

MAY 2025

TEXAS

in Bloom



TSFA *School of* FLORAL DESIGN

Providing the Best in Education

TEXAS MASTER FLORIST CLASSES

May 16-19, 2025



TO REGISTER
Scan QR code or visit
tsfa.org/school



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TMF
Scan QR code or visit
tsfa.org/tmf-certification

Texas State Florists' ASSOCIATION

offers two distinctive opportunities
to advance your career pathway

FORMATIVE DESIGN OBJECTIVES

J. Keith White AIFD CFD CEJ will instruct an advanced, two-day, hands-on evaluation class on Formative Design Objectives at the Texas State Florists' Association School of Floral Design. Five design categories will be reviewed based on the principles, elements and techniques from the AIFD Guide to Floral Design 3rd Edition. The categories include Wedding, Flowers to Wear, Arrangement, Sympathy and Designer's Choice. An individual review of each category will lead to increased understanding of the evaluation process and expand confidence in the art of floral design.

May 23 - 24, 2025 • 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Open to floral designers meeting one of these requirements:

- Certified Floral Designer (CFD®).
- Enrolled in the process to become CFD.
- Enrolled or planning to enroll in Professional Floral Design Evaluation (PFDE) to become a member of AIFD®.

Class will gather for approximately 7 hours daily.
Enrollment includes lunch each day and time to network!

HOW TO ENROLL

TSFA Member Rate — \$699
Nonmember Rate — \$799



Scan the QR code
or visit tsfa.org/school

WHERE TO STAY

TSFA School of Floral Design students may consider reserving lodging at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites, using TSFA's corporate rate of \$109 plus applicable taxes and fees, reservation link is available during the registration process.

Holiday Inn Express and Suites
247 W. Metro Drive, Leander, Texas
512-690-5678

TSFA SCHOOL OF FLORAL DESIGN
413 S. WEST DRIVE • LEANDER, TX 78641

Texas in Bloom

MAY 2025 | VOLUME LI | NUMBER 5

FROM THE *President*



TSFA President
Ed Fimbel
CFD TMFA

Greetings, TSFA members!

May has arrived, bringing with it Mother's Day – that wonderful celebration when flowers take center stage to honor special women in our lives. I hope your Mother's Day sales were successful and profitable for your business.

This month brings two excellent educational opportunities for your professional development. First, the Texas Master Florist (TMF) certification class will be held May 16-19 in Leander at the Texas State Florists' Association (TSFA) School of Floral Design. This program is designed for qualified candidates seeking TMF certification. Please visit tsfa.org to review eligibility requirements.

Second, on May 23-24, the TSFA School of Floral Design will host "Formative Design Objectives," taught by J. Keith White AIFD CFD CEJ. This valuable course will help prepare you for the Professional Floral Design Evaluation (PFDE), a steppingstone to becoming a member of the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD). Again, check TSFA's website to confirm your eligibility for this preparatory course.

June is just around the corner, and with it comes the Texas Floral EXPO ... SECRETS, happening June 27-29 in League City. We've assembled an incredible lineup of industry stars: Chris, Hitomi, Charlie, Keith, Brenna, Rocio, Frank, Renato, Corrine, Vonda, Lori, Brandy and Derek – all ready to share their industry SECRETS with you! This event promises an immersive educational experience with hands-on workshops, stage presentations and business programs unlike anything Texas has seen in quite some time.

Don't forget about the Texas Designer of the Year (DOY) competition! Are you ready to claim this prestigious title? Competition rules are available online for those interested in participating.

We'll also hold TSFA's annual meeting, featuring the election of officers and a special design presentation by Hitomi Gilliam AIFD.

TSFA's high school floral design certification program is wrapping up for the year, and what a tremendous success it's been! Both Level 1 and Level 2 participation exceeded our expectations, with Level 2 seeing remarkable growth – one on-site certification had over 115 registrants, surpassing the entire 2024 total for Level 2. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who volunteered and supported these educational initiatives.

