

August 2025 Newsletter

What's included in this month's newsletter						
President's Message	News & Events	Horticultural Therapy Certification	Earn CEs	HT Activity	Sponsorship	Membership

President's Message

Dear AHTA Members and Supporters,

Welcome to the August 2025 AHTA Newsletter—your source for the latest updates in our dynamic horticultural therapy community.

Summer is in full bloom, with gardens showcasing vibrant flowers, fresh produce at its peak, and warm evenings that remind us of nature's restorative power. This season offers a perfect opportunity to deepen our passion for healing through plants and to remain rooted in our shared mission. Across the country, horticultural therapy continues to bring joy, foster connection, and promote well-being—truly planting seeds that grow into lasting impact.

We are pleased to invite you to the AHTA 2025 Virtual Conference, "Nurturing Community: Planting Seeds of Our Future," taking place October 9–11, 2025. The program will feature thought-provoking presentations, practical strategies, and opportunities to connect with colleagues worldwide. We are honored to welcome Richard Louv, acclaimed author and advocate, as our keynote speaker. His insights on the transformative power of nature will inspire us as we continue our important work. Registration is now open at ahta.org/2025-annual-conference.

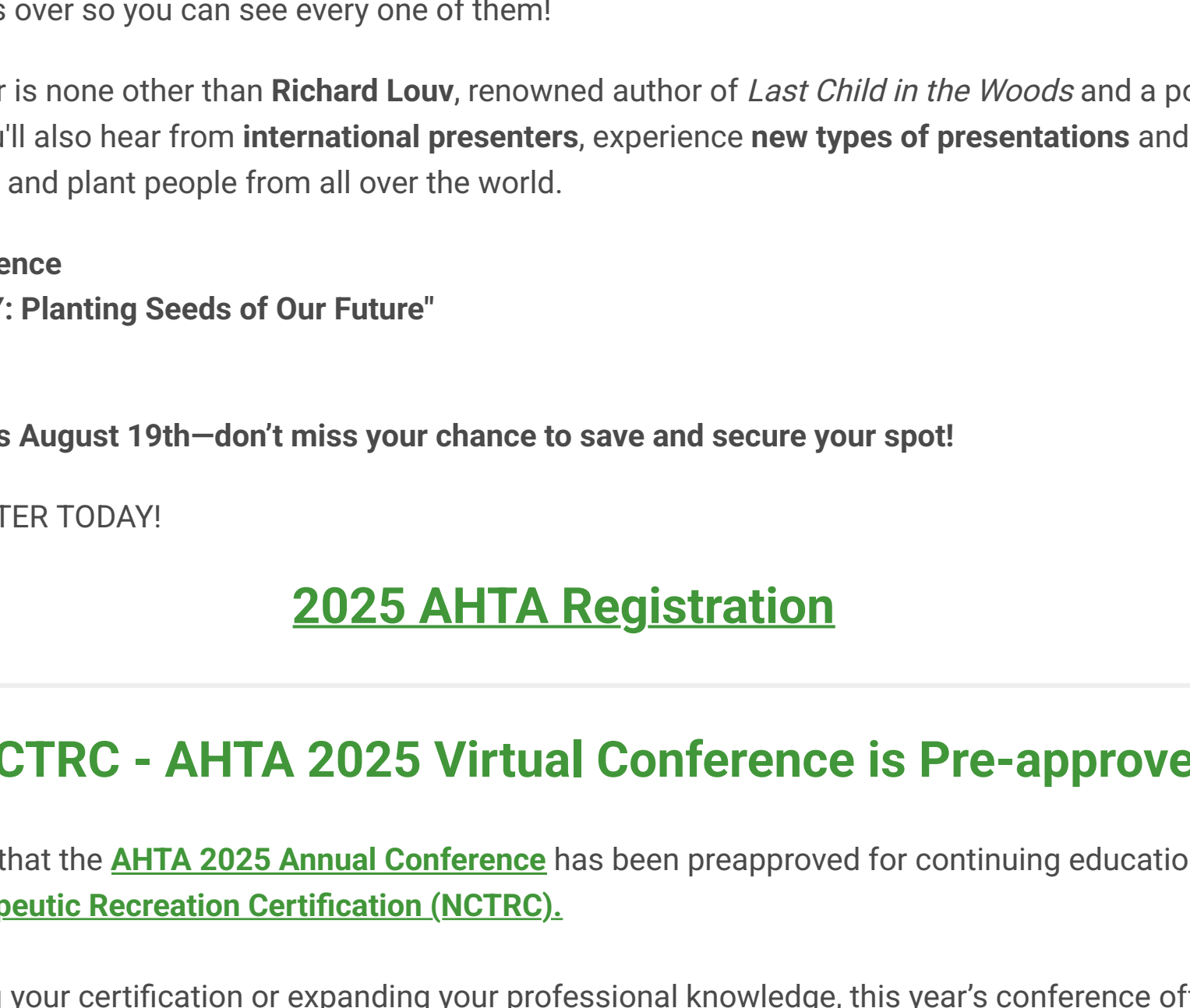
In addition, the AHTA Board of Directors and Work Teams are actively advancing key initiatives, including updates to the Standards of Practice and the expansion of professional development resources. We encourage members to consider participating in a Work Team. Your engagement is essential to the growth and vitality of our organization.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to making horticultural therapy a force for healing. Together, we are cultivating a brighter, greener future.

