

NEWS RELEASE

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Adkins Arboretum Awarded Grant from PNC Foundation for Nature Preschool Programs

Adkins Arboretum has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the PNC Foundation to continue making nature-based education more accessible to local preschoolers.



Adkins Arboretum Assistant Director Jenny Houghton reads to students in the Arboretum's Acorn Academy Nature Preschool program. The Arboretum recently received a \$5,000 grant from the PNC Foundation to support free preschool programs for Caroline County residents and to provide field trips for preschoolers enrolled in Caroline County Public Schools.

"We love being able to offer free nature preschool classes to children who live in Caroline County," said Adkins Assistant Director Jenny Houghton. "With continued funding from PNC, we

can now expand our offerings to engage local schools. Providing meaningful outdoor experiences at a young age is a great way to tap into children’s innate curiosity about the natural world.”

This is the sixth year that the Arboretum’s Acorn Academy Nature Preschool has been awarded a grant from the PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. During the first year, funding allowed the Arboretum to offer one session of nature preschool programs per season at no cost to residents of Caroline County. These popular programs for children ages 3 to 5 engage children with nature and serve as an introduction to the outdoors, wildlife and conservation while also providing school-readiness skills. Subsequent grants allowed the Arboretum to expand its preschool offerings to two sessions per season.

This year, funding will continue to support the nature preschool program and will also allow the Arboretum to develop and provide school field trips for preschoolers enrolled in Caroline County Public Schools. The Arboretum’s assistant director is collaborating with the Coordinator of Instruction for Early Childhood in Caroline County to ensure that field trips align with Maryland state curriculum.

Environmental education has been linked to improved academic achievement and encourages stewardship, pride and ownership. Adkins Arboretum’s nature preschool programs put students on the path toward cultivating a meaningful awareness of the human-environmental connection and instill basic tenets of critical thinking and investigation skills.

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Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum offers educational programs for all ages. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

The PNC Foundation actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes arts and culture.

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