

June 2025 Newsletter

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

President's Message

Dear AHTA Community,

As summer begins to bloom, I'm reminded of the incredible growth happening all around us not just in our gardens, but within our profession and community. It's been an energizing season at AHTA, and I'm excited to share some of what we've been cultivating together.

Over the past month, our members have continued to show up, engage, and inspire. From thought-provoking Book Club discussions to webinars and community meetings, your participation helps strengthen the roots of our shared mission.

We've been busy behind the scenes too. Digital credential badges are in the works, giving members a new way to showcase their AHTA credentials online. When you've worked this hard, you deserve to wear your leaves with pride.

At the same time, our taskforces are making steady progress on job task analysis and research initiatives, building the foundation for a new credentialing exam. These efforts are helping shape the future of horticultural therapy, ensuring it continues to grow with purpose and professionalism.

Our website is also getting some TLC we're improving functionality while exploring options to make sure our digital home fits our needs. Even websites may need a little repotting now and then.

Meanwhile, our Conference Work Team is deep into planning for 2025 and 2026. These gatherings promise to be rich with connection, learning, and shared purpose.

Sponsorship and webinar growth are gaining momentum, giving us new ways to support our mission and extend our reach. It's clear that our work is resonating and we have you to thank for that.

I hope you continue to find joy, purpose, and connection in the work you do. Whether you're guiding someone through a healing garden, contributing to research, or simply planting seeds of hope in your community, you're part of something bigger. You're not just helping plants grow, you're helping people thrive.

So, let's keep tending this garden together. Join a work team. Share your expertise. Stay connected. And if you ever feel overwhelmed, just remember: even the tallest sunflower started as a seed.

With a little dirt under my nails,
Matthew Janson CTRS, HTR,
AHTA President

News and Events

We're Thrilled to Welcome Richard Louv as the 2025 AHTA Conference Keynote Speaker!



Save the Date!
[AHTA 2025 Virtual Conference](#) | October 9–11, 2025

Get ready to connect, learn, and grow at the **national gathering of horticultural therapy and therapeutic horticulture professionals, educators, students, researchers, and advocates!**

This year's virtual conference promises inspiring keynotes, cutting-edge sessions, and dynamic community building across the field of HT and TH—all from the comfort of your own space.

Keynote Speaker: Richard Louv

We're thrilled to announce that **renowned author and nature advocate Richard Louv**—*Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder; The Nature Principle; Vitamin N, and Our Wild Calling*—will deliver the keynote address, bringing his powerful voice to the importance of nature connection in therapeutic practices.

What's New in 2025? A Whole New Day of Connection and Discovery!

Join us on our **brand-new third conference day—Thursday, October 9th**—featuring:

Consultation Groups (Communities of Practice)

Connect in small, peer-led groups tailored to your interests—healthcare, education, elder care, and more.

Spotlight on Innovative HT/TH Programs

Be inspired by creative and impactful programs from across the country.

Educational Programs Showcase

Explore academic opportunities—courses, certifications, and degrees from institutions supporting the next generation of HT and TH professionals.

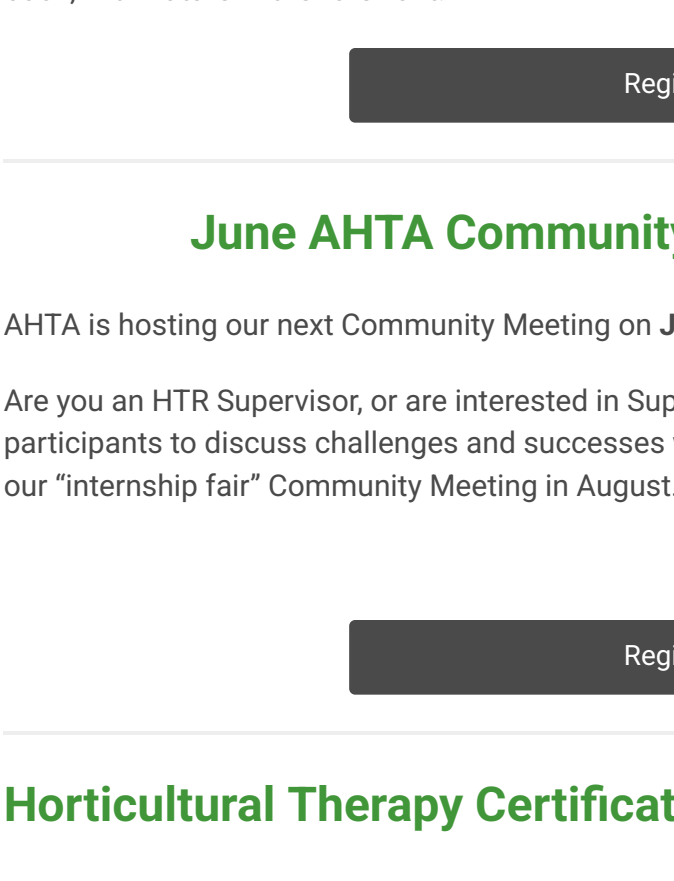
Registration is OPEN!

