



New Online Library of Thrips and Botrytis Resources!

New one-stop-shop complete with all the latest research strategies for combating Thrips and Botrytis

We are excited to announce the release of a new Thrips and Botrytis Research Library. This library is the result of a special research campaign, established in 2017, to address the control and management of Thrips and Botrytis. It has recently launched free to all thanks to the campaign's generous industry sponsors. View the library online today at endowment.org/tb!

This comprehensive online resource is designed to be a one-stop-shop, complete with informative webinars, insightful fact sheets, and engaging articles on the latest research and implementation strategy. It contains resources in both English and Spanish, as well as cutting-edge research reports that growers can use and implement into their business immediately. This library strives to empower growers as they effectively combat Thrips and Botrytis, helping to ensure

the continued health and vitality of their product. This resource will continue to be updated as new research findings emerge and as AFE persists in its mission of tackling the challenges faced by the floral industry.



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RESEARCH
INTERNSHIPS
SCHOLARSHIPS
EDUCATION

R.I.S.E. to Support – 2023 Annual Fundraising Campaign

Funding Results & Invitation to Upcoming Reception

In addition to sharing the Campaign results of our 45-day Annual Fundraising Campaign – R.I.S.E. to Support, we are pleased to invite you to join us at our Friends of Floral Reception at SAF's 2023 Annual Convention in Phoenix, Arizona on **Thursday, September 7th, from 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

This event will include donor recognition for the 2023 Annual Fundraising Campaign, Lifetime Giving, and more. We want to celebrate YOU – our dedicated community of supporters. We will go over our new priorities, achievements, and announce exciting new named funds. The reception will also include plenty of time for networking with AFE's broad community of floral industry members.

Throughout this issue, you will see the sponsors and donors of **R.I.S.E. to Support** highlighted and noted. We are so thankful for the ongoing support and look forward to celebrating more in-person!

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About AFE

AFE's Mission Statement

To be the trusted source and catalyst for floriculture advancement through funding of innovative research, scholarships, internships, and educational grants that best serve the dynamic needs and demographics of all industry sectors.



The AFE Bulletin is proudly sponsored by the Todd Bachman Memorial Fund.

Todd Bachman served as Chairman and CEO of Bachman's before his untimely death in 2008. Todd was a past chairman of the American Floral Endowment and was very active in many state and national industry organizations. Those who knew him will always remember what a great communicator he was and his outstanding leadership and devotion to work and family. His wife and daughters are honored to carry on his legacy.

New Online Library of Thrips and Botrytis Resources!

New one-stop-shop complete with all the latest research strategies for combating Thrips and Botrytis

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This special research fund has been leading the charge against the destructive forces of Thrips and Botrytis since 2017. Losses from these pests affect all segments of the industry every day, and are extremely challenging to control. With this special research fund, we have been able to support more than fifteen multi-year research projects to reduce losses and produce higher-quality flowers and plants.

The efforts of numerous expert researchers have paved the way for tried-and-true methods to combat these pervasive pests and minimize losses, and the results of the research endeavors will have a significant impact on grower production practices and on the floral industry.

We want to express our deepest gratitude to each industry sponsor, whose generous contributions have made this special research campaign possible. Additionally, another thank you to the researchers, research staff, and graduate students who have been funded by AFE for their unwavering commitment to supporting and advancing the floral industry.



Visit the Research Library Today at endowment.org/tb

Thank you to the following organizations who have made contributions in support of this important initiative!

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Altman PlantsBall S.B.Bouquet Collection, Inc.CalFlowersColombia Flower Council by Asocolflores & AFIFContinental FlowersEquiflor Corp. – Rio RosesFalcon Farms, Inc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">FlorExpo, LLCFresca FarmsGalleria FarmsGolden FlowersJardines de los AndesJoseph H. Hill Memorial Foundation, Inc.Kee Kitayama Research FoundationLen Busch Roses | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mayesh Wholesale FloristMetrolina GreenhousesPassion GrowersRoyal FlowersTagawa GreenhouseThe Elite Flower CompanyThe Queen's Flowers Corp.Solé FarmsSunshine Bouquet Company |
|--|--|---|

Advancement and Growth Through Sound Research

Growth and advancement are the keys to success in an ever-changing world. The Endowment aims to aid our industry in these areas by supporting impactful research which addresses current challenges, provides new advances, and shares best practices. Each year, AFE funds new and innovative projects targeting current needs based directly on feedback from industry leaders.

In 2023-2024, AFE will support 12 research projects in total, including five new research projects and seven continuing projects with \$550,000 in funding from the Endowment's Research Funds.

"Research is hugely impactful to our industry, ensuring that the highest quality flowers and plants make it from seed or cuttings to the consumer's home. These projects will help the industry increase profitability, streamline processes, and take advantage of new technologies," said Dr. Terril Nell, AFE Research Director.

New Projects

Plant Breeding and Genetic Engineering

- Use of CRISPR to Develop Powdery Mildew Resistance in Gerbera: Dayton Wilde, University of Georgia

Disease Management

- Enhancing the Performance of Biological Control Agents for Botrytis Control: Jim Faust, Clemson University and Anissa Poleatewich, University of New Hampshire (Funded by the Thrips & Botrytis Research Fund)
- Asteraceae Petal Blight: Pathogen Identification and Methods to Facilitate Effective Control Strategies: Julia Kerrigan, Clemson University

Post-Production

- Development of Potent Ethylene Antagonists for Floricultural Crops: Rasika Dias, The University of Texas at Arlington

Production Technology/Tools

- Identification and Application of Plant Growth Promoting Bacteria to Improve Floriculture Crop Plant Quality and Reduce Inputs: Michelle Jones, The Ohio State University (Funded by the Gus Poesch Research Fund)



Interested in getting involved in AFE's research program?

