

Our History



The West Tennessee Chapter (WTC-TUFC) of the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council (TUFC) was founded in 2004. In this same year, the Memphis Botanic Garden



(MBG) started preparation for arboretum designation through the efforts of the MBG Plant Records Officer, her staff and a volunteer Tree Team. In 2006, TUFC awarded MBG Level 4 arboretum status, the highest classification of levels and only one of four in the state at that time.



In 2008, the American Conifer Society (ACS) began partnering with public gardens throughout the United States to recognize noteworthy conifer collections through a special designation, the ACS Reference Garden. These gardens provide wonderful opportunities to educate the public about growing conifers, using conifers in a home landscape, and building enthusiasm about conifers and the American Conifer Society. In 2013, MBG became one of 6 such Reference Gardens in the state of Tennessee and the 16th such garden in the Southeast Region.

Since its creation in 2012, the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council (TUFC) Center of Excellence program has enhanced urban forestry at regional sites across the state by boosting regional urban forestry education and tree health. This same year, because of continued efforts by the MBG staff and the volunteer Tree Team, TUFC awarded MBG the designation of Urban Forestry Center of Excellence, the first and only such center in the state of Tennessee. This program helps to certify and re-certify local arboreta, to provide ongoing educational programs and to give citizens a local resource for arboriculture, and is staffed by regional groups like the West TN Chapter of TUFC. See <https://tufc.com/programs/educational/centers-of-excellence/> for additional details.