Matthew Janson CTRS, HTR,
AHTA President

News and Events

Keynote Speaker - Richard Louv



This year's keynote speaker is none other than Richard Louv, renowned author of *Last Child in the Woods* and a powerful voice for nature-based wellness. Louv has inspired a global movement around the importance of reconnecting with the natural world, coining the term "nature-deficit disorder" and changing how parents, educators, health professionals, and communities understand the link between nature and well-being. His work bridges science, storytelling, and advocacy with heart and clarity. Having him as our keynote speaker is an extraordinary opportunity—you'll walk away inspired, energized, and deeply affirmed in your work. This is a moment you won't want to miss!

[Read more about Richard here](#)

Register Now for the AHTA Annual Conference – Early Bird Pricing Available until Aug. 19th!

We're thrilled to announce that this year's [AHTA Annual Conference](#) is taking place in an **exciting new virtual format**, making it more accessible than ever to connect, learn, and grow together—no matter where you are! AND you'll have access to the presentations for a time after the conference is over so you can see every one of them!

This year's keynote speaker is none other than **Richard Louv**, renowned author of *Last Child in the Woods* and a powerful voice for nature-based wellness. You'll also hear from **international presenters**, experience **new types of presentations and workshops**, and connect with professionals and plant people from all over the world.

AHTA 2025 Annual Conference
"NURTURING COMMUNITY: Planting Seeds of Our Future"
October 9-11, 2025

Early bird registration ends August 19th—don't miss your chance to save and secure your spot!

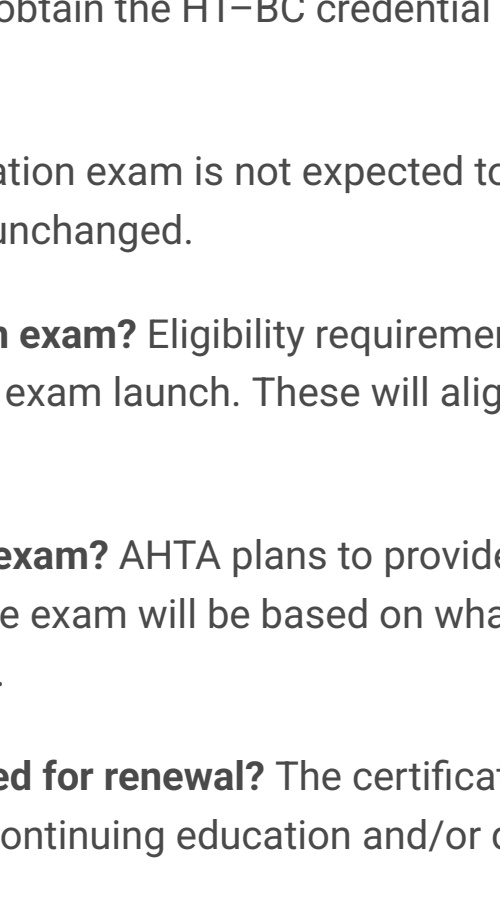
Come grow with us! REGISTER TODAY!

2025 AHTA Registration

Earn CEs from NCTRC - AHTA 2025 Virtual Conference is Pre-approved!