Contact AFE at afe@endowment.org. We want to hear from you! What industry challenges keep you up at night? It is through industry feedback that we shape current research priorities.

Continuing Projects

Plant Breeding and Genetic Engineering

- Engineering Floral Fragrance to New Heights Using a Synthetic Biology Approach: Thomas Colquhoun, University of Florida

Disease Management

- Supporting the U.S. Specialty Cut Flower Industry through Diagnostics, Disease Management and Outreach (GP): Francesca Hand, The Ohio State University (Funded by the Gus Poesch Research Fund in partnership with the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers and the Joseph H. Hill Memorial Research Fund)
- Optimizing the Efficacy of Beneficial Bacteria against Botrytis Blight in Greenhouse Crops: Michelle Jones, The Ohio State University (Funded by the Thrips & Botrytis Research Fund)

Insect Management

- Can Western Flower Thrips Be Managed in Commercial Greenhouses with UV Light?: Bruce Parker, University of Vermont (Funded by the Thrips & Botrytis Research Fund)

Production Technology/Tools

- Developing Foliage Stock Plant, Liner, and Finish Plant Production Protocols for Temperate Climates: Roberto Lopez, Michigan State University
- Manipulating Light Quantity, Quality, and Duration to Improve Timing, Yield, and Quality of Cut Flowers: Roberto Lopez and Caleb Spall, Michigan State University
- Altering Petunia Development Rate to Improve Cutting Yield and Crop Production Efficiency: Ryan Warner, Michigan State University

R.I.S.E to Support - 2023 Annual Fundraising Campaign

Funding Results & Invitation to Upcoming Reception

continued from page 1

We celebrate and thank the many industry supporters, sponsors, and friends who contributed to this year's annual fundraiser, R.I.S.E. to Support. **Over \$135,000 was raised in support of the floral industry through the Endowment's 2023 Campaign.** The success of the campaign shows how committed and united our industry is to ongoing progress, supporting future generations, education, and research.

From May 15th through June 30th, 2023, AFE's Board of Trustees and Staff connected with the floral industry through a virtual fundraising campaign to increase annual support for the Endowment's vital industry programs, which were noted in this year's theme of R.I.S.E.: Research, Internships, Scholarships, and Education for all sectors. The joint fundraising goal was set at \$100,000.

Over the month and a half, \$137,341 was raised from over 90 donors and sponsors. The full list of sponsors can be viewed on page 5.

In addition to the incredible campaign effort, three named funds were also established, which will be announced at the AFE Friends of Floral Reception scheduled for September 7th in Phoenix, Arizona, during the SAF Annual Convention. Over \$50,000 was also contributed toward AFE's scholarships and Arizona Retail Florist Education Travel Grant Fund. The diversity of funds and focuses AFE administers show just how dedicated the floral industry is to supporting overall growth and the next

generation.

Sponsors of this campaign have impacted the industry by funding programs that ensure continued growth and advancement across all segments. They have helped build a stronger, connected, and forward-thinking future full of flowers! We at the Endowment cannot thank each of you enough for choosing to R.I.S.E. up with us.

The 2023 Campaign was fully virtual, allowing donors to engage with the Endowment regardless of location and without the need for any travel costs. The virtual format aids in broadening brand awareness and fundraising capacity. However, if you are looking to connect with AFE and our community in person, AFE is pleased to invite you to our upcoming reception!

AFE will be holding a donor recognition and networking reception in **Phoenix, AZ, on Thursday, September 7th, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm** in conjunction with the SAF 2023 Annual Convention to celebrate industry growth and advancement made possible through donors' support of the Endowment.



AFE FRIENDS OF FLORAL RECEPTION YOU'RE INVITED!

Join AFE in celebrating recent accomplishments while networking with peers and industry leaders!

Thursday, September 7
6:00 - 7:30 PM | **SAF 2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION**
Westin Kierland Resort & Spa
Phoenix, AZ

Please RSVP on the SAF Registration Form or online at tinyurl.com/reception-rsvp

AFE Friends of Floral Reception

Begin your Thursday evening by attending the American Floral Endowment's Friends of Floral reception. Join AFE in celebrating recent accomplishments while networking with peers and industry leaders who partner with the Endowment to fund advancements in all aspects of floriculture – including research, scholarships, internships, and other industry programs. New to AFE? Take this opportunity to learn more, get involved, and take advantage of all that AFE has to offer!

The event and reception are open to all SAF Convention attendees and local industry members at no cost. Let AFE know you are planning to join –RSVP on the SAF registration form or online at tinyurl.com/reception-rsvp.

Although the AFE annual campaign is over, you can still support the Future of Floriculture with a tax-deductible contribution. Your support helps the industry face new challenges and guarantees that all Endowment programs can continue to meet growing demands. Visit endowment.org/donate or scan the QR code on the next page to give.

The Endowment is incredibly grateful for the contributions of all committed sponsors, donors, and supporters. Thank you for R.I.S.E.-ing to Support with AFE!



