ELLOREE TALENT STRATEGIES

www.ElloreeTalent.com
info@ElloreeTalent.com
(800) 803-7813
/in/elloreetalentstrategies

CLIENT CASE STUDY

Leadership Development at Longwood Gardens

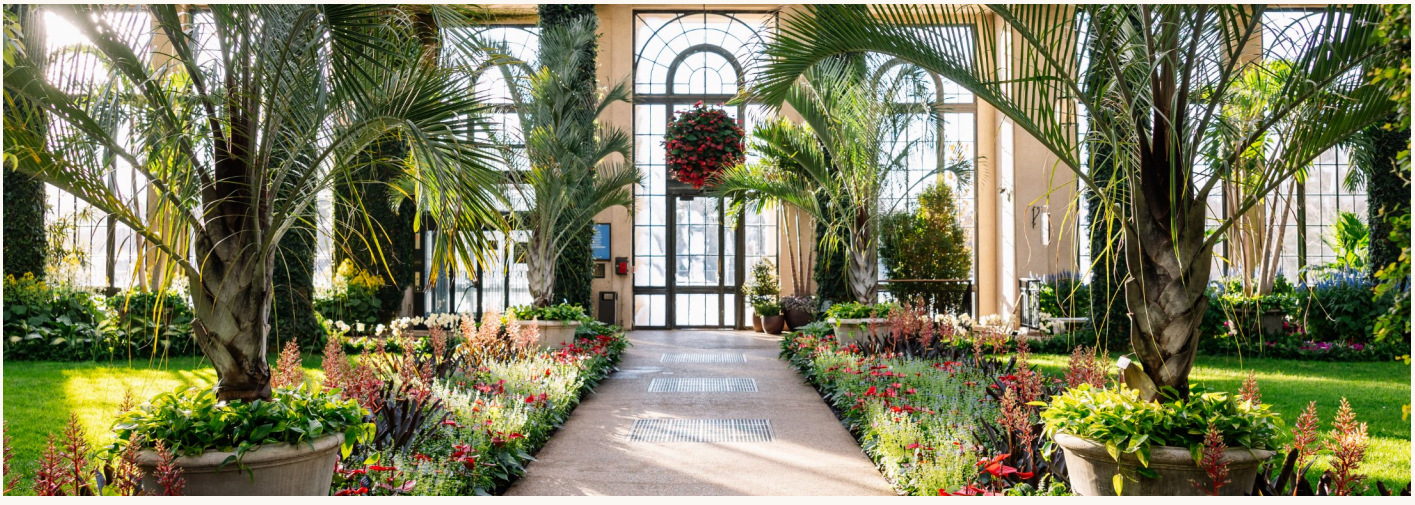
Bringing Values to Life Through History, Place, and Experience

At Longwood Gardens, leadership development is deeply connected to place.

Gardens are not only a physical environment, but a living expression of values shaped over generations—stewardship, innovation, learning, and community.

As Longwood continues to grow and welcome new generations of staff, leaders identified an opportunity: to make these values more visible and more intentionally woven into how leaders are developed.

> *"When people understand the history behind our values, they develop a deeper appreciation for the impact they have on the organization and on each other.*
>
> **SHELLEY DINEHART**
> CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, LONGWOOD GARDENS



Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

OVERVIEW

The Gardens as Curriculum

In partnership with Elloree Talent Strategies, Longwood explored how its history—embedded in the land, the gardens, and the people who shaped them—could become a more active part of how leaders learn and lead.

This work led to the creation of the **Living Our Values Leadership Experience**, a program that connects leadership development directly to the Gardens' legacy.

LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

Values-Based Leadership Development

WHY IT MATTERS

Leadership development becomes more meaningful when it connects leaders to the history, values, and context of the organization they are being asked to lead. Experiential learning can turn stated values into shared leadership practice.

Why This Work Mattered

Longwood has long been guided by a clear set of values. Yet like many organizations, there was a question of how to ensure those values are consistently experienced—not just stated.

LEADERS ASKED

- **How do we help people connect their day-to-day work to something larger?**
- **How do we ensure our history informs how we lead today?**
- **How do we create shared experiences that build alignment across teams?**

Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

A BROADER INTENTION

Inclusion Rooted in Longwood's Legacy

There was also a broader intention: to strengthen inclusion by helping leaders understand the diverse histories, perspectives, and contributions that have shaped Longwood over time.



As Longwood continued advancing its Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) strategy, leaders recognized an opportunity to connect those commitments more intentionally to the organization's values and history. Longwood's commitment to creating an inclusive environment where all individuals are respected and valued is supported by a long-standing IDEA strategy and Board-level engagement.

Rather than viewing inclusion as a separate initiative, the team sought to demonstrate how these commitments are rooted in Longwood's legacy and reflected in the stories, decisions, and people who have shaped the Gardens over time.

> *"We wanted to use Longwood's rich history and extraordinary grounds to tell the story of our values in a way that felt personal and meaningful. The goal was to help staff members connect not only to the work they do, but also to how they engage with one another.*
>
> **SHELLEY DINEHART**
> CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, LONGWOOD GARDENS

Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

STARTING POINT

History as a Learning Environment

Through a collaborative exploration of Longwood's culture and leadership practices, one idea became clear: the Gardens themselves already hold the curriculum.

As Longwood leaders considered the next phase of leadership development, they realized that the most powerful learning tools were already present—the Gardens themselves and the history embedded throughout them.