We're excited to announce that the [AHTA 2025 Annual Conference](#) has been preapproved for continuing education (CE) credit by the [National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification \(NCTRC\)](#).

Whether you're maintaining your certification or expanding your professional knowledge, this year's conference offers high-quality, relevant content designed to support your growth as a therapeutic horticulture professional.



AHTA Election Results for the AHTA Board of Directors!

AHTA is happy to announce the election results for the New AHTA Board of Directors voted in by the AHTA membership.

Welcome to the new BOD members!
Christopher Banke, LMFT, CCTP, ASDCS, HTR
Amy Fee Bruzzichesi, MSW, HTR

Kenneth Harvey, HTR
Meghan McKiernan, BS, HTR
Brooke Moren, CTRS, HTR
Danielle Stojan, HTR

Also, to a second term BOD member!
Brendan Yukins, LCSW, CST, PhD Candidate

Thank you all for your dedication to serving on The AHTA Board with this term beginning in October 2025! Thank you to all the members who took the time to vote!

Horticultural Therapy Certification

After many years of thoughtful consideration, AHTA is actively developing a certification for Horticultural Therapists. While some details are still being finalized, we want to keep our members informed and share what you can expect as this important credentialing process moves forward.

What is the AHTA Certification?

The AHTA Certification is a formal recognition that an individual has met established professional standards in horticultural therapy. It assures employers, clients, and the public that certified professionals possess the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to practice effectively and ethically. The certification process includes requirements for education, professional experience, and the successful completion of a comprehensive examination.

The exam, currently in development, is based on six key domains identified through a large-scale Job Task Analysis involving input from the horticultural therapy community. These domains are:

1. Horticulture
2. Treatment Planning
3. Program Planning and Activity Design
4. Managing Human Resources
5. Business Practices, Safety, and Ethics
6. Professionalism and Scholarship

The certification examination is anticipated to launch in **October 2026**.

Who is the Certification for?

The certification—tentatively titled Horticultural Therapist—Board Certified (HT–BC)—is designed for individuals seeking to be recognized as credentialed horticultural therapists. It is expected that HT–BC will eventually replace the current HTR designation as the primary credential in the field.

Frequently Asked Questions

What will happen to the HTR designation? AHTA will stop accepting new HTR applications approximately three months before the launch of the certification exam on July 1, 2026. After that, all new applicants will apply for the HT–BC certification. Current HTRs may continue to use their designation. Those who wish to obtain the HT–BC credential may take the certification exam, but it is not mandatory.

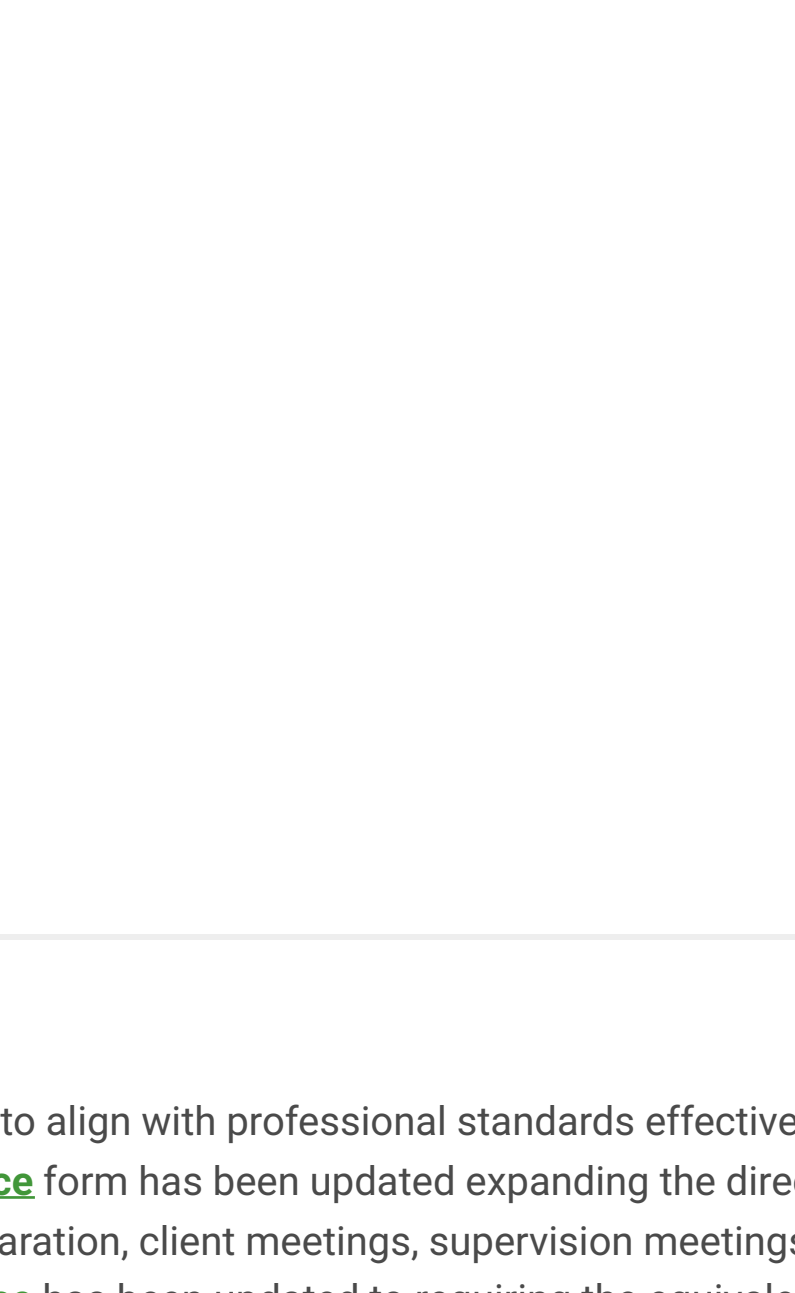
Will this affect the THP designation? No. The certification exam is not expected to be required for Therapeutic Horticulture Practitioner (THP) applications. The THP designation will remain unchanged.

