times

Thursday, January 11, 2024

Deborah Miller, VP of Development & Samantha Lengel, Director of Corporate & Foundation Relations

Holden Forests & Gardens

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Who are we?

Debbie Miller

VP of Development

- Attended Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland
- Social Services & Higher Education background

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Who are we?

Samantha Lengel

Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations

- Attended Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH
- Has worked in arts & culture, social services, health, and now the environmental sector at HF&G.

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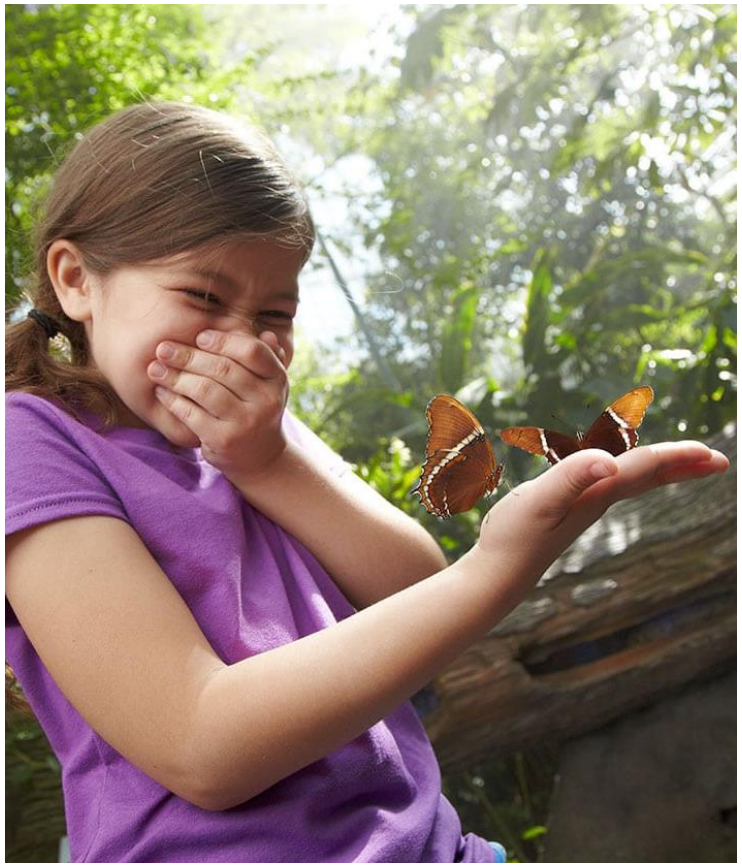
Who are we?



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The Cleveland Botanical Garden

- Founded in 1930 as The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland with a mission to promote knowledge and appreciation of cultivating plants in an urban setting.

The Holden Arboretum

- The Holden Arboretum was created in 1931 through a bequest from Albert Fairchild Holden.

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Introduction of Case Study

A case study of the effects of the combination of Holden Arboretum & Cleveland Botanical Garden on its Development & Membership team can be useful to other gardens who have **gone through a merger**, experienced **high levels of turnover**, recently come out of a global **pandemic**, or experienced **other institutional shake-ups.**

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Key Take Aways

- Take advantage of the data sources available to you
- Incorporate consultants and outside research
- Tap into your networks
- Focus on relationships
- Building a program – two steps forward; one step back

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Problem Statement

While the combination of Holden Arboretum and Cleveland Botanical Garden served to create an organization that eventually would equal more than the sum of its parts, the road to a high-functioning organization with a robust membership and fundraising department was bumpy.

- Institution-wide Challenges
- Department-Specific Challenges

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Plan To Evolve

- Assessment & Information Gathering
- Creating A Common Culture
- United Annual Fund Solicitation
- Rebuilding Donor Relationships
- Aging Donor Base

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Plan to Evolve

- Strategic Hiring
- Membership Program Assessment
- Membership Adjustments
- Rebuilding Donor Relationships
- Donor Town Halls
- Strategic Donor-Base Assessment and Planning
- A Look At High Turnover
- Developing Planned Giving Groundwork

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Key Stakeholders In & Outside the Department

- Work done collaboratively between the CEO/President & the VP of Development
- Development & Membership Staff
- Program Staff
- Outside Consultants

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The COVID Effect

- Furloughs & Layoffs
- Delayed Hiring & Replacements
- Pauses in Relationship Building
- Solicitation Overshadowing Stewardship (In A Time Of Need)
- Virtual Stewardship
- Event Restructuring
- Extended Memberships
- Hybrid Working Environment

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Where Are We Now?

