Mercer Botanical Center Internship Opportunity
Herbarium/Conservation Botany Intern
At Mercer Botanic Gardens
22306 Aldine Westfield Rd., Humble, TX 77338
713-274-4200

What is a herbarium? It is a historical and research collection of pressed, dried and mounted plants and plant parts. These are stored on acid-free paper in climate and pest-controlled cabinets. Mercer Botanic Gardens herbarium, registered as MERCA in Index Herbariorum, a global directory of herbaria and staff, includes plants of east Texas, rare Texas species, permanent sample sites that include Harris County saline prairies, and specimens from Mercer Botanic Gardens living collections. In 2017, the herbarium collection at Mercer grew from approximately 5,000 to about 50,000 specimens with the long-term loan of a collection from the Spring Branch ISD Robert Vines Environmental Science Center and Arboretum, registered as SBSC in Index Herbariorum, an important collection documenting the flora of the Houston metro area and East Texas.

Core Responsibilities
Reporting to the Mercer Botanical Center staff botanists, intern will:
• document and catalog plant specimens; log data into computer software; review, print, and attach labels to vouchers (mounted plant specimens); organize and store various plant family vouchers;
• maintain the plant specimens and apply up to date identification and current nomenclature.
• learn how to georeference collection locations for specimens. There is access to the onsite botanical library, online resources such as Google Earth, and the opportunity to interact with other herbaria to research information;
• work will result in a defined project which they will have the opportunity to present at the Mercer Botanic Gardens Student Research and Education Symposium;
• work outdoors in areas including the conservation nursery, conservation display garden, Harris County Precinct 4 Prairie Dawn Preserve, native plant restoration sites in East Texas;
• perform other duties as assigned

Job Dimensions and other Requirements
• Intern must enjoy working outdoors as well as in an office setting.
• Internship Availability: Spring 2020 at 20 hours per week, or more; Summer 2020, up to 40 hours per week, worked primarily Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. with a 30-minute lunch and regular breaks; some weekends may be required.

• This is a paid internship through grants provided by The Gibson Family, Native Plant Society of Texas – Houston Chapter in honor of Dr. Larry Brown, and Harris County Precinct 4.

• A background check and drug screening may be administered by Harris County Precinct 4 prior to hiring. Intern may be subject to random testing as a condition of continued employment.

Physical Demands
• The intern is regularly required to stand, walk, use hands and fingers to handle, feel and reach with hands and arms; frequently required to sit, climb, or balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; talk or hear and taste or smell.

• The intern may be required to lift and/or move up to 40 pounds;

• Specific vision abilities required by this internship includes close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.

• The intern works in outside weather conditions and is periodically exposed to heat, humidity, rain, and dust.

• The noise level in the work environment is normally moderate.

• The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an intern to successfully perform the functions of the internship. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential duties.

How to Apply
Send a résumé and cover letter with subject: MBC Herbarium/Botany Internship. Email to Linda Costanzo LCostanzo@hcp4.net and Suzzanne Chapman schapman@hcp4.net. If the position is funded by Harris County Precinct 4 an application is required.