On a somber note, our floral industry recently lost a great champion of education, Herman Meinders. I was fortunate to meet him at the AFS Education Center in Oklahoma City back in 1988, and our paths crossed many times thereafter. Mr. Meinders was a tremendous advocate for our industry and a true friend and supporter of TSFA and the Texas Floral Endowment.

I look forward to seeing YOU in League City, June 27-29, for EXPO...SECRETS. Thanks to the planning efforts of Expo Chair Marisa Guerrero AIFD CFD TMF we're set for a fantastic weekend!

"Let's band together for TSFA!"
Ed Fimbel CFD TMFA

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS STATE FLORISTS' ASSOCIATION
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FROM INSPIRATION TO INNOVATION: TEXAS FLORAL SHOWCASE WITH JOYCE MASON-MONHEIM BLOOMS IN LUBBOCK

On March 27, florists, educators, students and floral enthusiasts gathered in Lubbock for a day that blossomed into something truly extraordinary. The Texas Floral Showcase, hosted by the Texas State Florists' Association (TSFA), welcomed nationally recognized designer and educator Joyce Mason-Monheim AAF AIFD CFD PFCI AZMF for a day of hands-on floral artistry, heartfelt mentorship and vibrant community connection.



Showcase Chair Cassie Sanders AIFD CFD TMF described the vision behind the event: “We really wanted to bring together every level of floral design – students, teachers and retail florists – and highlight the vital connection between high school floral design programs and the broader retail floral industry. By focusing on educators this year, we strengthened that bridge and created opportunities for meaningful collaboration across all facets of the floral community.”

The day kicked off with a hands-on workshop where participants – from brand-new high school students to seasoned professionals with decades of experience – delved into the foundational principles and elements of floral

design. At the heart of both the workshop and the evening presentation was a clear, consistent theme: a refreshing, down-to-earth perspective on the Principles and Elements of Design. Mason-Monheim encouraged attendees to reimagine the fundamentals, opening the door for intentional creativity and modern interpretations.



The workshop brought out the very best – from a high school student who generously gave of her time, to two of the very best TSFA School of Floral Design instructors!



One of the most memorable moments came as Mason-Monheim worked alongside her student assistants – Eva Jackson, Camille Powell, and Kristie Keyes TMF – who represented the next generation of floral leaders. “They were guiding me through the process,” Mason-Monheim shared. “I asked, ‘Where should this flower go?,’ and they told me.” Letting the students step into the teacher’s role captured the true spirit of the showcase: bridging generations through shared creativity, mentorship and hands-on learning.

Mason-Monheim teaching style shone throughout the day. She broke down complex concepts with clarity and relatability, making the elements of design feel newly relevant and accessible to everyone in the room. One standout tip – “Squint at the design to locate your focal area” – offered a simple yet powerful technique that educators and designers alike could immediately take back to their classrooms and studios.

Later, during a captivating dinner presentation, Mason-Monheim walked attendees through a range of design styles

– each arrangement purposefully highlighting different principles and elements in action. From Flemish-inspired work featuring fruit and dominant focal blooms, to abstract designs exploring tension and movement through floral objects, every creation served as both art and education.

As the sun set on the Lubbock skyline, attendees left not only with fresh designs and valuable skills, but with a sense of renewed purpose. The Texas Floral Showcase wasn't just about blooms – it was about growth, community and the beauty of creative collaboration grounded in the timeless – but always evolving – principles of design.



A TEXAS SIZE THANK YOU TO EACH COMPANY THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF THE TEXAS FLORAL SHOWCASE

A special thank you to Matt Dickinson and Lubbock Wholesale Florists, Inc. for receiving all product and absorbing the freight expenses. The design work space was most appreciated, as well as the transport of all product and arrangements the morning of the event. Your generosity contributed greatly to the success.

TEXAS FLORAL EDUCATION UNDERWRITERS AND PRODUCT PARTNERS

GOLD LEVEL

Rio Roses

SILVER LEVEL

Wolfe Wholesale Florist

BRONZE LEVEL

Accent Decor

Smithers-Oasis

Syndicate Sales

TEXAS FLORAL PRODUCT CONTRIBUTORS

Products from these growers are available through
Texas wholesalers.

