



Francis Porcher

ago we had faculty members who were making really significant contributions to pharmacology and medical therapies, and we still do. I think that's a nice connection."

The garden, facing the Drug Discovery Building between the Colbert Education Center and Library and the Basic Science Building, features more than 40 specimens that are shown in Porcher's book including signage with botanical information as well as details about what the plants were used for. There also is a companion website with more information about the plants. It will list the entry it had in his book, and for those who want to know modern-day uses, there will be a link to its entry in the Natural Medicine Compendium database, a pharmacy resource that Wayne Weart, PharmD, arranged for MUSC's use.

There's a leadership team that will oversee the garden composed of people from a variety of fields, including pharmacology, history and horticulture with programming opportunities being handled by the Office of Health Promotion. There will be garden tours, lunch-and-learn events and educational sessions for students. "It will be a nicely balanced group of people looking at the garden from various perspectives, not just as a garden or a healing garden. It's the pharmaceutical and the horticultural part, the history. It's all of it together," Hoffius says. Her hope is that the garden will be an inspiration.

"It's to say, 'look at the things around us that are untapped as of now.' We should not discard something out of hand just because we're unfamiliar with them."

She refers to a botanical illustration of horsemint, part of "The Flowering of Medicine," a special exhibition of illustrations by Thomas L. Hamm and Linda Ann Vinson designed in conjunction with the garden dedication.


"I went to the beach and saw a field of this horsemint. I would have thought someone needs to get out the mower, but now I see it in a different light. What I've learned is that all of these weeds that I've walked by millions of time have these properties above and beyond themselves. They're not just weeds. They have value."

It's a value students and researchers can see in using the garden as an educational resource, including the historical materials in the Waring Library and the online website resources. Not everyone who comes to the garden will care about the medicinal part, though, and that's just fine, she says.

"My favorite thing about it would be if it's used by a variety of people for a variety of reasons, sort of like art. You can get as much as you want from it. It has a living presence and an inspirational presence, whether that inspiration is peacefulness and natural harmony or whether it's research or healing."

For more information, visit the website at <http://waring.library.musc.edu/exhibits/PMG/about.php> or contact the Office of Health Promotion, (843) 792-1245.

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