- Data & Systems
- Growth in Staffing
- Major Gifts
- Planned Giving

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Development Department Structure

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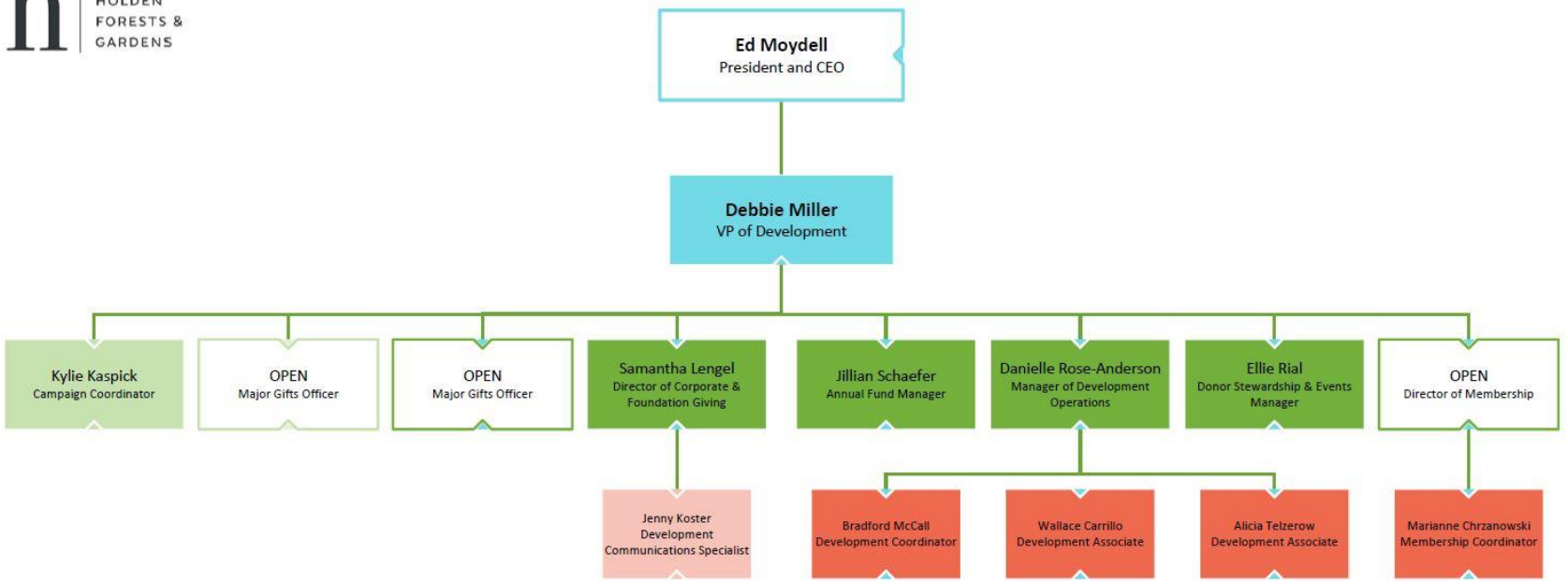
Development

