



Lelia Orrell Elliston, Ph.D.

263 South Ave. - Weston, MA 02493 - lelia@ellistonfarm.com - h:781-893-6844 c:781-956-8333

DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGIST, MANAGEMENT

Strategic Planning - Multi-Site Operations

Institutional Advancement - Finance Marketing and Branding

Community Outreach - Science and Education

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Environmental and Development Management Executive with experience leading successful start-up non-profits and supporting the missions of long standing organizations. Previous employment includes Regional Director managing 80 people, \$5m budget and implementing a Capital Campaign and Strategic Plan; new initiative for a non-profit as part of their strategic plan; establishing a Major Gifts Campaign; and revitalizing a local non-profit organization. Ability to identify strategic moves to gain increased visibility, and expand outreach that support missions. Passion for exploring operational and marketing opportunities that drive revenues, visibility, and growth. Strong personnel and financial management. Grant writing experience with 58% funded. Diverse background, experience and training. Enthusiastic personality, artistic, creative thinker, devoted work ethic, natural organizer and multi-tasker who thrives in diverse, face-paced environments.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- 1998 to 2006 **UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON**, Boston, Massachusetts
Doctoral Environmental Biology Program
Dissertation on *Sabatia kennedyana*, an endangered plant species of northeastern temperate coastal plain ponds. Thesis encompasses genetics, plant demography and natural history. *Defense: February 14, 2006.*
- 1993 to 1998 **UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON**, Boston, Massachusetts
Graduate Environmental Biology Program
Began masters program in biology. Due to ambitious proposal, was given permission to matriculate directly into PhD program.
- 1988 to 1993 **UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON**, Boston, Massachusetts
Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with a concentration in Botany. Graduated with honors; GPA: 3.6. Honors thesis: "Genetic variation and population differentiation of *Carapa guianensis* (Meliaceae)." (Manuscript).
- 1986 to 1988 **MASSACHUSETTS BAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**, Wellesley, Massachusetts
Associate of Science degree in Horticulture. Greenhouse and nursery internships. Coordinated award-winning 1988 Spring Flower Show exhibit. GPA: 3.98 with honors.
- 2005 **Timber Harvester License** – Received license after completing workshops, seminars and written material.
- 2001 **Massachusetts Conservation Commissioner Training** – Received certificate after completing workshops, seminars and written material.

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2007 to current **DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS**
The Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, Massachusetts. Private unique high school with a focus on preogressive education in the arts, science and social justice. Research, cultivation, stewardship and data management of >10K constituents. Research and maintain major gift prospect list and annual stewardship of major donors. Expertise using Blackbaud and several other database management software packages; development of marketing, branding and communications to alumni. Design, marketing and hosting of more than 15 annual local and regional US events. Stewardship of alumni endowments and two new foundations; science grant writing. Manage intra-net communication systems; co-facilitate campus youth group and chair of employee council.

PAST PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2006 to 2007 **REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR GREATER BOSTON AND THE NORTH SHORE**
Massachusetts Audubon, Lincoln, Massachusetts. Overall responsibility to ensure programs/sites within the region are well-managed, fiscally responsible and strategically positioned. Managed \$5 million budget for 17 Sanctuaries, eight Nature Centers and 80 employees to achieve campaign goals and mission. Collaborated with Conservation Science, Land Protection, Advocacy, Development, and Education Departments. Developed and guided activity in the region to ensure that programmatic resources aligned with the organization's conservation goals. Raised funds and allocated resources - human and financial - within the region to achieve objectives. Provided leadership and assistance to unit managers, reviewed performance of unit managers, and participated in the development and implementation of major operating policy, budgets, and programs. Redesigned annual plan format to evaluate and network regional property workers.
- 2005 to 2006 **DIRECTOR OF RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**
Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, Inc., East Boston, Massachusetts. Created and managed funder/investor relationships in a community-based organization. Established strong relationships with existing and future NOAH funders/donors. Spearheaded new initiative that reflects expanded mission. Designed persuasive marketing materials, including website, flyers and newsletter, that conveyed NOAH's needs and investor priorities. Cultivated collaborative relationships with NOAH staff. Maintained and regularly updated an accessible data base on all funders, grantors and investors with key information and history. Prepared materials for and participated in meetings with funders as requested. Reported directly to the Executive Director.
- 2001 to 2005 **Executive Director (2 years) / Executive Board (2 years)**
Land's Sake, Inc., Weston, Massachusetts. Played key role in transition to new leadership and evaluation of organization. Examined accounting practices and employee policies. Recommended strategy for fiscal soundness, new marketing direction and proposed ways to breath a sense of renewal and purpose into organization. Co-developed and implemented new strategic plan. Turned \$30k net loss to \$55k net revenue in eight months by developing first annual budget, improving accounting and introducing managerial accountability. Wrote employee policy manual, held weekly staff meetings, managed events. Extended mission and programs into region. Launched new bi-weekly column in community newspaper, and monthly newsletter.
- 1986 to current **FLORICULTURE / LANDSCAPE, Elliston Farm, Weston, Massachusetts**
Self-employed: Transitioned to strictly environmental and landscape consulting. Prior to 2004, operated full service landscape, contracting, property management and wholesale floriculture business. Seasonally produce field-grown perennial cut flowers on four acres.
- 1997 to current **WEB DESIGN, COMPUTER CONSULTING AND MAINTENANCE**
Self-employed: Web development and computer consulting services. Provide training and consulting services in operating systems and web-related applications. Manage web projects from inception to implementation. Portfolio <http://BottomOfTheGarden.com>. External devices, network, web/ftp and server management and troubleshooting.
- 1990 to 1998 **TEACHING & RESEARCH ASSISTANT / INSTRUCTOR, UMass Boston,**
Department of Biology: Instructor with the Rainforest Collaboration's Educational Foundation of America project to teach inner-city school children conservation, biodiversity and sustainability. Developed curriculum of field trips to local and Costa Rican sites. **Teaching Assistant** for nine undergraduate courses. **Research Assistant** funded by NSF on population biology of tropical trees.
- 1983 to 1986 **DISTRICT MANAGER, Miller Car Rental, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts**
Overall management of operations and personnel for four offices. Hired, trained, and supervised employees. Traveled extensively to offices in other US regions to audit, troubleshoot and improve operations. Identified problems, hired and trained new support staff to improve office operations and revenues.