RESEARCH
INTERNSHIPS
SCHOLARSHIPS
EDUCATION

Thank you!

The American Floral Endowment (AFE) would like to take the opportunity to thank the sponsors of our **2023 Annual Fundraising Campaign - R.I.S.E to Support.** Together, we continue to build a stronger, connected, and forward-thinking future full of flowers.

Thanks to industry support, the Endowment was able to raise record-breaking amounts in support of our Research, Internships, Scholarships, and Educational Grants. From May 15 – June 30, **an incredible total of \$137,341 was raised through 90+ donations.** This tremendous effort will ensure that AFE's programs continue to grow in the future and meet the industry's growing needs.

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GET INVOLVED – HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



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TODAY!

Join these industry leaders by making a contribution to support floral industry programs. Visit www.endowment.org or use the QR code. Every dollar supports industry growth!



American
Floral
Endowment

Research
Internships
Scholarships
Education

Funding the Future of Floriculture

A Look at the Next Generation of Floricultural Scientists, Educators, and Leaders

Announcing this year’s Paul Ecke, Jr. and Altman Family Scholars. Congratulations to these incredible young professionals!

These six individuals have a plethora of accomplishments in the industry and have their sights set on even further growth. AFE strives to uplift young professionals and support them as they pursue futures in our industry. Our Paul Ecke, Jr. and Altman Family scholarships specifically help fund the education of full-time graduate students pursuing a career in horticulture or floriculture – the next generation of floricultural scientists, educators, and leaders. These scholars represent the best of the best in their fields, and we are happy to highlight each of their unique experiences, passions, and accomplishments that led them to where they are today.

About the Paul Ecke, Jr. Scholarship

The Paul Ecke, Jr. Scholar awards \$5,000 a year for two years (\$10,000 total) to a dedicated MS/Ph.D. student attending a U.S. land-grant university. The scholarship is in honor of the late Paul Ecke, Jr., who contributed vital knowledge to the industry through innovative research and education programs. The recipient is recognized as a passionate graduate student dedicated to research and education in the floriculture and horticulture industry.

Jack Bobo – North Carolina State University



Jack started his college education at Texas A&M with his sights set on veterinarian school – until he took his first horticulture class to satisfy a general science credit. After that class, everything changed. It was here where Jack says the beginning of his career really began. He went on to receive his Bachelor’s degree in Horticulture Science at Texas A&M before moving onto the University of Georgia, where he completed his Master’s degree in the same field.

In the near future, Jack is excited to attend a number of industry events and continue expanding his network. He recently joined AFE’s Young Professionals Council (YPC) and is looking forward to attending more upcoming YPC events. **“No matter where my career takes me, I hope that my knowledge within the horticultural sector and my passion for people can be implemented in concert to progress this great industry that has swept me into its tides.”**

“Receiving this scholarship is a complete honor – I hope that this scholarship will help me make more connections in the industry and open doors for me that might have previously been unavailable to me,” he said. “I am completely excited, honored, and feel very privileged to be a Paul Ecke Scholar.”

About the Altman Family Scholarship

Created in 2015 by Ken and Deena Altman, the Altman Family Scholarship seeks to support improvement in horticulture education and research by investing in outstanding, young industry professionals. The Altmans believe in the power of giving back and do so through the reach of this scholarship and Altman Plants programs that offer growing expertise to the industry. This scholarship provides an annual scholarship (\$5,000) to promising and dedicated graduate students pursuing a career in horticulture.

Isabella Borrero – University of New Hampshire



Isabella found her niche after taking a plant pathology course as an elective in her first year at Ohio State University. Her professor, Dr. Thomas Mitchell, recalls her sitting in the front row and being incredibly engaged with the course material from the beginning – eventually, Isabella realized this was what she wanted to pursue for her career. She went on to earn her Bachelor’s degree in Plant Pathology and now is in the Agricultural Sciences Master’s program at the University of New Hampshire.

Isabella’s research is looking into how the addition of wood-fiber amendments to substrates causes both physical and chemical changes to create a disease-suppressive environment for floricultural species.

Isabella says that this award will help her in her future career goals tremendously. She aspires to one day work in a research-conducting botanical garden or greenhouse, and would love the chance to conduct research overseas someday.

“The value of experiencing different cultures and ideas from people around the world to me, is priceless,” she said. **“I believe that a wide range of experiences in different plant-pathogens systems around the world is needed for me to obtain the level of literacy I aspire to in the field of plant pathology, and that research is trending more and more towards international collaboration.”**

Josselyn Calidonio – Clemson University



Josselyn grew up in Ayutica, Santa Ana, a small community in El Salvador where agriculture is the main economic activity. Her father is a farmer, which helped to forge her love for agriculture and plants from a young age.

Her first academic experience in the industry started at EARTH University in Costa Rica, studying Agricultural Sciences. From there, Josselyn began to gain hands-on experience in the industry, completing a year-long internship at Metrolina Greenhouses as an Assistant Grower and a 9-month job position at Costa Farms in the Dominican Republic as a Junior Grower.

All of Josselyn’s experiences ultimately led her to Clemson University, where she is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in Plant and Environmental Sciences. She works under Dr. Jim Faust, researching new alternatives for Botrytis management in floriculture crops.