January 2024



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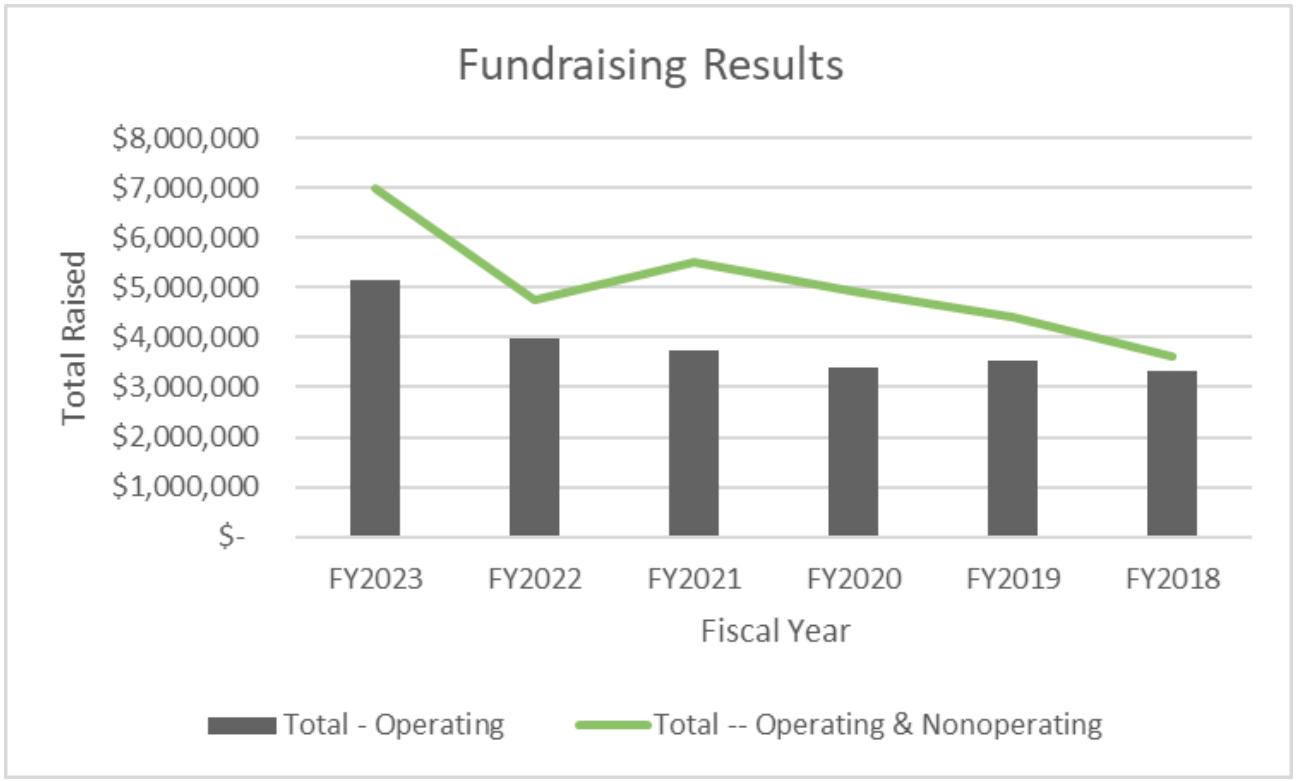
Where Are We Now?



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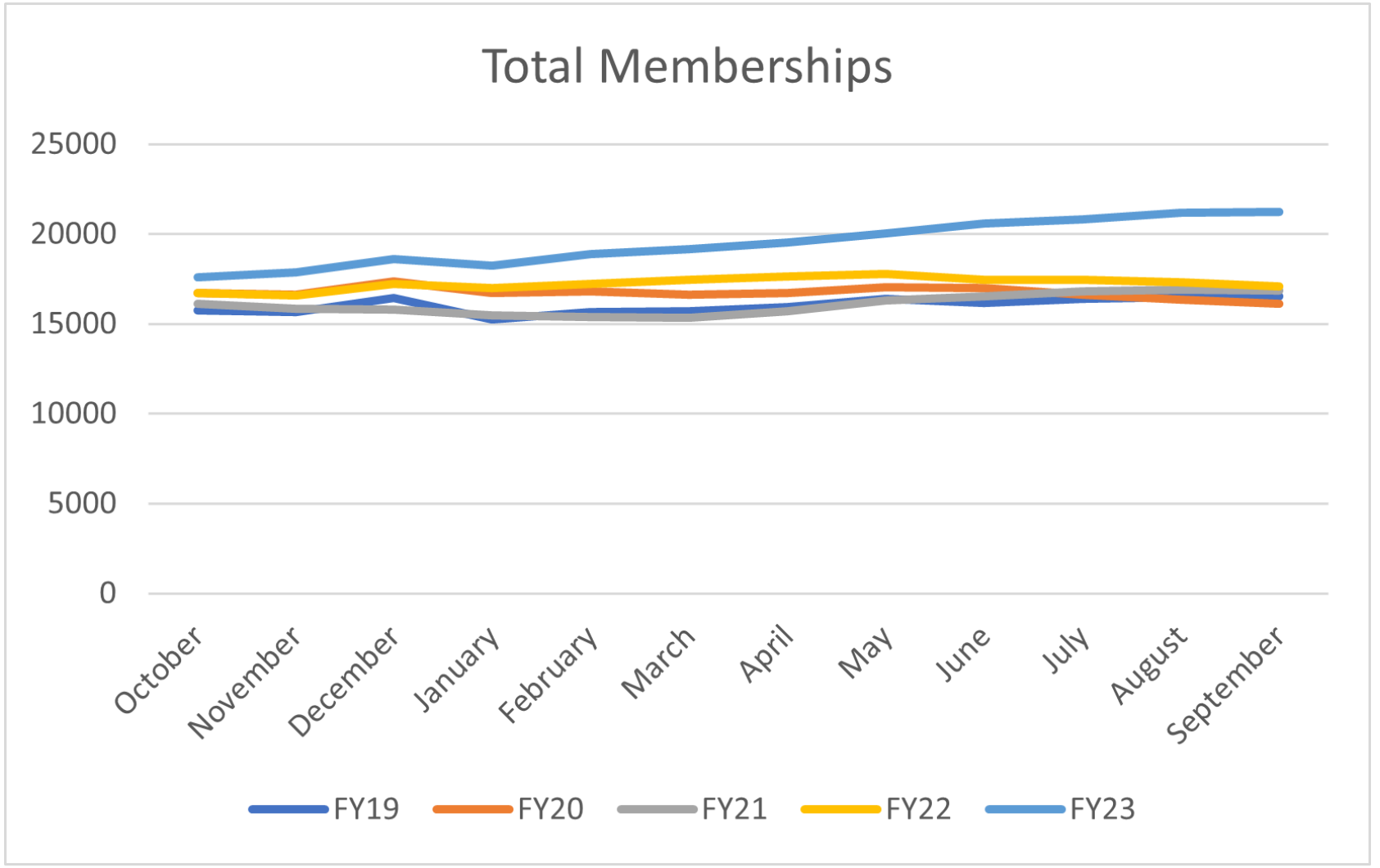
Membership Growth