How do I know if I'm eligible to sit for the certification exam? Eligibility requirements will include specific education and experience criteria, which will be published well in advance of the exam launch. These will align with national standards for professional certification.

Will there be study materials or prep courses for the exam? AHTA plans to provide recommended resources, sample examination questions and some guidance on the examination. The exam will be based on what practitioners are expected to know so applicants education and training should be the best preparation.

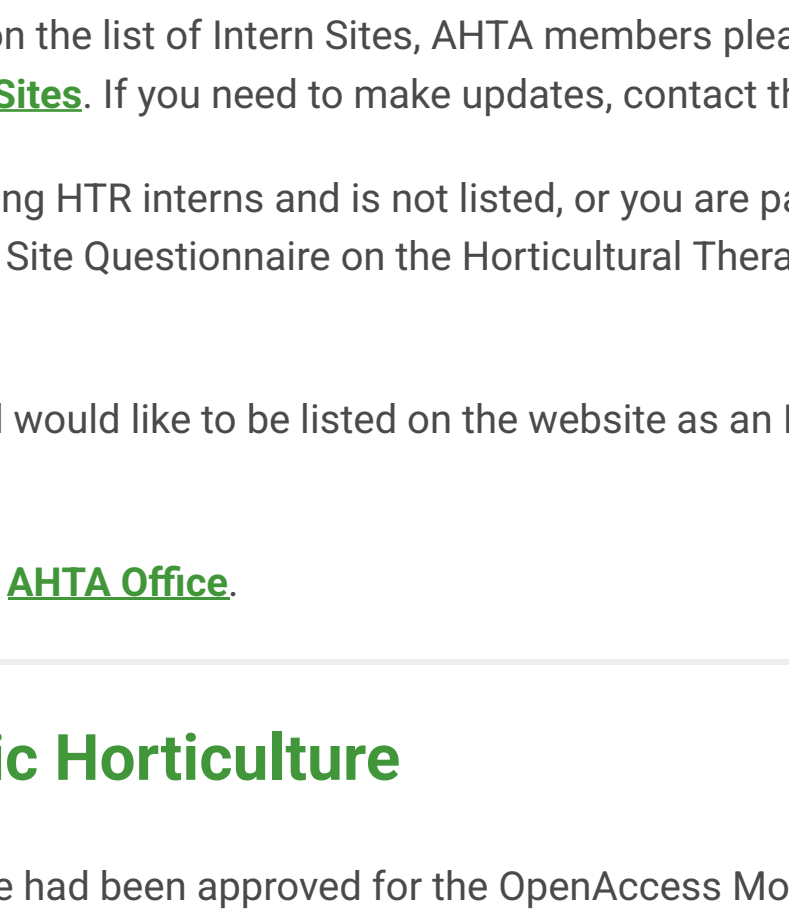
How long is the certification valid, and what is required for renewal? The certification is expected to be valid for five years. To maintain certification, individuals will be required to complete continuing education and/or demonstrate ongoing professional activity, as defined in the recertification guidelines.