Fern Trust

Glad-A-Way Gardens

Green Point Nurseries

Mellano Farms

**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO TSFA MEMBERS
MARISA GUERRERO AIFD CFD TMF AND
KELLY MARBLE AIFD FOR GENEROUSLY
PROVIDING PRODUCT TO CONTRIBUTE TO
THE SUCCESS OF THIS PROGRAM.**

TRIBUTE TO HERMAN MEINDERS



Herman Meinders, 87, passed away peacefully on March 30, 2025, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Born of German immigrants in Pipestone, Minnesota, on November 15, 1937, Meinders lived a childhood filled with love and lessons of the importance of hard work, strong ethics and Christian guidance from caring parents, Harold and Francis Meinders. During high school, Meinders went to work in sales at JC Penney. The importance of higher education was soon clear and he attended Oklahoma City University with a transfer to JC Penney in OKC in the 1950's.

Though he did not graduate, it is important to note that OCU remained central to his personal story and philanthropic legacy. His enduring commitment to the university and the transformative power of education led him to fund the Oklahoma City University Meinders School of Business. He served on OCU's board of trustees and formerly chaired its executive committee.

Oklahoma was selected with the thought that the weather would be better than Minnesota, and after one year in "The Sooner State" moving to Florida became a topic of conversation. JC Penney had no openings in Florida, and

thus, money became tight. Meinders worked in a grocery store and took a room in a home whose owner owned a flower shop. As time went on, together with a co-worker, Meinders purchased Sammy's Bar with a loan from his dad. One night, a man by the name of Dale Murphy stopped in. As it turned out, Murphy was a salesman for National Florists' Directory. Conversation led to a promise that Murphy would follow up with a job offer, and when that did not occur, Meinders persevered.

The tenacity to contact the home office landed him a sales job with National Florists' Directory. He was soon traveling flower shop to flower shop selling directories for \$15. These several years in sales led to employment at Florafax, where he later served as Vice President of Sales prior to opening American Floral Services (AFS) in his 900-square-foot garage apartment on December 7, 1970, with \$500 in the bank.

With a starting membership of 137 flower shops, each joined with a \$25 membership fee and a \$5 monthly fee, along with, "No sending fees to send wire orders." New concepts opened a new way of thinking that led to the establishment of a rebate, printing a directory every other month, the use of toll free 1-800 numbers, promotional giveaways, conventions on cruise ships and giving \$1 Million to one florist attending the AFS Annual Convention!

In 1994, just 24 years after the founding of AFS, this innovative company had become the world's largest flowers by wire service with 25,000 member florists in the United States and Canada and 50,000 florists world wide. During that year, Meinders sold AFS, and in 2000, AFS merged with Teleflora to better serve the floral community. He remained Chairman Emeritus of Teleflora – forever proud of the industry he helped transform and the lifelong friendships he built within it.

Meinders received numerous honors from the floral industry, including honorary membership in the American Institute of Floral Designers and the 1987 AIFD Industry Award of Merit, and in 2012, he was inducted into the Society of American Florists Floriculture Hall of Fame. The Texas Floral Endowment established the Herman Meinders Visionary Award, of which Meinders was the first recipient in 2014 during the celebration of TSFA's 100th year. The AIFD Foundation recognized his lifetime of achievements during AIFD Symposium in 2017. He co-founded the World Flower Council and was the first recipient of its Floral Laureate Award.

Family was the heart of Herman's world, and he was blessed with two daughters. Kathryn Ann Meinders brought great joy to Herman's life – smart, vibrant, and full of potential. Her unexpected passing in 2008, at the age of 42, was a loss he carried tenderly in his heart. Christine Marie Meinders, born in 1977, continues to embody his creativity and purpose.

In 1986, Herman married LaDonna Kramer Meinders, the love of his life and his partner in philanthropy. They shared 38 years of marriage, building a life devoted to family, generosity and their deep commitment to the community. Together, they laughed often, worked hard and believed deeply in the power of giving.