Josselyn’s dream is to continue in the floriculture industry, applying her knowledge and bringing revolutionary ideas, and through research, help solve industry problems. **“My goal is to be a role model and example of resilience for other people who want to continue this path. I would like them to see that no matter where you are from, your socioeconomic status, or your gender, you can accomplish your dreams.”**

Henry Gonzalez – Michigan State University



Henry is a first-generation student from Nahuizalco, El Salvador. He received his Bachelor’s Degree in Environment and Development from Zamorano University in Honduras before moving to the US to pursue a Master’s Degree at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

Last Fall, Henry was admitted to the Horticulture Ph.D. program at Michigan State University. Henry is also a recently-joined member of our YPC.

His research focuses on the development of low-cost technologies for pollution control and prevention, specifically for agricultural wastewater treatment. In the long-term, Henry wants to be a Professor who can contribute to the agricultural and water science research in the US and Central America through collaboration with other professionals.

“With the valuable advising/mentoring I am receiving from my graduate committee, I believe this award will help me build a sturdy foundation for my career, expand my leadership skills, and stand out in academic excellence,” Henry said. **“I am confident I am already paving the way for other children from my family and community to access high-quality education and have the courage to take on the world.”**

Savannah Mead – West Virginia University



Savannah attended West Virginia University for her bachelor’s Degree in Horticulture, where she also minored in Cello Performance. Now, she is finishing up the first year of her Master’s in Horticulture at West Virginia University.

Savannah has her mind set on ensuring a bright and strong future of the floriculture industry – her focus particularly is in sustainable floriculture, researching how to reduce the environmental impact of floriculture production. Her research looks into how AMD-coated sand as a media amendment influences plant growth, health, and flowering of petunias and chrysanthemums both in a production environment and in a post-production or “homeowner-emulated” environment.

In the future, she hopes to find a research position at a lab that works with floriculture crops, whether annual or perennial, and will continue exploring and contributing to improving floriculture sustainability.

“This award allows me to experience milestones in research that I never have before,” Savannah said. **“I could not be more grateful to AFE for seeing the potential in me and awarding the Altman Family scholarship to me so I can truly enrich my graduate research experience.”**

Patrick Veazie – North Carolina State University



Patrick received his Bachelor’s in Horticulture at North Carolina State University and is now pursuing his Master’s in Floriculture Production, conducting research under Dr. Brian Whipker. Patrick is also a member of our YPC. Patrick’s current research focuses on finding

new, environmentally-friendly alternative aggregates to be utilized in potted substrates for floriculture production.

Patrick plans to continue his studies by pursuing a Ph.D. in Floriculture and/or Greenhouse Production, and then either enter academia or the horticulture industry to continue conducting research to solve problems in the industry and provide solutions to growers.

“This award from AFE will allow me to travel to more growers and attend multiple meetings to continue to learn about floriculture research and the current problems that growers are facing,” Patrick said. **“Using this award, I plan to expand my extension efforts to focus on more crops by visiting new growers.”**

To learn more about our Paul Ecke, Jr. and Altman Family Scholarships, their recipients, and the application process, visit [endowment.org](https://www.endowment.org).



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Ashlie Tagawa Mohr Appointed to AFE's Vic & Margaret Ball Committee

Ashlie Tagawa Mohr has been appointed as the newest member of AFE's Vic & Margaret Ball Intern Scholarship Committee. She is currently the Director of Human Resources and Intern Coordinator for Tagawa Greenhouses in Brighton, Colorado, where her focus is on staffing, training, and employee relations.

In her new role on the Ball Committee, Mohr will be working with industry, faculty, and the Ball Family representative to review student applications for the **Vic & Margaret Ball Intern Scholarship Program** and help promote the program to students. She will be helping the future generation of industry leaders to understand first-hand the lasting effects of this great program.



with interns and graduate trainees even as far back as the 1980s to help aspiring leaders grow a passion for the horticultural industry. In the early years, the company was involved with a program in Japan to help young adults to learn about US production. As time went on, Mohr's grandfather, Ken Tagawa began working with AFE and continued this tradition. Now as a third-generation family member, as well as the intern coordinator with Tagawa Greenhouses, Mohr continues this tradition by training and interacting with students to try to best support their individual careers/learning.

"At Tagawas, I think we've always understood that the future of the industry depends on the future generations.

My grandpa always says that if we bring up the industry, it will bring all of us up together. Thus, I want to make sure that whenever interns (or any of our employees) spend part of their careers with us, that they have the opportunity to be successful and find their time with us beneficial," Mohr said.



"Sometimes our interns will come back to us as future growers and managers, but other times they come back to us as our suppliers, vendors, partners, customers, or experts in the field. And, it's exciting to be a part of their stories. The motto around here is 'WE GROW,' and so I usually joke that since I'm not the best at growing flowers, that's why they put me in charge of the people. But I like being in the business of growing with people, and to me that's the best part of our internship and training programs - I end up learning so much from the different people and ideas that they have when given the space to grow."

In 1992, Vic and Margaret Ball made a generous donation to AFE to establish this program for students to apply classroom knowledge, and gives students the opportunity to gain practical, hands-on floriculture/horticulture experience through a three, four, or six-month paid internship at a commercial production greenhouse or nursery.

Before joining her family business, Mohr graduated with a degree in English Linguistics and a minor in Japanese from Colorado State University in 2013. Her love for languages brought her to work abroad in Japan for six months as an English Conversational Teacher before returning to the United States to start her career in Human Resources.



