



CNLA Committee List *

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE, Co-Chairs: Dustyn Nelson, CCH and Chris Valley, CCH

The Advocacy Committee works to raise awareness, influence decision-makers, and act on behalf of CNLA members and the green industry. The committee collaborates with the CNLA lobbying team to achieve these goals through lobbying, grassroots mobilization, and providing written and/or public testimony.

Committee members should be civic-minded, enjoy steering policy development, can speak publicly, or can offer testimony on short notice. Those with a broad overview of the industry can provide valuable knowledge to help educate legislators as they make many difficult and complex decisions. Young advocates for our industry are welcome, as legislators like to hear from those up and coming into the industry.

Time Commitment:

- During the legislative session: 1-2 hours per week
- Outside of legislative session: 2-3 hours per month
- Attend a Fundraiser or a Meeting when asked by the lobbying firm.
- Attend the Ag Day at the Capitol, mid-March from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

INVASIVE PLANT COUNCIL (IPC)^

- Seat One (nonprofit association rep): Dustyn Nelson, CCH
- Seat Two (grower company rep): Chris Valley, CCH

DEANS ADVISORY BOARD^ (UConn College of Agriculture, Health, & Natural Resources)

- Appointment: Dustyn Nelson, CCH

WATER PLANNING COUNCIL ADVISORY BOARD^

- Business & Industry Member (Water Intensive Business): Darryl Newman, CCH
- Alternate: Dustyn Nelson, CCH

EDUCATION COMMITTEES

CONNECTICUT CERTIFIED HORTICULTURIST PROGRAM (CCH), Chair: Amanda Pezzullo, CCH

CNLA's annual 13-week certification program teaches the basics of botany, plant identification, and professional horticultural information. CNLA recognizes that for the hard-working individuals of our industry there is a need to convey our professionalism to the consumer. This accreditation can help individuals as they search for a job, reassure the customers of the expertise we possess, and serve as a refresher for the vast amounts of information you digest.

Volunteers are needed to help identify and schedule instructors, proctor and grade exams, coordinate workshops, and source materials for the class. This committee is responsible for reviewing and coordinating all class material (in English and Spanish) and exam questions in partnership with instructors.

Time Commitment:

- 1-hour meeting per month or as needed.
- Meetings are virtual.
- Expected to attend the 1st night of class, the review session and the 2 in-person exams.

Volunteers must have their CCH.

GREENSTART PROGRAM, Chair: Amanda Pezzullo, CCH

The GreenStart Program is a version of the CCH program tailored to high school students who are participating in the agricultural program.

Volunteers are needed to work with the CT Agricultural Teachers to develop and review the curriculum, creating hype videos, awards and recognition.

Time Commitment:

- 1-hour meeting per month or as needed.
- Meetings are virtual.

PROGRAM/SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEES

BLOOM AFTER HOURS, Chair: Chris Valley, CCH

The committee is responsible for coordinating at least 3 2-hour educational programs during the evening of the summer months.

Committee members are needed who can partner with the host site to coordinate these programs. This includes, but is not limited to, coordinating the educational session, sponsors, location, and ensuring participants attend a productive event.

WINTER SYMPOSIUM, Chair: Cecilia Keneally

The Winter Symposium features a robust set of educational workshops and seminars, often providing pesticide credits many of our members require to maintain their certifications. It is a showcase of the products our members sell and provides an opportunity to find items or services they may need, network with current vendors, and explore the cutting-edge solutions our industry has to offer. The CNLA Annual Meeting is held during the symposium and is where we celebrate the accomplishments the association has made throughout the year and elect the Board of Directors. The CCH recognition is also held during the Winter Symposium, immediately following the Annual Meeting.

Committee members needed to brainstorm educational topics, suggest possible speakers, reach out to industry experts to inquire about their interest in being a presenter and to reach out to potential exhibitors and sponsors.

Time Commitment:

- Up to 2 1-hour meetings per month February – October or as needed.
- 1-hour meeting per month, November – January or as needed.
- Meetings are virtual
- Expected to attend the Winter Symposium in January.

CT FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW – Chair: Chris Valley, CCH

Spring in February arrives annually at the Connecticut Convention Center! Exhibits are overflowing with fresh flowers, plants, herbs, bulbs, seeds, gardening books, gardening equipment & much more. View the beautifully landscaped gardens full of greenery and watch the design & horticulture competition. There are over 80 hours of seminars and demonstrations across a variety of topics.