Herman often said that "success means nothing if you don't share it." He believed in the preparation of students through high school floral design classes and supported the development of TSFA's Level 1 and Level 2 Floral Design Certification for decades, providing funding through the Texas Floral Endowment to move the program forward.

His contributions extended far beyond the floral industry. Herman and LaDonna supported local literacy programs, educational initiatives and cultural projects. Among his proudest achievements was donating his beloved Diamond H Ranch in Cookson, Oklahoma, to the Last Frontier Council, Boy Scouts of America to be a place where generations of Scouts will continue to explore, learn and grow.

Herman was inducted into the Sales and Marketing Executives International Academy of Achievement, the Oklahoma Commerce and Industry Hall of Honor and, in 1998, the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. He received the OCU Distinguished Alumnus Award, an honorary Doctor of Commercial Science degree from OCU, the Liberty Bell Award, the Melvin Jones Fellow Award and numerous honors from the Boy Scouts of America.

His biography, *Flowers to Philanthropy*, written by Bob Burke, was published in 2004, chronicling his remarkable journey from small-town beginnings to international business success and philanthropy. In 2024, Burke published a second book, *A Legacy for Generations: The Generosity of Herman Meinders*, further honoring Herman's lifelong commitment to giving back and the profound impact of his philanthropy.

Herman believed in using his success to solve real problems and support the causes closest to his heart. One of his most enduring contributions was his extraordinary support of Mercy Hospital in Oklahoma City. By 2024, Herman

and LaDonna had become the hospital's largest individual donors in Oklahoma. Their gifts established the Meinders NeuroScience Institute and the Meinders Center for Movement Disorders, ensuring thousands of patients access to advanced treatment for Parkinson's Disease, which Herman valiantly fought the last 12 years of his life.

Herman and LaDonna's impact continues through their support of education, healthcare, the arts and community development. Their generosity was not simply about writing checks. They showed up, stayed involved and cared deeply.

Herman is survived by his daughter, Christine; his siblings, Donna Licquia, Don Meinders, Bob Meinders and Linda Drumm (John); and his stepchildren, Mark Gooden, Lori (Chris) Ode, John (Jody) Gooden and Joe Gooden; eight step-grandchildren; 11 step-great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. He is also survived by his dear friend and longtime business associate, Mo Grotjohn. He was preceded in death by his parents, his beloved wife, LaDonna, and his daughter, Kathryn Ann Meinders.

A Celebration of Life was held on April 4, 2025, at 2 p.m. at Crossings Community Church and was followed by a reception at the Meinders NeuroScience Center at Mercy Hospital.

In words attributed to Winston Churchill: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life from what we give." Herman Meinders lived a life that exceeded expectations and made a life of philanthropic efforts that will forever benefit his industry and his community.

Cards and notes of remembrance may be mailed to this address:

Family of Herman Meinders
14001 McAuley Boulevard
Suite #100
Oklahoma City, OK 73134

To read more about Herman Meinders and his well-lived life:
smithandkernke.com/obituaries/herman-meinders

To view livestream of the Celebration of Life service:
vimeo.com/event/5032154/38bf928b87

TSFA ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The TSFA Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, June 28, 2025, from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. during the Texas Floral Expo.

TSFA Election will continue, throughout the day, until 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 28, 2025.

The TSFA Nominating Committee presents the slate of officers and directors for your consideration.



PRESIDENT

Marisa Guerrero AIFD CFD TMF

Marisa has relished a lifetime living in and learning about the floral industry. As Vice President of Debbie's Bloomers, in El Paso, she is a second-generation florist known for her enthusiasm and involvement in the industry. Having served on the boards and committees of numerous industry organizations, including TSFA, AIFD South Central Chapter, AIFD Foundation and WTNM Florists' Association, she looks forward to many more opportunities to strengthen the foundation of the floral industry.



SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Tom Wolfe, Jr.

