

September 26, 2022



## A note from Dr. Susan Ehrlich, CEO



### Groundskeeping as Poetry

What makes ZSFG the best public hospital in the country?

It's a question I get asked frequently, and so I've reflected on it a lot. The answer lies in our diverse team, with its expertise, dedication, and passion; as well as the partnership with UCSF and the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation (SFGHF).

Last week, we witnessed a new and wonderful way the partnership was expressed: the Garden Poetry Walk. I was very fortunate to participate in the Dedication Ceremony for the Walk in the Comfort Garden at Building 80/90. The Garden Poetry Walk was conceptualized and organized by our stellar gardening team and its leader, Anile Woods, partnering with the UCSF Dean's Office and made possible by a grant from the SFGHF.

This partnership makes our talented poets' artistry visible every day to the rest of our team. I highly encourage you to check out the poetry kiosks in the gardens outside buildings 80/90, buildings 30/40 and on the 7th floor of building 25.

This effort is a great time to highlight and celebrate our Facilities Grounds Maintenance Crew, (gardeners and facilities porters) who keep the ZSFG grounds clean and safe, 24/7, come rain or shine. Amazingly, just a small team of seven are cleaning and maintaining the entire 23 acres of our campus, including garden areas, courtyards, and what the team calls "wild areas," the green places we walk by and enjoy every day.

Keeping the campus clean and green is not just a good way to welcome our patients and staff. There are many physical and mental health benefits to spending even a little time outdoors. Short walks, or time spent in the many gardens and courtyards – especially when you can read poetry while you're doing it! -- can give us a much needed mental health boost during the day. This was especially critical at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic; getting a quick break and enjoying a small bit of fresh air amidst our beautiful gardens and courtyards helped get us through some tough times. We have our groundskeeping crew to thank for that!

Take a look below for some feedback from our groundskeeping crew for tips on how we can all participate in keeping our entire campus clean, green, and beautiful. It's up to all of us.

- Do not smoke on campus.
- Properly dispose of cigarette butts (the biggest source of litter!)
- Use the "Pack it in, pack it out" policy when eating at any of our outdoor spaces-leave nothing behind.
- Report any vandalized or damaged plants or landscaping to the Gardening Department at 6-5413
- Keep the patios and courtyards safe: don't block doors from closing properly. Make sure doors close securely behind you.

Have a safe, healthy, and joyful week --

Did you know that **every day** the crew:

- Removes more than 360 gallons of trash in addition to furniture, car parts, toxic chemicals and other large items dumped in the parking lots
- Picks up more than 1,000 cigarette butts
- Picks up over 15 gallons of masks, gloves, and other PPE-related items
- Removes syringes, needles, and other drug paraphernalia

**Susan**