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Next Steps

- Major Gifts & Planned Giving
- Campbell & Company Feasibility Study in 2022
- Three Campaign Positions
- Building a Campaign Volunteer Committee
- Developing Campaign Themes & Case for Support
- Civic Blitz with New CEO

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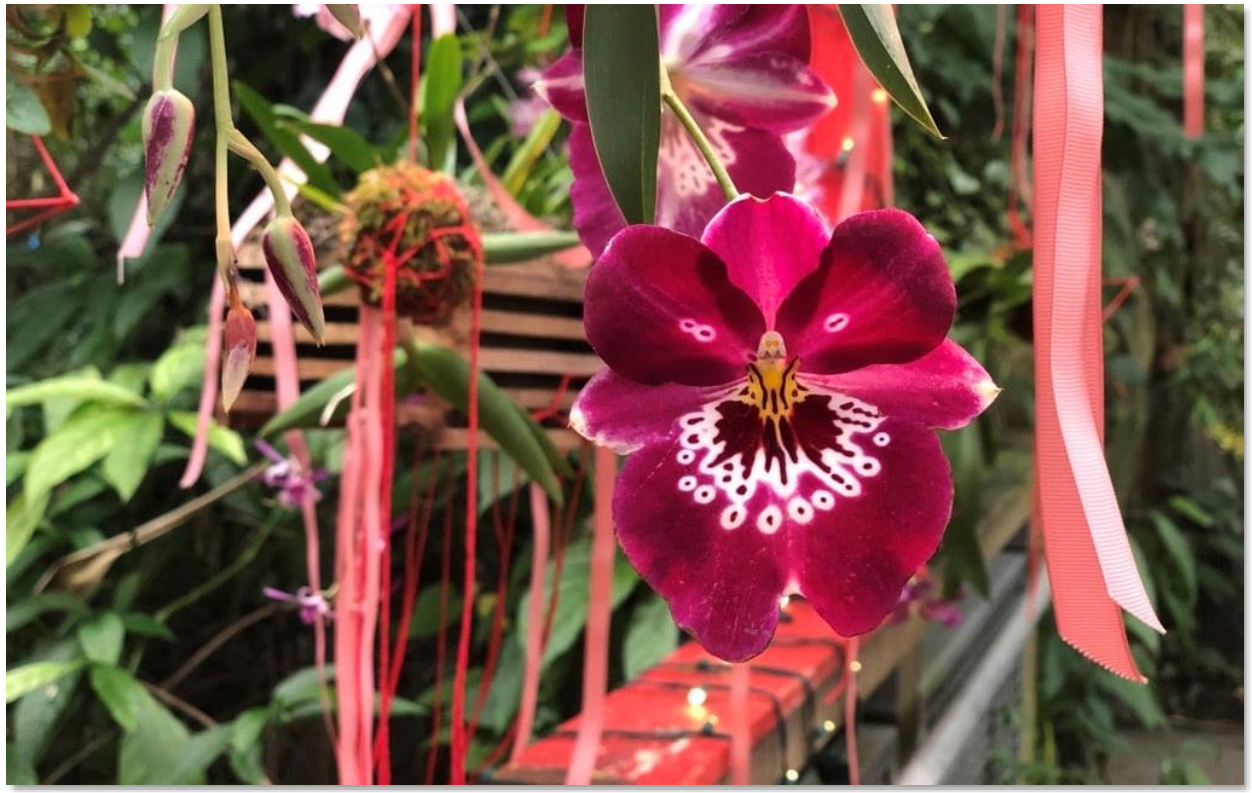
Feedback & Q&A



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Thank you for listening!

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