Introducing “Green Classrooms, Growing Minds”—a new spotlight series from the AHTA ‘Growing Impact’ Youth Wellness Campaign.



AHTA is showcasing how indoor and outdoor plant-rich classrooms are supporting learning, regulation, resilience, and physical health for today's youth. Follow us on social media to stay connected, get inspired, and help us grow a healthier future for youth everywhere!

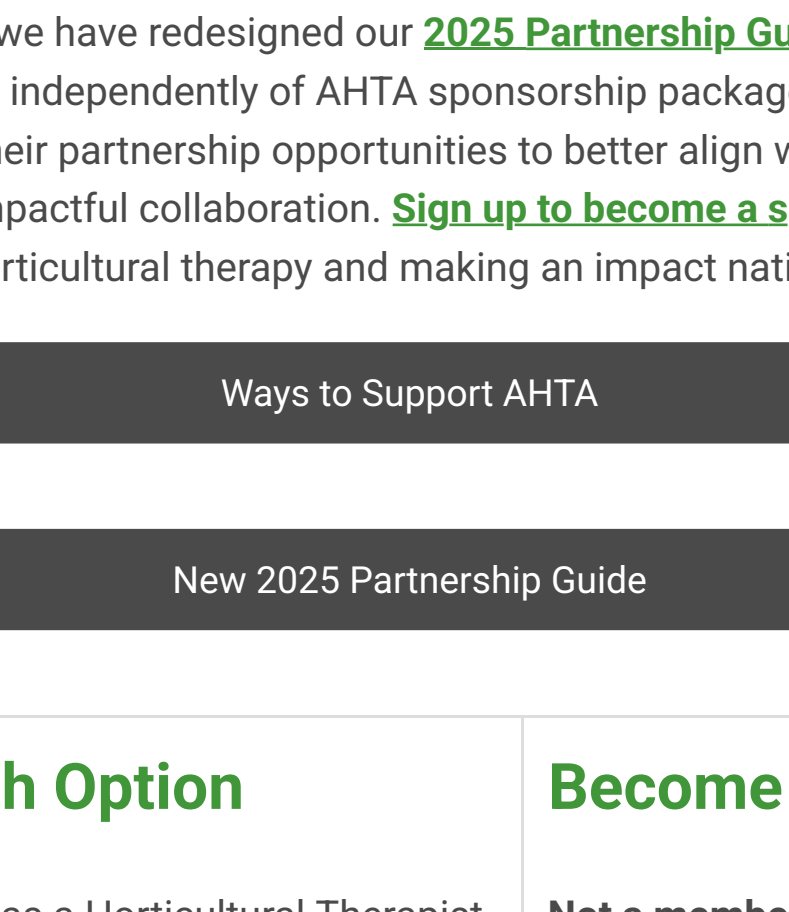
Sneak Peak: Upcoming Social Media Features!



A Very Special Guest is Coming to School... and It Has Leaves!

Soon students will meet someone green, grounded, and exceptionally adaptable in life. Because every student deserves a classroom that supports both the mind and the heart.

#PlantWithAPurpose #GreenClassroomsGrowingMinds #YouthWellness #NatureInSchools #HorticulturalTherapy #GrowingImpact #AHTA #WholeChildDevelopment #MindfulLearning #PlantPower



“Meet Us at the Trees”

Very special outdoor learning environment in Spokane, Washington:

- Guided by a visionary landscape architect and AHTA member.
- Imagined by students and built in part with their own hands.
- Brought to life by an extraordinary principal who believes deeply in the vision, voice, and strength of the students she proudly collaborates with.
- This outdoor learning classroom is a testament to what happens when learning environments are shaped by young minds, collaborating leaders, and the therapeutic power of plants.

Stay tuned...

#GreenClassroomsGrowingMinds #AHTGrowingImpact #OutdoorLearning #YouthEmpowerment #StudentLedDesign

More partners and sponsors to follow! Please direct any questions to sponsorship@ahta.org.