> *"Longwood's values are not new. They're values that have been demonstrated throughout Longwood's history. They are who we are. The Gardens and the stories behind them gave us a way to help people experience those values rather than simply talk about them."*
>
> **SHELLEY DINEHART, CHRO**

Across the landscape, stories of leadership are visible.

01

THE LENAPE PEOPLE

Their relationship with the land reflects deep stewardship and respect.

02

THE PEIRCE FAMILY

Their plant exploration speaks to curiosity and learning.

03

PIERRE S. DU PONT

His vision demonstrates innovation, generosity, and civic responsibility.

These stories are not separate from leadership—they are examples of it.

Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

ELLOREE PERSPECTIVE

The strongest leadership development is not always created by bringing an outside curriculum into an organization.

Sometimes the most powerful curriculum is already there—in the organization's history, values, people, and place. The opportunity is to translate those assets into an experience that helps leaders understand what leadership means in their specific context.

THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES EMERGED

01 Leadership is best understood through stories

Values become meaningful when people see how they are lived.

02 Place deepens reflection

Being in the Gardens creates a different kind of connection than classroom learning alone.

03 Shared experience builds alignment

When leaders engage together, it creates a common language for leadership across the organization.



Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

THE PROGRAM

The Living Our Values Leadership Experience

The Experience was designed as a guided journey that connects key locations across the Gardens with moments in Longwood's history and the values they represent.

Rather than traditional training, it invites participants to move through the Gardens, reflect, and engage in conversation—considering how Longwood's values and history influence their own approach to leadership and stewardship.

A CENTRAL QUESTION

What does it mean to lead at Longwood—and how do I carry that forward in my role?

SEVEN STOPS, SEVEN DIMENSIONS OF LEADERSHIP

01 STEWARDSHIP
Meadow Garden
Participants explore the relationship between people and land, past and present.

02 CURIOSITY AND LEARNING
Peirce's Park
The origins of plant collection and scientific exploration come to life.

03 INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY
Cox family & Progressive Friends
Stories that prompt reflection on belonging and conviction.

04 GENEROSITY & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY
Main Conservatory
Pierre and Alice du Pont's contributions illustrate leadership through giving.

05 INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE
Main Fountain Garden
A highlight of vision, engineering, and continual improvement.

06 EDUCATION AND MENTORSHIP
Idea Garden
Reflects Longwood's role as a place of learning and development.

07 LOOKING AHEAD
West Conservatory & Central Grove
Participants consider what it means to lead into the future.

Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

WHAT WE'RE SEEING

Shifts Already Visible

The Leadership Experience is becoming a meaningful addition to Longwood's approach to developing leaders. While still evolving, several shifts are already visible.

STRONGER CONNECTION TO PURPOSE

Participants are more readily able to connect their roles to Longwood's broader mission and legacy, and feel a sense of renewal from the experience.

MORE SHARED LANGUAGE

The Experience creates common reference points that leaders can return to in conversations and decision-making.

DEEPER ENGAGEMENT WITH HISTORY

Leaders are exploring Longwood's past with greater curiosity and seeing its relevance to present-day work.

CROSS-FUNCTIONAL CONNECTION

Bringing leaders together in a shared experience fosters relationships across teams and disciplines.

> *"The experience gave me time to slow down and reflect in a way I rarely do during the workday. Hearing the stories behind the Gardens and the people who shaped Longwood helped me think differently about my own role. It was impactful to consider the legacy we're inheriting and the role each of us plays in carrying it forward.*
>
> **PROGRAM PARTICIPANT**
> LIVING OUR VALUES LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

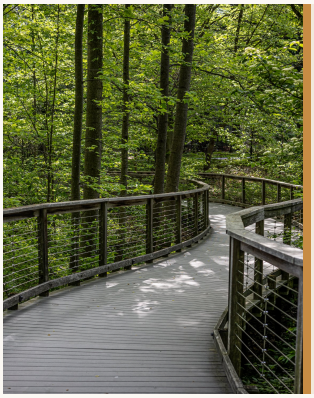
Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

CARRYING THE WORK FORWARD

Leadership is not separate from the organization's history, values, or environment—it grows from them.

By grounding leadership development in place and story, Longwood is creating experiences that are both practical and meaningful. Leaders are not only learning about values; they are seeing how those values have been lived over time and considering how to carry them forward.

The Living Our Values Leadership Experience continues to evolve, shaped by the people who participate in it and the conversations it sparks. In this way, leadership development at Longwood remains what the Gardens themselves have always been—a living, growing expression of care, learning, and community.



ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

This work was developed in partnership with Elloree Talent Strategies, who collaborated with Longwood to design an experience rooted in the organization's unique context and values.

The result reflects a shared commitment to creating leadership development grounded in experience and aligned with what makes Longwood distinct.

ABOUT ELLOREE TALENT STRATEGIES

Elloree Talent Strategies helps organizations strengthen performance by improving leadership and talent practices. Through strategic advisory, leadership development, executive coaching, and independent talent insights, Elloree helps leaders translate organizational values and priorities into practices that shape culture and performance.

ELLOREE TALENT STRATEGIES

Elloree Talent Strategies helps organizations create leadership experiences grounded in their own history, values, and culture.

www.ElloreeTalent.com

(800) 803-7813

info@ElloreeTalent.com

/in/elloreetalentstrategies

Copyright © 2026 Elloree Talent Strategies, LLC. All Rights Reserved.