



## **McKee Botanical Garden Hires Accomplished Scientific Leader and Orchid Specialist to Oversee the Award-winning Garden's Legendary Orchid Collection**

**Vero Beach, FL** — Echoing the vision of McKee Botanical Garden's co-founder, Arthur G. McKee, the historic jungle, is once again home to a highly trained and nationally respected orchid specialist. Nearly eighty years after McKee hired his first orchidologist, David Fairburn, to steward his personal collection of more than 2,000 prized orchids, McKee Botanical Garden welcomes **Luis Manuel Ortiz Jordan** as its new **Orchid Collection Curator**.

Ortiz Jordan joins the Garden at a singular and auspicious moment, as McKee prepares to celebrate the **Centennial Anniversary of its living collections in 2026**, a milestone that honors a century of horticultural exploration, preservation, innovation and excellence.

A respected orchid biologist and cultivator, Ortiz Jordan brings extensive experience in orchid research, conservation, and hands-on cultivation. In his new role, he will oversee McKee's nationally recognized orchid collection, advance best-in-class horticultural practices, and expand the Garden's leadership in orchid conservation, education, and public engagement.

"McKee's orchid legacy is woven into the very fabric of this Garden," said Rochelle Wolberg, Executive Director of McKee Botanical Garden. "Welcoming Luis Ortiz Jordan as Orchid Curator not only honors our past but also ensures that our orchid collections will continue to thrive, inspire, and educate for generations to come."

Ortiz Jordan's appointment reinforces McKee's long-standing reputation as a center for horticultural excellence and underscores its commitment to investing in expert stewardship of its living collections. His work will play a pivotal role in the Garden's Centennial initiatives, including expanded interpretation, research, and public programming centered on orchids, plants that have captivated McKee visitors since the earliest days of the Garden.

"I am honored to join McKee Botanical Garden at such a meaningful moment in its history," said Ortiz Jordan. "To care for these extraordinary orchids, in a landscape so rich with history and purpose, is both a privilege and a responsibility I deeply respect."

McKee Botanical Garden's orchid collection remains a cornerstone of its identity, rooted in Arthur G. McKee's original vision and sustained more recently through the restored Garden's dedicated stewardship. With the appointment of Ortiz Jordan, the Garden looks confidently toward its second century, ensuring that one of its most treasured living collections continues to flourish.