With the birth of her daughter (Reina, age 7), Mohr decided to return to the Brighton area and started working for Tagawa Greenhouses.

Greenhouses is one of the largest young plant suppliers in North America through Ball Horticultural, serving over 2700 greenhouses and garden centers. Not only this, but Tagawa Greenhouses has had a long tradition of working



The deadline to apply for our two hands-on internship programs is approaching quickly! Students can apply for our **Vic & Margaret Ball and Mosmiller Intern Programs** by **Sunday, October 1st.**

endowment.org/internships

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22 Students Recognized with Scholarships

The Endowment (AFE) provides more scholarships in floriculture than any other organization to help attract, retain, and support young professionals to our industry. AFE scholarships act as a powerful catalyst for the next generation of floral industry leaders. Financial constraints can deter many students, but with the help of these scholarships, future industry leaders and innovators are able to access quality education and training, paving the way for a promising future in the floral industry.

Congratulations to our Scholarship Class of 2023! This year, we have awarded 22 students from 13 universities with scholarships, totaling \$58,100. In 2023, we received 86 applications from colleges and universities all over the nation. We would like to give a special thank you to the 52 industry members who reviewed and scored the applications!

Learn more about these students and what these scholarships mean to them through our full article at endowment.org.



Cherise Hunt
Mt. San Antonio College, Horticulture
American Florists' Exchange Scholarship - \$3,000



Francisco Lorenzo Garcia
College of DuPage, Horticulture, Floral Shop Management
James Bridenbaugh Memorial Scholarship and Vocational (Bettinger, Holden, & Perry) Scholarship - \$2,100



Sophia LeBard
Washington State University, Horticulture and Music
Julio and Sarah Armellini Scholarship - \$3,200



Carla Quimson
Cal Poly Pomona, Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning
CalFlowers Scholarship - \$4,250



Benjamin Stickland
Colorado State University, Horticulture with a conc. in Floriculture, Environmental Horticulture with a conc. in Landscape Design & Contracting, Minor in Spanish
Ball Horticultural Company Scholarship and Suntory Flowers "Dream Big" Scholarship - \$2,900



Chelsea Flood
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Nutrition, Agriculture Education
CalFlowers Scholarship - \$4,250



Ethan Jenkins
North Carolina State University, Horticultural Sciences
Harold Bettinger Scholarship - \$2,200



Manjot Sidhu
Michigan State University, Horticulture
John Carew Memorial Scholarship - \$2,100



Luis Mazariegos
College of DuPage, Sustainable Urban Agriculture, Horticulture, Greenhouse Management
BioWorks IPM/Sustainable Practices Scholarship - \$1,700



Alexandria Kruger
Mt San Antonio College, Ornamental Horticulture, Landscape Design, Horticulture Science
Carlson-Johnson Scholarship for Non-Traditional Students - \$1,300



Olivia DeWolf
Kansas State University, Horticulture, Minor in Entomology
Earl Dedman Scholarship - \$2,200



Lauren Staley
North Carolina State University, Horticulture Science, Propagation Systems and Entrepreneurship
National Greenhouse Manufacturers Association (NGMA) Scholarship - \$600



Jane Godfrey
Colorado State University, Horticulture, Controlled Environment Production, Music Performance with a Piano Conc.
Dewar Family Scholarship - \$2,900



Jennifer Suszek
College of DuPage, Horticulture
Mike and Flo Novovesky Scholarship - \$3,000



Emily Larsen
University of Wisconsin River Falls, Horticulture, Crop Science
Ferriss Horticulture Scholarship - \$2,100



Greta Berg
Kansas State University, Horticulture, Plant Pathology and Entomology
James K. Rathmell, Jr. Memorial Scholarship for Horticultural Work/Study Abroad - \$4,100



Landon Erbrick
Auburn University, Horticulture (Nursery and Greenhouse Science), Minor in Stewardship-Based Agriculture
Garcia Family Scholarship - \$2,800



Haley Jacobs
Oklahoma State University, Plant and Soil Sciences, Biotechnology and Crop Improvement
Seed Companies Scholarship - \$2,600



Jamie Sykes
SUNY Farmingdale, Horticulture Technology Management, Landscape Development
LIFGA and Long Island Flower Growers Association - Bob Gunter Scholarship - \$2,800



Nadia Phillips
University of Minnesota, Plant Science, Horticulture, Urban and Community Forestry
John L. Tomasovic, Sr. Scholarship - \$1,600



Jenny Ryals
Mississippi State University, Horticulture, Minor in Plant Pathology
Richard T. Meister Scholarship - \$4,300



Ammiela Elias
University of Rhode Island, Plant Sciences
Jacob and Rita Van Namen Marketing Scholarship - \$2,100

AFE awards more than 30 scholarship annually – thanks to industry donors and organizations. If you or your organization would like to discuss establishing a scholarship through AFE, please reach out. There are more students applying than funding available, and these scholarships make a real difference to these students. More details on AFE scholarships are available at endowment.org/scholarships. AFE awards these scholarships annually, and all applications are due by **May 1** of each year.



Save the Dates!

2024
Fall & Christmas
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AFE at AIFD: A Whirlwind Floral Experience

Our Communications Coordinator Gracie Alvarez had the chance to travel to Chicago for the **American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD) Symposium** over the Fourth of July weekend! While there, she visited the **"Bringing FFA to AIFD"** group, viewed main stage showcases from world-renowned designers, and participated in the PFDE test.