Tom Wolfe, Jr. is the President of Wolfe Wholesale Florist in Waco. As a 6th generation florist, he grew up in Waco and has been in the flower industry his entire life. Tom graduated from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, with a Bachelor of Arts in Finance and Accounting. He has served the floral industry in many capacities. A long-time member of WFFSA, the national wholesale association, working on many committees and as a member of the board. Tom has also served TSFA on numerous committees and was also a member of the board holding the position of Treasurer. He is a proud father and enjoys boating, golf and snow skiing.



RETAIL DIRECTOR (ELECT TWO)

Dawson Clark TMF

Dawson Clark TMF holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and has worked in numerous roles over a 40-year career in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Over his career, he has demonstrated success in business operations, strategic planning, human resources, wedding and special events, marketing, public relations, and even architectural and landscape design. Everything changed when he found his creative home as a floral designer in 2014. This journey led to the creation of HighPointe Estate, where he serves as Founder and Creative Director. Volunteering in TSFA, and the friendships made, have been a huge blessing.



Clay Honeycutt AIFD CFD

Clay Honeycutt AIFD CFD was born and raised just outside Dallas. A creative at heart, he pursued a career in floral design starting just over 10 years ago. Over his career, he has worked as a retail designer, wholesaler and high school floral design teacher, and most recently, he purchased his first flower shop in Rockwall, Texas. Clay's passion for education and the floral industry is at the forefront of everything he does!



Tricia Won AIFD EMC IMF

Tricia Won AIFD EMC IMF is the owner of Romantic Florals, a freelance designer, floral demonstrator and workshop teacher. As a TSFA member, she served on the Communications Committee, designed centerpieces for the 2023 Texas Floral Expo Breakfast and volunteered. Won is an accredited member of AIFD. She serves as Secretary on the South Central Chapter Board and on national committees. She holds the European Master Certification (EMC) and International Master Floristry (IMF) designations and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in advertising.



WHOLESALE DIRECTOR

Jeff Floyd

Owner and CEO of Hills Wholesale Florist Longview, Jeff Floyd has been in the industry since his days at Marshall High School. Delivering flowers and learning floral design introduced a career that spans over 50 years. Floyd graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in accounting. Together with experience, this provided an understanding of both the business and creative side of the floral business. In 2015, his family purchased Hill's Wholesale Florist. Jeff and his wife, Susan, have two children and four grandchildren. "It is a beautiful thing when a passion and a career come together," is a quote that best describes Jeff Floyd.

Texas State Florists' Association PRESENTS

SECRETS

TEXAS FLORAL EXPO 2025

ARE YOU READY TO REGISTER?!

SET UP YOUR TSFA ACCOUNT!

Would you like to save \$250 off Texas Floral Expo registration? It's easy to do! As a TSFA member, simply create your account on the website if you have not already done so, check your email for a link to select your password and use your email address and password when you register for the Expo before the June 6 deadline. By logging in to the TSFA website, you may also access the Info Hub and a wealth of exclusive member benefits. Thank you for being a valued member of the TSFA community!

ONCE YOUR ACCOUNT IS SET, REGISTRATION IS AS EASY AS 1-2-3

1

"Everything Expo" Registration – TSFA Member \$449 • Nonmember \$599
Everything listed on the Expo Schedule is included, with the exception of the optional Hands-on Design Workshops. Register by June 6 to secure this rate.

2

Hands-on Design Workshops – TSFA Member \$125 each • Nonmember \$175 each

- Secrets of AI-Powered Floral Artistry – Brandy Ferrer AIFD CFD TMF.
- Unlocked Secrets – J. Keith White AIFD.
- Secrets for Creating Marketing Videos – Charlie Groppetti AIFD.
- The Secret to Sustainability in Bespoke Design – Derek Woodruff AAF AIFD CFD PFCI CF.
- Mastering the Secrets of Sympathy Florals – Rocio Silva AIFD and Frank Feysa AIFD CFD PFCI.
- Wedding Design: What's Your Best Kept Secret? – Chris Collum-Williams AIFD CFD TMF.
- Sheep and Cane – Hitomi Gilliam AIFD.

