

2020 WaterWise Garden Recognition Contest Winner

The WaterWise Garden Recognition Contest celebrates and recognizes beautiful, water efficient residential gardens throughout Santa Barbara County. In July 2020, the Poole-Hickey family was awarded as the winner of the City of Santa Barbara and the countywide grand prize winner for their beautiful garden featuring water wise plants that attract native pollinators, a rain barrel to collect rainwater, and downspouts to water the yard. In addition to winning the award in Santa Barbara County, The Poole-Hickey family was also named the Better Homes & Gardens' [2020 America's Best Front Yard](#) Contest Winners.



Ms. Poole, an architect, took inspiration from the landscapes in her building architecture designs and designed the family's garden to be drought tolerant and to attract native insects and birds. Ms. Poole also wanted to incorporate colors that complimented each other and the colors of the house. The family installed a rain barrel to capture rainwater on site to use for irrigation and redirected rain gutter downspouts to the front yard instead of the street. In addition to its water wise features, the garden is also a popular outdoor entertainment space.



According to Ms. Poole, "since replacing our lawn with our new garden, our family spends more time outdoors in the evenings playing bocce ball, sitting and reading, and watching the neighbors walk by. The front yard seating area is the cornerstone of the concept of the social front yard, neighbors walk by with their dogs or family after dinner and stop to chat. The design makes all sides of the property usable and multi-purposed."

Other participants displayed a wide variety of themes, high-efficiency irrigation methods, and plant palettes. For example, one entry came from a photographer who wanted to create an "enchanted garden" that incorporated colors that reminded her of her home state of Oregon. Her goal was to create a space for her customers to enjoy before their photography sessions. Another participant updated the original lawn with beautiful water wise plants in an effort to encourage neighbors to follow suit. All entries demonstrate that water wise gardens can be lush and colorful, attract wildlife, and are low maintenance.

The WaterWise Garden Recognition Contest highlights community members who are doing their part to be water wise while maintaining a beautiful garden. For



garden inspiration and to see garden contest entries from all over Santa Barbara County visit WaterWiseSB.org/GardenContest.