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THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026 • OLDHAMERA.COM • OLDHAM COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER • \$2 • VOLUME 150 • ISSUE 20



Laura Johnson, Director of Thrive Forest School at Creasey Mahan, has been named a recipient of The Garden Club of America's 2026 Elizabeth Abernathy Hull Award. Johnson, pictured center, was nominated by Glenview Garden Club.

Thrive Forest director wins national honor

BY ERA STAFF

Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve recently announced that Thrive Forest School Director Laura Johnson has been named a recipient of The Garden Club of America's 2026 Elizabeth Abernathy Hull Award.

Established in 1992, this national award is given annually to 30 individuals who inspire children under 16 to appreciate the beauty and fragility of our planet through

horticulture and environmental education.

Johnson was nominated by a member of Glenview Garden Club for her "passion, creativity and dedication to educational programming that encourages love, curiosity and respect for nature."

"We are incredibly proud of the impact Laura has had on our Thrive Forest School and on thousands of students, as well as her tireless

HONOR

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dedication to nurturing environmental awareness and stewardship," shared Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve Executive Director Tavia Cathcart Brown. "It's so exciting and well deserved! Laura is the kindest person — dedicated to our students, parents, and wonderful team. It's a joy to work with her every day. Her genuine care for our families and her passion for helping our students connect with nature make her an invaluable part of our team. We are very happy to celebrate her, along with the exceptional Thrive Forest School team of educators, who bring their best selves every day — rain or shine."

Nestled in the woodlands of Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve in Goshen, Thrive Forest School was the first nature-based preschool in the Louisville area. Forest schools, also known as forest kindergartens, are said to allow students more physical activity than a traditional preschool, as well as more room to explore and tap into imagination, while building a connection to nature.

To learn more about Thrive Forest School and Creasey Mahan, visit creaseymahannaturepreserve.org.

To learn more about The Garden Club of America, visit gcamerica.org.

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