



BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Birmingham Botanical Gardens Hosts Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon**

**BIRMINGHAM, AL** – Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens hosts its annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Thursday, December 16 at 11:30 a.m. in Strange Auditorium at The Gardens. The theme of this year's potluck is "Volunteers: Our Shining Stars" with a movie premier feel complete with a red carpet and popcorn bags filled with gift DVDs. The Gardens' very own Alicia Andrews and Joe Ann Steele will each sing holiday classics. UAB's Jazz Combo will follow with a performance to honor the cast of volunteers to close out the ceremony.

The Hollywood theme is a nod to the Volunteer Awards that will be announced during the luncheon. Awards are given in five categories: Ida C. Burns Volunteer of the Year, Plantsperson of the Year, Educator of the Year, Community Partner of the Year and A. Brand Walton, Jr. Unsung Hero of the Year, a new prize honoring the late Brand Walton. Mr. Walton served Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens "behind the scenes" for years as its pro bono legal counsel.

The Gardens actively recruits volunteers year-round for everything from event staff to garden helpers to education docents. Anyone interested in joining the volunteer team at Birmingham Botanical Gardens should contact Volunteer Coordinator Mary-Bestor Grant at 205.414.3962 or [mgrant@bbgardens.org](mailto:mgrant@bbgardens.org).

**About Birmingham Botanical Gardens**

Birmingham Botanical Gardens is Alabama's largest living museum with more than 10,000 different plants in its living collections. The Gardens' 67.5 acres contains more than 25 unique gardens, 30+ works of original outdoor sculpture and miles of serene paths. The Gardens features the largest public horticulture library in the U.S., conservatories, a wildflower garden, two rose gardens, the Southern Living garden, and Japanese Gardens with a traditionally crafted tea house. Education programs run year round and more than 10,000 school children enjoy free science-curriculum based field trips annually. The Gardens is open daily, offering free admission to more than 350,000 yearly visitors.