Stay alert for the official announcement—**early bird rates will offer great savings and first access to sessions!**

Together, let's grow the future of HT and TH!

[2025 AHTA Registration](#)

AHTA Virtual Book Club Meets in July- Members Only



The next AHTA members online book club will be on Tuesday, July 8th, 7 pm EST. We will dive into a perfect summer novel by the acclaimed writer, Barbara Kingsolver. In *Prodigal Summer*, Kingsolver elegantly intertwines three love stories set amid the forests and farms of southern Appalachia. A truly gorgeous book, with nature in the forefront.

[Register Here](#)

June AHTA Community Meeting- Members Only

AHTA is hosting our next Community Meeting on **June 17, from 6-8pm CST/4-6 pm PST/7-9pm EST**.

Are you an HTR Supervisor, or are interested in Supervising? We will be holding consultation space for participants to discuss challenges and successes with supervision. This session will serve as preamble to our "internship fair" Community Meeting in August.

[Register Here](#)

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.

Community Meetings on the Certification

AHTA will hold several community meetings for feedback on the upcoming certification. Stay tuned for dates and times.

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. 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.

AHTA 'Growing Impact' Youth Wellness Campaign Update:

Shining a National Spotlight on Healing and Growth Through Horticultural Therapy (HT) and Therapeutic Horticulture (TH)

The countdown is on! We are just days away from launching Phase 2 of the 'Growing Impact' Campaign: Advancing Youth Wellness Through Horticulture. From mid-June through October, AHTA will be showcasing diverse sites across the country, spotlighting the many impactful ways HT and TH are supporting youth wellbeing. At a time when so many young people are navigating emotional, social, cognitive, and physical challenges, HT/TH programming is providing meaningful opportunities for growth, healing, and connection. Stay tuned to our social media channels as we highlight this inspiring, transformative work happening nationwide, and reach out to AHTA if you would like to join in the campaign initiative. Let's grow impact – powerfully, together.

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

Sensory Scavenger Hunt: Engaging the Senses Through Nature

By Katie Ryzhikov – The District, Maryland and Virginia HT networking group

Description of Activity

A Sensory Scavenger Hunt invites participants to explore their surroundings using all five senses. Whether conducted in a garden, park, or indoors with natural elements, this interactive activity encourages mindfulness, observation, and grounding in the present moment. Participants search for items or experiences that match sensory prompts

Therapeutic Goals

- Promote sensory awareness and sensory integration
- Support self-regulation through grounding and mindfulness
- Encourage movement and engagement with the natural environment
- Enhance attention and focus
- Foster social interaction and communication
- Increase emotional health through sensory-emotional connections

Step-by-Step Process for Delivery

1. Prepare the setting: Choose a safe, accessible space with diverse sensory stimuli—ideally outdoors in a garden, park, or courtyard.
2. Introduce the activity: Briefly explain the purpose of the scavenger hunt and how it engages the senses.
3. Distribute scavenger hunt sheets or cards: Feel free to use the example below!
4. Model a few examples: Encourage exploration and curiosity without the need to physically collect items.
5. Allow time to explore: Give participants 15–30 minutes to move around and engage at their own pace.
6. Facilitate a group reflection: Invite participants to share findings and discuss how different sensations made them feel.
7. Optional extension: Offer journaling, drawing, or a creative project based on sensory discoveries.

Materials List

- Printed scavenger hunt sheets or cards
- Clipboards and pencils/pens
- Magnifying glasses (optional)
- Journals or paper for reflection
- Camera or phone (optional for documentation)

Safety Considerations

- Ensure the space is physically safe and accessible.
- Supervise closely in unfamiliar outdoor areas or with groups prone to distraction.
- Use non-touch alternatives for participants with sensory sensitivity or medical concerns.
- Monitor weather conditions and provide protection as needed.
- Avoid prompts involving tasting unless using known, safe, edible items under supervision.

Applications for Populations

- Children with sensory processing challenges (e.g., autism, ADHD)
- Older adults with dementia or trauma decline
- Individuals recovering from trauma (grounding and body awareness)
- Youth in foster care or shelters
- People with anxiety or depression
- Community mental health or day program participants

Tip: This activity pairs well with guided breathing exercises or a short nature journaling session to further reinforce sensory grounding and reflection.

Nature Scavenger Hunt

		See Find something in nature with a pattern (like bark, leaf veins, or shadows).
		Touch Find something soft that feels comforting.
		Smell Locate a scent you enjoy, such as a flower, herb, or earthy soil.
		Hear Listen for a calming sound (like birding, rustling leaves, or water).
		Touch Feel something rough or bumpy with your hands or fingers.
		See Spot something brightly colored that catches your eye.
		Smell Find a natural smell that reminds you of a memory.
		See Look for something small and hidden—like a bug, pebble, or new bud.
		Hear Identify a sound that changes as you get closer or farther away.

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 meetings 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 Green 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 approval. 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@hta.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 "EditProfile"
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.

[Join Today](#)

powered by [MemberClicks](#)