Renee' Potter, Arizona Retail Florist Travel Grant Recipient

Renee' Potter, our 2023 Arizona Retail Florist Travel Grant Recipient, used her grant funding to attend this year's Symposium. Renee' Potter is the owner of Fred's Flowers in Tempe, AZ. Renee' was able to stay for the full Symposium and had this to say about her experience:

"The AIFD Symposium was great as always! I was inspired by the mainstage design programs. There were lots of hugs, laughter and comradery reuniting with floral friends I only see once a year.

Meeting new industry members from around the country and the world is unique to this annual event. Networking at the Partners Showcase and viewing everyone's stunning displays is always one of my favorite days at Symposium. The two formal dinners are always fun and delicious! Especially this year with a themed dinner on the final night – Who doesn't love a good costume party?!"



Bringing FFA to AIFD

AFE helped fund this year's "Bringing FFA to AIFD Symposium" through one of our educational grants. This is the first time FFA students have been able to attend in person since before COVID-19. Gracie had the chance to meet the students and help during their hands-on workshops throughout the week.



“These students are the next generation of our industry, and it's our job to support and empower them as they grow in their skills,” Gracie said. “It was great to see them learning new techniques, asking questions, and being immersed in our industry.”

This year, FFA students from Shafter High School in California, Southern Alamance High School in North Carolina, Big Walnut High School in Ohio, and Silsbee High School in Texas were in attendance with their advisors. Some of their hands-on workshops included creating unique flowers to wear with Lesleigh Cravens, designing spiral bouquets in an armature with Lisa Belisle, and making boutonnieres with Ron Mulray.

We love any opportunity to support the next generation of floral, and this event is a perfect example of that.

A Flower-Full Experience

While at AIFD, Gracie also had the chance to volunteer in the design room, view Main Stage showcases from award-winning designers, and participate in the PFDE test (Professional Floral Design Examination). Some of the featured designers at this year's Symposium included Charlie Groppetti, David Beahm, Jenny Thomasson, Ty Leslie, Jackie Johns, Lottie Nys, Laura Dowling, Per Benjamin, Andie Muller, Jorge Uribe – and many more!

Prior to joining the AFE team, Gracie worked for four years at Tiger Garden Flower Shop in Columbia, Missouri. While there, she designed arrangements for large events, weddings, and daily shop orders, as well as doing large on-site installations. Since then, she has enjoyed freelancing for flower shops. After spending the last few months practicing and honing her skills for the PFDE, she finally had the chance to take the exam for the first time in Chicago.



The PFDE includes a 4-hour, hands-on exam where candidates design arrangements for five different categories. Candidates who pass the exam are inducted into the American Institute of Floral Designers at the following year's Symposium.

"It was incredible to be surrounded by such talented floral designers from all over the nation,"

Gracie said. "It was certainly a learning experience that I will never forget. The PFDE is a test of your creativity, ability to work under pressure, and dedication to your technique – and there were no two designs in that room that looked the same by the end of it."

New Consumer Research Released on Sustainable Practices in the Floral Industry

The results from a new consumer research study, "U.S. Consumer Perceptions & Willingness to Pay for Sustainable Environmental Practices in the Floral Industry," are now released. The study was led by researchers at Mississippi State University (MSU) and the Texas State University (TSU).

This project was funded by **Floral Marketing Fund (FMF)**, alongside co-sponsors, **BloomNet®**, a floral services company, serving more than 5000 local florists across the country, and **Syndicate Sales**, a leading manufacturer/supplier of floral hardgoods for retail florists.

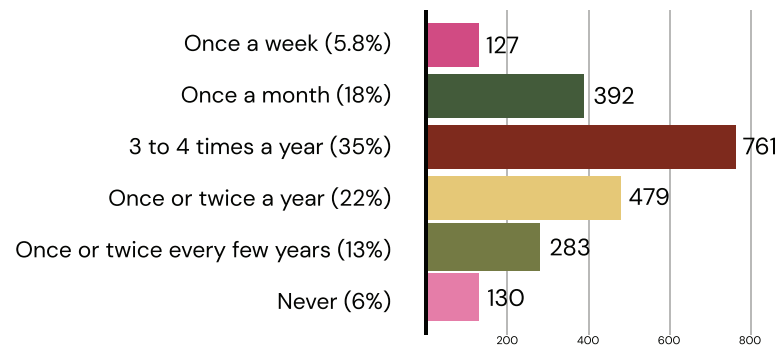
The primary purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of consumer perceptions as they relate to retail floral providers' sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.



Key findings include insights into consumers' willingness to make purchases and pay additional costs for flowers from retailers practicing sustainability within their businesses. The data also shows where and how often consumers are making floral purchases, with a majority purchasing flowers three to four times a year (35.0%) to once or twice a year (22.1%) in person (65.3%).

Focuses within the data include locally sourced flowers, organic, fair-trade, composting, multi-use materials, and more. Discoveries include trigger phrases like "locally sourced" to be impactful when consumers make purchasing decisions. Retailers will be able to use these findings to better promote their sustainable practices to consumers in ways that the consumers want to see.

Figure 7.1. Frequency statistics for the question "How often do you make floral purchases? Flower purchases can be defined as cut flowers and indoor potted plants purchased at retail flower providers and separate from nursery/greenhouse purchases."

