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Branchburg-based horticultural therapist honored for community work at national conference



Laura DePrado, owner of Final Touch Plantscaping, Branchburg, was named the recipient of The American Horticultural Therapy Association 2013 Alice Burlingame Humanitarian Service Award at the association's 40th Annual Conference. / Photo Courtesy Laura DePrado

Written by
Staff Report

Laura DePrado, owner of Final Touch Plantscaping in Branchburg, was named the recipient of The American Horticultural Therapy Association 2013 Alice Burlingame Humanitarian Service Award at the association's 40th Annual Conference.

The conference was held in Minneapolis earlier this month with the theme of "Honoring the Past: Envisioning the Future." The conference was attended by more than 150 people representing North America, Asia, Europe and Australia.

The non-profit association was established in 1973, and is the only U.S organization chartered with the development of horticultural therapy programming. For more information, visit ahta.org.

DePrado was recognized for her thousands of hours of service advancing and promoting horticultural therapy in New Jersey, including the 2013 HT Resolution by the N.J Department of Agriculture and the delegates representing 21 counties including county boards of agriculture, horticulture, nursery, landscape greenhouse and vegetable growers and Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station.
(<http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/conventions/2013/resolutions.html>).

Alice Burlingame, an occupational therapist with a degree in landscape architecture, who authored the book, "Horticulture as Therapy."

"This is an incredible honor bestowed on me by the AHTA," DePrado said. "The results of which, are yet to be realized. The benefits of horticultural therapy on human health and well being, and the value of Horticultural Therapist in countless settings is flourishing around the country.

During the conference, DePrado served on a panel of experts "envisioning the future" of horticultural therapy, and presented on the Rotary Rutgers District 7510 Enabling Garden project in five counties of Central Jersey. She is a member of the AHTA conference committee, the Mid Atlantic Horticultural Therapy Network, the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association, the Farm Bureau, and Rotary District 7510 Club and Community Service Director, Branchburg Rotary Club, and Somerset County Business Partnership.