



## Pocahontas Gardens

*Helping to Educate, Feed and Heal our Community*

A Signature Initiative of the *Pocahontas Leadership Collaborative (PLC)*

The ***Pocahontas Leadership Collaborative (PLC)*** is a new student collaboration concept promoting diverse social development and leadership skills through the lens of the woman most famously known as Pocahontas. Coordinated and facilitated by ***The Pocahontas Project*** (the Project), all **PLC** coordinated efforts will in some way support the goals and objectives of the ***Matoaka Sustainability Action Plan***. While it is expected that most **PLC** student leaders will be teenagers, students of all ages are invited to join in and help shape the future. Ultimately, the primary **PLC** objective is to inspire and organize a global community of student leaders working with common hope and purpose for a sustainable future for all mankind. In an effort to connect with students of all ages, and to create a pathway to involvement as a **PLC Ambassador**, the Project has developed **Pocahontas Gardens** as one of its signature initiatives, named after the ***Princess Pocahontas Gardens*** at St. George's Church in Gravesend, England, where Pocahontas is buried.

The numerous health, environmental, and social benefits of community gardens and community gardening cross over all of mankind's arbitrary boundaries and can be practiced and enjoyed by people of all ages around the world. ***Pocahontas Gardens*** is both the name of the physical gardens and the collaborative mindset of this **PLC** initiative, using Pocahontas' life example as our guide. Ultimately, each **Pocahontas Garden** will be a physical, intellectual and spiritual undertaking, while creating community collaboration along the way. The initiative emphasizes growing and installing plants native to the region and connecting every **Pocahontas Garden** with indigenous methods, crops, history and traditions whenever possible. Every **Pocahontas Garden** will be designed and operated to benefit local underserved communities in mind, body and spirit. And, in following Pocahontas' example, the initiative will use its gardens and collective energy to support local food distribution efforts to those in need.

The Project is working to develop several templates as guides for **PLC Ambassadors** to help create a new **Pocahontas Garden** or to support an existing garden operation. Templates will also be created to guide **PLC Ambassadors** in supporting food distribution efforts in their local community. Ultimately, while the initiative will follow the same basic operational guidelines around the world, **PLC** plans and objectives for each individual **Pocahontas Gardens** effort will differ from community to community, country to country, and continent to continent. While the gardens are developing the Project will work to create an interactive network of the growing number of **Pocahontas Gardens** efforts around the world, connecting these student leaders in common purpose as well as increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of each individual garden and its impact on the local community.

### **Pocahontas Gardens – Plans for early 2021**

As it is a new and developing **PLC** initiative, the opportunities and possibilities inherent in **Pocahontas Gardens** are still being recognized and considered. The Project is currently working with PLC@GHS student leaders in Gloucester to identify the potential partner organizations and efforts in the regional community and across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Project is also working to develop an English version of this initiative, and is partnering with St. George's Church in Gravesend, since the initiative is named after their Princess Pocahontas Gardens.

As the Project expands the **PLC** concept to other communities in Central Virginia and beyond, the research and connections created by the PLC@GHS will help to inform those efforts as they get started. In Virginia, the following organizations and governmental agencies are on the list of proposed partners for the various **Pocahontas Gardens** efforts across the Commonwealth.

- Virginia State University College of Agriculture
- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Virginia Department of Health
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
  - Chesterfield County > <https://chesterfield.ext.vt.edu/>
  - Gloucester County > <https://gloucester.ext.vt.edu/>
  - Henrico County > <https://henrico.ext.vt.edu/>
  - James City County > <https://james-city.ext.vt.edu/>
  - York County / City of Poquoson > <https://york.ext.vt.edu/>
  - City of Richmond > <https://richmond-city.ext.vt.edu/>
- Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom > <https://va.agclassroom.org/>
- Virginia Native Plant Society
  - John Clayton Chapter > <https://vnps.org/johnclayton/>
    - Gloucester, Mathews, Middlesex, James City and York Counties, as well as the Cities of Williamsburg, Hampton, Newport News and Poquoson
  - Pocahontas Chapter > <https://vnps.org/pocahontas/>
    - Counties of Amelia, Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King William, New Kent, Powhatan, Prince George, and the Cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell, Petersburg and Richmond

- Virginia Food Banks
  - Virginia Peninsula Food Bank > <https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank/virginia-peninsula-foodbank>
  - Feed More (Richmond Region) > <https://feedmore.org/>

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