Marigold Seedlings Intention Letter

By Katie Pukash, Idaho Botanical Garden

Season/Dates of Session: Spring/Summer

Population: Substance Use and Co-Occurring Disorders

Session Time: 60 Minutes

Group Goals:

1. Physical: dexterity, fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination
2. Cognitive: following directions, learning new information
3. Social: group discussion, connecting with peers
4. Psychological: creating intentions, mindfulness, vulnerability, empathy
5. Other: sensory stimulation

Brief Description of the Session:

Opening: “Today you will be writing a letter of intention for your recovery and planting marigold seedlings.”

Project: Participants will write a letter of intention for their recovery on coffee filters. They will put the letter of intention at the bottom of the nursery pot. Then participants will add soil and plant their marigold seeds. Lastly, we will learn all about marigolds and how to care for the seedlings as they grow.

Closing: “Thank you so much for your participation today. As the marigold grows, I hope you remember your intentions and see growth within yourself.”

Therapist Preparation Steps:

- Gather materials
- Create marigold information and **handouts** about marigolds and how to care for them.
- Supplies needed:** coffee filters, pens, nursery pots, potting soil, marigold seeds, water, watering pitcher, soil scoop.
- Precautions:** Remember Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics. Practice universal precautions. Writing a letter of intention can be emotional. Support clients as needed. Move through the session gently and with care.
- Fun Facts related to your topic:**
 - It is believed that there are a lot of health benefits that come with marigold flowers because they contain substances with anti-viral, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-inflammatory properties.
 - Marigolds are every gardener's favorite flower because planting them with other outdoor greens helps keep some of those pesky pests and critters away!
 - The bloom itself symbolizes beauty, warmth, creativity, a drive to succeed, and celebration of the dead.

Adaptations:

What are adaptations and strategies that you will have available to assist clients?

If clients have trouble coming up with intentions, assist them by giving examples and asking them how they wish to grow.

Plant Material (list plant material names):

Marigold seed – *Tagetes patula*

Supply Costs:

- Coffee filters- \$1.00 (dollar store)
- Pens- \$1.00 (dollar store pack)
- Nursery Pots- \$12.00 (for 50 6-inch nursery pots)
- Potting Soil- ~\$10.00
- Marigold Seeds- free (I have tons of marigold seeds)
- Soil Scoop – free (bring a plastic cup)

Estimated Total Cost - \$24.00

Cost per client for group of 10- \$2.40

Updates from AHTA

- The [AHTA Code of Ethics](#) was updated to align with professional standards effective March 1, 2025! For more information [Here](#)
- The [THP Verification of Work Experience](#) form has been updated expanding the direct client services to include direct client hours, documentation, program planning/preparation, client meetings, supervision meetings and non-supervision meetings!
- The [HTR Verification of Work Experience](#) has been updated to requiring the equivalent of 1,500 hours work experience as an employee or independent contractor, supervised by either a HTR or general supervisor who can validate the horticultural therapy services provided.

HTR Internship Sites and Intern Supervisors Information Updates

AHTA receives numerous requests for information from students in Horticultural therapy educational programs and applicants for the Horticultural Therapist – Registered regarding the internship requirements for registration. A list of internship sites that meet the requirements for HTR internships, as well as the list of approved Intern Supervisors, are available on the AHTA website. We ask for your help to update those lists.

If you are part of a program that is currently on the list of Intern Sites, AHTA members please check your program and contact information on the AHTA website [Internship Sites](#). If you need to make updates, contact the AHTA office at info@ahta.org.

If you know of a program that is already hosting HTR interns and is not listed, or you are part of a program that would like to be listed as an internship site, please go to the Internship Site Questionnaire on the Horticultural Therapy Internship webpage, under the Professional Registration tab.

If you have been a HTR for at least 1 year and would like to be listed on the website as an Intern Supervisor, please complete the application at [Intern Supervisor Application](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the [AHTA Office](#).

AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture

The AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture had been approved for the OpenAccess Model and is now available on Google Scholar. Did you know that you can access the copies of the AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture by going to Google Scholar, putting in the “AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture” in the search window and to narrow down your search add the volume number from the AHTA list of Journal. Click [HERE](#) to learn more. While considering publishing in the AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture consider that as members of AHTA there is no charge for the Article Processing Charge (APC) while nonmembers pay \$300. Another great way to become a member! Hoping to see more submissions that will go out to all!