SAMPLE OF FUNDED GRANT PROPOSALS (samples available upon request)

Bohnett Foundation - LGBT Outreach and Professional Development for "Safe Schools". 2009. Two year grant: \$50k

Department of Environmental Protection - Land Incentive Program for invasive species removal and land restoration. (submitted) 2009. \$50k

NeighborWorks America Organizational Underwriting Plan. 2007. Federal Grant Proposal. \$250k. Extensive 64 page proposal requiring a significant amount of metrics.

Americorp Proposal for Land's Sake. 2005. Staffing support.

Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (numerous grants from 1997-2004)

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Elliston, L.C.O. 2006. Natural History, Genetics and Demography of *Sabatia kennedyana* (Gentianaceae): An Endangered Plant of Atlantic Coastal Plain Pondshores. *Doctoral Thesis. UMass Boston Biology Department*. Reprints available upon request.

Orrell, L.C. 1997. Metapopulation Genetics and Population Biology of *Sabatia kennedyana* (Gentianaceae): Progress Report for Research Grant #: MA HER SW97. Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Report.

Elliston, E.P., and L.C. Orrell. 1996. *Erwinia* Slime Flux May Cause Temporary Color Morph in Juvenile Western Screech-Owl, *Otus kennicotti*. *J. of Wildlife Rehabilitation*, 19 (3): 3-6.

Orrell, L.C. 1996. Populations Genetics and Population Biology of *Sabatia kennedyana* (Gentianaceae). Progress Report for Research Grant #: MAHER SW96-11. Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program Progress Report.

Hall, P., L.C. Orrell, and K.S. Bawa. 1994. Genetic Diversity and Mating System of a Tropical Tree, *Carapa guianensis* (Meliaceae). *American J. of Botany*, 81(9): 1104-1111.

Orrell, L.C. 1993. Genetic variation and population differentiation of *Carapa guianensis* (Meliaceae). (Honors thesis).

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Welcoming Service. 2009. "Compilation of speeches given at the FPC-Wayland Welcoming Service."

Right To Farm Bylaw and Informational Pamphlet. 2008. Town of Weston.

Elliston, L.C.O. 2007. "Greening Spring: ecological landscaping in NE". *Connections*, April issue. 4 pages.

Numerous newspaper articles, reports and newsletter items. Too numerous to list.

Elliston, L.C.O. 2005. The Biology of Field Mowing. *Weston Town Crier*, June 30.

Website Design and Maintenance Portfolio <http://BottomOfTheGarden.com> Nearly 20 websites designed for educational, small business, artists and non-profit clients.

AFFILIATIONS

Current: Weston Agricultural Commission (Chair), Weston Conservation Commission, Weston High School Mentoring Program, Roxbury-Weston Programs, Weston Forest and Trail Association. **Past:** Solutions Benefiting Life (8 years), Land's Sake (4 years), The New England Chapter of The Society for Conservation Biology (7 years).

Letters of recommendation and references available upon request.