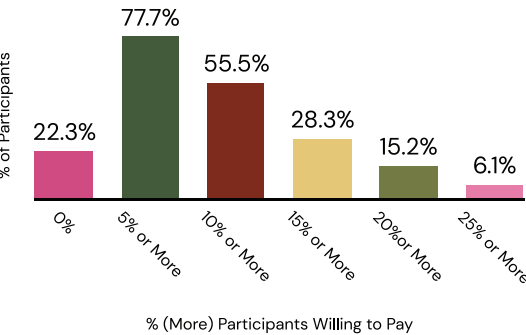


Consumers are keeping sustainability in mind, and 50% or more of the participants indicated a willingness to pay 10% or more for all of the sustainable attributes presented in the study. The participants were asked to rank the list of environmental attributes from most important to least important, showing which sustainable practices matter the most to each consumer group.

Additionally, the final report includes findings explored by age, education, income, gender, and ethnicity to give more detailed insights for retailers to use when considering their target customer base.

For more information on this study and other consumer research efforts visit floralmarketingfund.org. 16 reports are available for your use!

Please indicate how much more, if any, you would be willing to pay for a flower arrangement made using sustainable, recycled, upcycled, and/or reusable materials instead of single-use products.



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Developing and Celebrating Young Professionals

At the American Floral Endowment, we know that the future of our industry is dependent on fostering the next generation of industry leaders. Through scholarships, internships, career resources, and the **Young Professionals Council**, the Endowment aims to support young professionals at each step in their journey in floriculture from education into their careers.

By aiding the next generation with over 30 annual scholarships and three internship programs, we are ensuring that students have the tools and funding that they need to pursue an education in floriculture, keeping our industry competitive with other fields. This includes a special invitation to get involved through our Young Professionals Council (YPC) and utilize the AFE Career Center to prepare them for their new careers.

However, the Young Professionals Council is not limited to those already connected to AFE through our programs. Anyone interested in pursuing careers in floriculture aged 18-35 is welcome to join. **The membership is totally free!** YPC members are welcome to in-person and online networking events, personal development webinars, volunteer opportunities, and more.

The YPC offers unique opportunities to network both with peers and industry leaders from all segments of the industry. The group is a mix of those in both academia and industry.

This July, AFE Staff traveled to Columbus, Ohio, for American Hort's Cultivate '23 to continue to strengthen the Endowment's industry involvement and connect with our community and the next generation.

While there, Young Professionals Council members got together for a luncheon to reconnect, catch up, and plan ahead with AFE's Manager of Communications and Outreach and YPC Liaison, Karin Krause.



"I had a great time as a Young Professional and first-time attendant/speaker at Cultivate 2023. I was honored to receive the 40 under 40 award; had a great panel discussion on diversity, equity and inclusion for our industry; saw old friends; and made new connections, especially at the YPC networking lunch! YPC is a home for all young professionals! Overall, it was quite an experience, and I enjoyed it so much!" noted YPC member Ping Yu from the University of Georgia.

Also among the attendees at Cultivate and the YPC luncheon were AFE's 2023 Paul Thomas Floriculture Production Intern of the Year, Emily Larsen of the University of Wisconsin – River Falls. Every year, AFE gives the recipient of this prestigious award paid hotel and airfare to Cultivate and free registration, among other perks. We recognize our programs' impact on individuals like Emily, and it is an excellent reminder of why the Endowment's work is so important.



Another great celebration of young professionals in our industry is GPN's 40 Under 40, which included a reception during the event. We wish to highlight the YPC members and AFE Staff who were included in this recognition by GPN. Awardees included but were not limited to:

- AFE's Research Coordinator, Laura Barth

Alongside YPC members:

- Hannah Brookfield of BontaniGal
- Joshua Craver of Colorado State University
- Nathan Janke of Ball Horticultural Company
- Ping Yu of the University of Georgia
- Qingwu (William) Meng of the University of Delaware

"Being recognized as one of GPN's 40 under 40 in an industry I've been in since I was 16 has been one of my greatest professional achievements. I am also looking forward to continued connection with the industry through the Young Professionals Council, where we can continue to build each other up as young leaders," stated YPC member and awardee Hannah Brookfield.

We encourage any young professionals who would like to meet this group of high-achieving peers and gain access to other career and personal development resources to join our Young Professionals Council. Any questions about the group can be sent to our YPC Staff Liaison, kkrause@afeendowment.org.



Join the YPC at
endowment.org/ypc

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Two New Memorial Tributes Established to Honor Industry Champions

Remembering Sue Conyers & Gene Willis

We are sad to announce the passing of two industry leaders, Sue Conyers and Gene Willis. Memorial Tributes have been established by family and friends of each through AFE to forever remember and honor them.



Sue Conyers

A memorial tribute honoring Sue Ann Conyers has been established through the Endowment by Red and Katie Kennicott of Kennicott Brothers in Chicago, IL. Sue A. Conyers, 80, passed away on July 14th after a battle with brain cancer. Sue was a pioneer in the flower industry.

In 1971, Sue joined Sunburst, a new flower importing company, as an Office Manager. In 1975, she joined Southern Rainbow as a Sales Manager. After gaining a few years of experience in the industry, Sue opened her own importing company in Miami, World Flowers, Inc., in 1979. World Flowers became a family business and inspired generations of industry work.