CNLA is an exhibitor at the show and promotes the nursery and landscape industry along with CNLA, CCH and provides educational sessions.

Committee members are needed to help design the booth, set-up and take-down, coordinate volunteers, select giveaways, and prepare handouts.

Time Commitment:

- Up to 1-hour virtual meetings per month September – February or as needed.
- Must be able to attend the Flower and Garden Show and be on-site when there are no volunteers scheduled.

GOLF TOURNAMENT – Chair: Lisa Stevens, Executive Director

The Golf Committee along with CNLA staff is responsible for organizing, overseeing, and managing the golf outing. Including marketing, identifying prizes, securing volunteers and sponsors.

Time Commitment:

- Up to 1-hour meetings per month February – July or as needed.
- Meetings are virtual.
- Must be able to attend the golf outing in July either as a player or a volunteer.

LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

GARDEN CENTER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (GCLC), Chair: Kaitlyn Larson

The GCLC monthly meetings provide a confidential, peer-driven forum where owners and managers of CNLA garden center member companies engage in candid conversations about what's working, what isn't, and what trends are shaping the market. This group offers a constructive space to share frustrations, exchange solutions, and regain perspective.

Time Commitment:

- Meetings dates and times will be determined by the committee.
- 1-hour monthly meetings,
- Meetings are virtual.

Participants must be affiliated with a CNLA Member Garden Center.

LANDSCAPE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (LSLC) - Chair: Chris Goodwin

The LSLC meetings provide a confidential, peer-driven forum where owners and managers of CNLA member landscape companies engage in candid conversations about what's working, what isn't, and what trends are shaping the market. This group offers a constructive space to share frustrations, exchange solutions, and regain perspective.

Time Commitment:

- Meetings dates and times will be determined by the committee.
- 1-hour monthly meetings.
- Meetings are virtual.

Participants must be affiliated with a CNLA Member Landscaping Company.

GREEN ALLIANCE TASKFORCE[^], Chair: Matt Fitzpatrick, CCH

The Green Alliance Taskforce is established to strengthen collaboration with like-minded industry associations to advance shared environmental, legislative, and industry goals. The committee focuses on building strategic partnerships that support effective advocacy and coordinated lobbying efforts at the state and regional levels.

By aligning resources and messaging with partner organizations, the committee aims to amplify the voice of the green industry and support informed decision-making among members, policymakers, and the public.

The Green Alliance Taskforce serves as a liaison between the association and external groups, identifying opportunities for joint initiatives, information sharing, and unified action on key issues impacting the industry.

The members of the Green Alliance Taskforce are appointed by the President.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE - Chair: TBD

The Marketing & Public Relations Committee is responsible for planning, promoting, and supporting the organization's major events and marketing initiatives. The committee also helps promote the value of membership through event engagement and outreach efforts.

The committee plays a vital role in raising the organization's visibility, strengthening community engagement, and enhancing the overall member experience.

Time Commitment:

- Meetings dates and times will be determined by the committee.
- Up to 1-hour meetings per month or as needed.
- Meetings will be virtual.

Committee members are needed to assist in promoting major events through email campaigns, social media, to help ensure consistent messaging that highlights the value of membership, support outreach efforts to increase event attendance and member engagement, identify opportunities to enhance the organization's public image and community presence, and provide input on improving the overall member experience through communications and engagement strategies.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - Chair: TBD

The Membership Committee is responsible for strengthening and growing the association's membership by focusing on recruitment, engagement, and retention efforts. The committee works to communicate the value of membership and identify prospective members. The committee will also assist in welcoming new members and encourage participation in events and programs.

Time Commitment:

- Meetings dates and times will be determined by the committee.
- Up to 1-hour meetings per month or as needed.
- Meetings are virtual.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE[^], Chair: Past President

The Nominating Committee is responsible for identifying, evaluating, and recommending candidates to serve in leadership positions within the organization, including the Board of Directors and officer roles. The committee ensures that nominees align with the organization's mission, values, and strategic goals, and that leadership reflects a balance of skills, experience, and representation from across the industry.

The Nominating Committee plays a critical role in shaping the organization's leadership and ensuring effective governance and long-term sustainability.

The members of the Nominating Committee are appointed by the President.

[^]position by appointment only

**President and CNLA Staff are Ex-Officio members of all Committees and Working Groups*