British horticulture’s budding stars of the future honoured

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PRESS RELEASE - for immediate release

A first-time RHS Chelsea Gold Medal winner, next-generation community gardening team leaders and specialists in growing edible crops are among the eight students who have been honoured by the **Worshipful Company of Gardeners** at its Autumn Court Dinner, held at the Drapers Hall in the City of London on November 11th, 2014.

As part of its on-going programme of encouragement and support for education in horticulture, the Company commends those students who have shown themselves to be the best among their peers in their chosen fields of study and this evening, Master Gardener Mr Stephen Bernhard FI Hort presented cheques and certificates to this group of budding stars of the future, and congratulated them on gaining top results from four of Britain's leading horticultural colleges.

Master Gardener Stephen Bernhard said: "All of the students here tonight have proven themselves to be at the top of their game in their chosen fields of study and to be active young ambassadors of horticulture. Their enthusiasm and determination to share their learning with their peers and the wider non-gardening community is palpable, and we shall watch their developing careers with interest."

Also during the evening, the Company's **principal guest, TV presenter Julia Bradbury (Wainwright Walks, Countryfile),** spoke about the impact of the countryside on her life and career, and about the importance of gardening on the wellbeing of life. Other guests included Master Fan Maker Mr Doug Clasby, Master Fruiterer Mr Peter Cooper, Master Carpenter Mr Mike Felton, Master Baker Mr David Bentley, Master Draper Nicholas Bence-Trower and his Clerk, Col Richard Winstanley OBE, Past Master Marketors Mrs Venetia Howes, and Superintendent, Smithfield Market, Mr Robert Wilson.

The eight students recognised by the Company of Gardeners were chosen because of the following honours that they have gained from their respective colleges:

THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

RHS Wisley Top Trainee Award

The **Wisley Top Trainee Award** was made to **Mrs Pavlina Kapsalis**, student in Practical Horticulture, for her outstanding commitment to all aspects of her programme and to have excelled in both the practical and theoretical elements of the course.

RHS Gardens Wisley Curator's Award

The **RHS Gardens Wisley Curator's Award** was made to **Mr Matt Barker**, Specialist Option Certificate in Aboriculture trainee, for making the best all-round use of the training programme and for displaying excellent practical ability.

CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE

NOCN Level 2 Certificate in Garden Design & NOCN Level 3 Diploma in Principles and Practice of Garden Design

Both awards were made to **Miss Sarah Jarman**, who completed the one-year Certificate course in 2013 and then immediately enrolled herself on the two-year Diploma programme in Garden Design. During the first year of her diploma, Sarah collaborated with two fellow students to form JAM Garden Design and together they entered the Fresh Talent competition at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, which they subsequently won. Now in her second year, Sarah is currently putting together a proposal for a show garden at the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show 2015 and has lined up a landscaper, and experienced nursery owner and plants person, Jekka McVicar, to supply her with the plants. Sarah says: "Capel Manor is full of inspiration for students, and finding out how well its students do at shows and competitions sold the course to me. I knew that that was what I wanted to do one day."

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Level 3 Extended Diploma in Horticulture - Gunnersbury Park

The award for best student in **Level 3 Extended Diploma in Horticulture** was made to **Miss Sofia Marcotti**, a second-year student in Capel's City and Guild's Extended Diploma in Horticulture and based at Gunnersbury Park. Sofia has a particular interest in growing edible crops and intends to put her horticulture skills to use by working with a London community growing project involving disadvantaged communities in south London.

WRITTLE COLLEGE

The determination of **Mrs Karen Hook** to attain her BSc (Hons) Horticulture as a part-time student at Writtle whilst running her own garden maintenance business and managing serious illness was given particular recognition. Her hard work and determination meant that Karen was able to graduate at Chelmsford Cathedral this September 2014, seven years after she began her studies.

The positive and diligent studies of **Miss Jocelyn Rose**, who gained 1st Class in her BSc Hons Horticulture, were also recognised. She has now won an intern placement at RHS Gardens Wisley, where she will work to further her knowledge and experience.

THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW

Kew Diploma with Honours

The Kew Diploma with Honours was awarded to **Miss Suzanne Patman**, who was nominated because she attained the highest marks in her final-year dissertation, which was entitled "*Guerrilla gardening: Has the urban jungle gone bananas? An investigation into guerrilla gardening in contemporary London*.Suzanne will be taking up the role of team leader/trainer with Streetscape, a landscaping social enterprise.

The **Kew Diploma with Honours** was also awarded to **Mr Martin Deasy**, who was nominated because he attained the top marks in the final-year Practical Management Project, entitled *"Investigate and make recommendations as to how the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, can exploit its botanical expertise, plant resources and reputation to bring selected plant species to the commercial market*".

For press enquiries, interview opportunities and images, contact the Clerk on 020 7149 6696, clerk@gardenerscompany.org.uk

Background information:

The Company of Gardeners (www.gardenerscompany.org.uk) exists to promote the art and practice of good gardening throughout the country, and to encourage and support educational establishments which are centres of horticultural excellence. It also supports charitable activities connected with horticulture, although the Company does not benefit from large endowments and has never owned property. It is a charitable fund that is limited and largely dependent upon the generosity of its members (Liverymen and Freemen), who are expected to contribute to the Fund as a condition of membership.

The Company also exists to promote the fellowship of gardening by introducing new members to the Company and to beautify the City of London and elsewhere by encouraging the display of flowers and foliage, wherever and whenever possible. There is a wide knowledge of gardening and horticulture within the Company which can be drawn upon as practical support for new projects.

ENDS

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