Sue quickly became a leader in the Miami flower importing community. She viewed the health of the whole industry with as much gravity and importance as the growth and health of her own company. This attitude and her belief that no single business can survive if the industry it services is not strong led her to spearhead the creation of the Miami Flower Importers Credit Association (MFICA) in 1981, which continues to service the flower importers.

Sue was a founding member of the Association of Floral Importers of Florida (AFIF), where she served as the Vice President for more than 15 years and continued on the board for a total of 22 years until 2005. She served as the Transportation Chairman for the association working to convince flower customers that shipping by refrigerated trucks was better than air freight out of Miami.



Gene Willis

A memorial tribute honoring Gene Merrill Willis has been established through the Endowment by Pete Garcia Company/Garcia Group, Inc. Gene M. Willis, 81, of Jamul, CA, passed away unexpectedly but peacefully in his home on March 22, 2023. He is most known by the industry through his career of work at San Diego Florist Supplies, Inc.

Gene began assisting with the bookkeeping at San Diego Florist Supplies in 1975 and became a partner in 1977. In 1989 he helped open the 2nd location in Carlsbad, CA. In 1991 he became 100% owner and continued to support the floral industry in Southern California by providing the best floral hard goods from around the world. By 2018 he had grown San Diego Florist Supplies to 7 locations across Southern California and Las Vegas, NV.

Gene was actively engaged in the floral industry, serving as the president of International Floral Distributors in 2013 and on the board of directors from 2012 to 2014. He promoted floral hard goods as an integral part of the floral industry for 46 years. He believed hard goods were every bit as important to the success of cut flowers.

Gene was faithful to everything to which he put his hand—his faith, his family, his friends, and his commitment to the floral industry. Gene’s legacy lives on through his wife, four children, their spouses, and nine grandchildren.

We, at the Endowment, are grateful to be able to honor the memories of these industry champions. To read the full tributes for each of these industry leaders and make a contribution in their honor, please visit endowment.org/memorial-tributes.

New Salary Data Showcases the Promise of Horticulture Careers

AFE has partnered with Seed Your Future (SYF), in collaboration North Carolina State University, on a new industry salary project. We are excited to announce the results of its comprehensive horticultural salary survey. The survey, conducted in Fall 2022, aimed to provide valuable insights into the salaries and benefits offered across various positions within the horticultural industry. We, at AFE, have released an additional, condensed version of the report focusing on positions within the floriculture industry.

“We are thrilled to possess data that allows us to compare the salaries and benefits in floriculture with those in broader sectors of agriculture. Our objective is to share this information in order to attract a wider range of individuals to our industry, encompassing various roles from cultivation to accounting.” — Debi Chedester, CAE, IOM, AAF, Executive Director, AFE

Key Findings

Salary Range	Min	Max
Arborist	\$43,000.00	\$62,000.00
Crew leader/supervisor	\$42,000.00	\$59,000.00
Educator	\$33,000.00	\$62,000.00
Gardner	\$32,000.00	\$59,000.00
Grower	\$44,000.00	\$69,000.00
Irrigation specialist	\$37,000.00	\$50,000.00
Plant records specialist	\$50,000.00	\$67,000.00
Production manager	\$60,000.00	\$75,000.00
Propagation specialist	\$33,000.00	\$52,000.00
Pest management specialist	\$50,000.00	\$62,000.00
Seasonal/temporary	\$31,000.00	\$41,000.00

Salary Ranges:

Average production salaries showed significant variation, with fruit/vegetable production seasonal workers earning an average of \$30,160, and public garden production managers earning \$98,590. Most positions in the horticultural industry boasted salaries exceeding \$40,000. Administrative positions, on the other hand, commanded higher pay scales, ranging from \$46,740 for public garden merchandizers to over \$100,000 for roles such as fruit/vegetable production maintenance managers (\$120,580), horticultural services research/development managers (\$129,750), and horticultural services sales managers (\$132,633). Executive positions were found to be the highest paid.

Salary Range Variation:

While certain positions exhibited relatively lower average salaries, the wide salary range indicated that longevity and experience played a significant role in determining higher pay within those positions. This highlights the potential for career growth and increased earnings in the horticultural industry.

Benefits:

The survey also shed light on the common benefits provided to employees in the horticultural industry. Paid time off, professional development opportunities, and medical insurance were found to be the most prevalent benefits. In addition, companies reported offering dental and vision coverage, life insurance, retirement plans, Employee Stock Ownership Plans, profit sharing, bonuses, short-term/long-term disability coverage, vehicle and phone allowances, purchase discounts, flexible work environments, meals, and wellness days.

Hiring Outlook:

The survey revealed an optimistic hiring outlook for the horticultural industry. **A majority of the surveyed businesses (51%) expressed plans to increase their hiring, while 43% intended to maintain their current hiring rate.** Few businesses indicated a decrease in hiring.

The comprehensive horticultural salary survey provides valuable insights into the earnings and benefits landscape within the industry. This information will serve as a valuable resource for individuals considering careers in horticulture and for businesses looking to attract and retain talent.

Both reports can be accessed at endowment.org. The survey will be conducted every other year to gauge changes and trends. Industry participation is key to ensure the data reflects salaries across the country.



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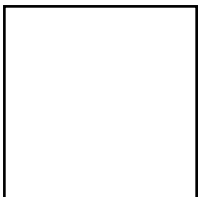


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