



BrandywineValley.com

Nina Kelly, Director of Marketing and Communications, Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau
September 15, 2022

Thank you for having me speak about this beautiful region, our organization's role in promoting it, and the unparalleled value of public gardens.

Chester County's Brandywine Valley is in the heart of Philadelphia's countryside. Known for wide - open spaces and bucolic rolling hills, the county's commitment to preservation is a serious one with over 30% preserved space for open land or agriculture.

The tourism and hospitality industry are vital to both the economy and quality of life in Chester County. Second only to agriculture in job production and economic impact, tourism is a key factor in the county's success. A network of assets including attractions, accommodations, wineries, breweries, arts, history and more, make the county a desirable region in which to live, work and play. Public gardens are an important part of the landscape which so greatly enriches the region.

My organization is The Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau (CCCVB) – we are the designated tourism promotion agency for Chester County. Like most tourism agencies our strategies are aimed primarily at generating out-of-market visitors (both domestic and international).

We maintain the Brandywine Valley Tourism Information Center at 300 Greenwood Road in Kennett Square right outside the gates of Longwood Gardens. The center welcomes visitors from around the country/world - the majority of which visit Longwood and other gardens, arboretums, and attractions.

The Brandywine Valley has a rich tradition of horticulture from the benevolence of the famed Du Pont family to arboretums paying homage to Pennsylvania – Penn's Woods. This heritage resonates throughout the greater Philadelphia region where there are more public gardens and arboreta than anywhere else on the continent.

Thus, Greater Philadelphia has earned the moniker – America's Garden Capital. This horticultural influence is particularly strong in Southeastern Pennsylvania and Northern Delaware. This messaging is marketing gold as it resonates so completely to both domestic and international visitors.

*Example – the first Philadelphia and The Countryside Michelin Travel Guide is being produced in France for 2023. Longwood Gardens is a prime asset.

Theme of nature and gardens being works of art, pieces of history and assets of sustainability.

- Longwood's Light: Installations by Bruce Munro this year example of art exhibit throughout the garden.
- Nearby Winterthur (another du Pont Estate, currently has an exhibition of the role Henry Francis DuPont played in Jaqueline Kennedy's historic White House renovation.
- Brandywine River Museum of Art is part of America's Garden Capital as the river, 17-acre campus of wildflowers and native plants and trees are a part of the experience – marrying nature and art in a very tangible way.
- Mr. Pierre DuPont literally "saved the trees" over a century ago here at Longwood. Mr. George Weymouth at Brandywine Conservancy saved the grist mill now housing The Brandywine River

Museum of Art over a half-century ago. Preservation and sustainability are intrinsic to the region's DNA.

The CCCVB counts cooperation among partners essential for growth/success:

- Among stakeholders – 5 Counties/Visit Philly,
- State Tourism office/partners - Best Buds initiative
- Garden community: PHS/America's Garden Capital initiative/AGC Passport
- Longwood Gardens: Season accommodations packaging/cooperative marketing initiatives
Partnership with Victory Brewing (Brewery produces a line of seasonal custom brews with ingredients grown at Longwood Gardens)

Public gardens enhance the quality of life for residents, provide desirable attractors for visitors, sustain the environment, and are a vital economic driver - they are simply priceless treasures.

Thank you for your attention.