Supporting AHTA

Your generous support makes it possible for our organization to grow and thrive. Your contributions help keep us going, including helping with the expenses of our annual conference, increasing our ability to work toward credentialing, offsetting the cost of our journal and other outreach publications, and connecting to colleges and universities, facilities, prisons, hospitals, and agencies that [support the profession of horticultural therapy](#). Our [2025 Partnership Guide](#) is now available!

In keeping with the forward growth of AHTA, we have redesigned our [2025 Partnership Guide](#) to include new “à la carte” sponsorship opportunities! These options can be selected independently of AHTA sponsorship packages or added to enhance them. The goal is to offer sponsors greater flexibility in shaping their partnership opportunities to better align with their specific needs and objectives, resulting in a more tailored and impactful collaboration. [Sign up to become a sponsor](#) today! Your support fuels our mission to continue advancing the development of horticultural therapy and making an impact nationally and worldwide.

Ways to Support AHTA

New 2025 Partnership Guide

AHTA HTR Database Search Option

AHTA HTR Database Search Option AHTA has a Horticultural Therapist-Registered(HTR) Directory feature on our website. This feature allows companies or the general public to search for HTRs near them. The benefits for HTRs may include employment, consultation work, presentation /information sharing opportunities, advocacy for the profession of horticultural therapy and more! Any HTR member has the opportunity to opt-in or opt-out of the database. We request that HTR members update their profile with this indication.

To update:

1. Log into the Member Center
2. Select "My Profile"
3. Select "Edit Profile"
4. Check "Opt-in" or "Opt-out"

We would like to use this as a reminder for all members to refresh their profiles with any other updates as well.

Become a Member

Not a member of AHTA? Join today! AHTA's membership is comprised of individuals who are passionate about the unique benefits of horticultural therapy as a therapeutic modality. Members are committed to the growth of the profession. Membership in the AHTA will keep you up to date on the latest in horticultural therapy news, as well as give you access to outstanding educational and networking opportunities.

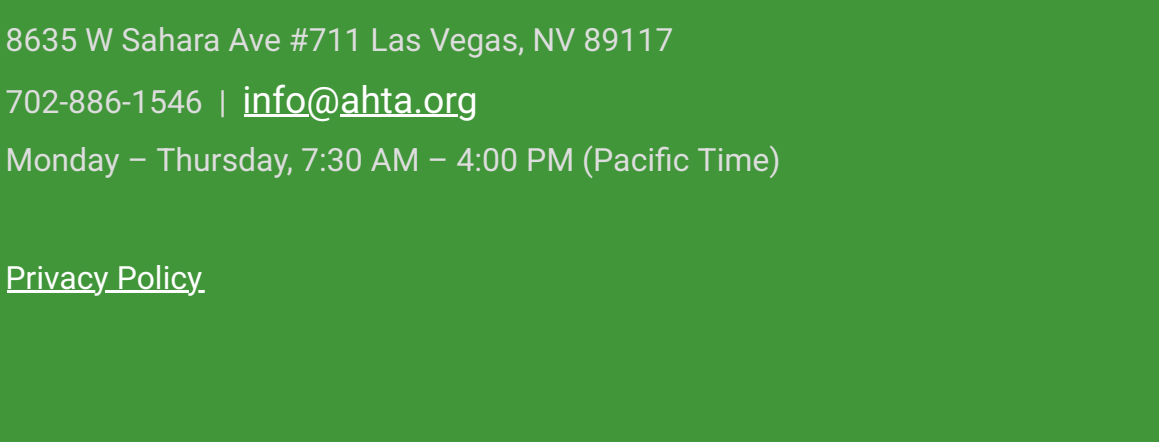
Did you know? AHTA members benefits include free webinars and free article processing fees for the AHTA Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture! Another two new reasons to join!

Join Today

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JOIN NOW >

American Horticultural Therapy Association

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Monday – Thursday, 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM (Pacific Time)

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Upcoming Events

Thu Oct 9, 2025 2025 AHTA Annual Conference	Category: AHTA Events
Fri Oct 10, 2025 2025 AHTA Annual Conference	Category: AHTA Events
Sat Oct 11, 2025 2025 AHTA Annual Conference	Category: AHTA Events