

Attending the National Floriculture Forum 2017 meeting in Philadelphia, PA was truly a career changing opportunity that could not be possible without the support of AFE.

As a student working on my Ph.D. at the University of Georgia in breeding, it seems that breeders are not very involved in the floriculture industry. As a future breeder with his heart in the floriculture/ornamental industry, this thought has been a little discouraging. I was happy to know that two of the faculty members attending the meeting were breeders and are active members of the NFF!

Presenting some of my research to a diverse and knowledgeable audience gave me very interesting insights and comments from different perspectives, which will help me develop stronger and more industry-applicable experiments in the future. Being able to interact with other grad students, faculty members, and industry professionals with a passion and love for the floriculture industry was truly inspiring and helped me to make a lot of connections. The group was very welcoming and friendly; we already made plans to meet for the next ASHS national meeting in Hawaii next September.

Also, I met with other members of the AFE Young Professional Council with whom we discussed some of the challenges that the industry has experienced and how we can help to address them.

On a side note, I could check two items off my “bucket list”; The Philadelphia Flower Show and Longwood Gardens!

Thank you so much AFE for this opportunity!

Leynar Leyton Naranjo | PhD Student | March 27, 2017 | Griffin, GA