3

Advanced Hands-on Workshop – TSFA Member \$195 • Nonmember \$245
Enchanting Cascades • Brenna Quan AIFD.

REGISTER FOR THE EXPO IN ONE OF TWO WAYS

QR code will take you directly to "Everything Expo"



Visit tsfa.org/expo



Texas State Florists' ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

SECRETS

TEXAS FLORAL EXPO 2025

The educational programming is supported by the Texas Floral Education Underwriters.

FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2025

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Lalique



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Secrets of AI-Powered Floral Artistry

Brandy Ferrer AIFD CFD TMF

Underwritten by South Central AIFD

Pier Room



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Unlocked Secrets

J. Keith White AIFD

Underwritten by FTD

Noon – 2:00 p.m.

Concurrent Sessions

Lalique



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Secrets for Creating Marketing Videos

Charlie Groppetti AIFD

Underwritten by Texas Floral Education Underwriters

Pier Room



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

The Secret to Sustainability in Bespoke Design

Derek Woodruff AAF AIFD CFD PFCI CF

Underwritten by Syndicate Sales

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Amphitheater



BUSINESS WORKSHOP

Unlocking Social Media Best Practices

Renato Cruz Sogueco AAF PFCI

Underwritten by BloomNet

2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Salons A&D

PRODUCT GALLERY

- Shop.
- Network.
- Passport To Education.

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Salon B

TEXAS DESIGNER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

Categories I and II

5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Crystal Ballroom Foyer

BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Crystal Ballroom Foyer

STARS OF TEXAS RECEPTION

7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Salon B



STARS OF TEXAS DINNER • DESIGN PRESENTATION

Innovative Floral Stylings for Weddings and Events

Chris Collum Williams AIFD CFD TMF

Underwritten by Accent Decor



SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Salon B



BREAKFAST • TSFA ANNUAL MEETING DESIGN PRESENTATION

Styling Unique Everyday Florals

Hitomi Gilliam AIFD

Underwritten by Teleflora



9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Salons A&D

PRODUCT GALLERY

- Shop.
- Network.
- Passport To Education.

11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Salon B



LUNCHEON • DESIGN PRESENTATION

Christmas Secrets Revealed

Charlie Groppetti AIFD

Underwritten by Texas Floral Education Underwriters



2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Marina Plaza



INTERNATIONAL INSIGHTS • DESIGN PRESENTATION

Floral Sorcery: Transforming Ideas Into Art

Brenna Quan AIFD

Underwritten by BloomNet

SCHEDULE • JUNE 27-29, 2025

Register now to LEARN ALL THE SECRETS

PRODUCT GALLERY • 6 DESIGN PRESENTATIONS • 4 BUSINESS SESSIONS

7 HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS • 1 ADVANCED HANDS-ON WORKSHOP

TEXAS DESIGNER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Concurrent Sessions

Amphitheater



BUSINESS SESSION

*Uncovering the Latest Website Tips,
Tricks and Trends*

Renato Cruz Sogueco AAF PFCI

Underwritten by BloomNet

Pier Room



BILINGUAL HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Mastering the Secrets of Sympathy Florals

Rocio Silva AIFD CFD PFCI and Frank Feysa AIFD CFD PFCI

Underwritten by Smithers-Oasis

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Amphitheater



BUSINESS SESSION

Service & Synergy: Building a Customer-First Dream Team

Vonda LaFever AIFD CFD PFCI and Lori Willson PFCI

Underwritten by Flower Clique

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Lalique



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Wedding Design: What's Your Best Kept Secret?

Chris Collum-Williams AIFD CFD TMF

Underwritten by Accent Decor

SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Poolside Salon

INTERFAITH SERVICE

7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Pier Room



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Sheep and Cane

Hitomi Gilliam AIFD

Underwritten by TSFA

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Amphitheater



BUSINESS SESSION

Secrets of Top Event Florists

Turning Vision Into Profitable Designs

Corrine Heck PFCI

Underwritten by Details

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Salons A&D

TEXAS DESIGNER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

Categories III

9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Marina Plaza



INTERNATIONAL INSIGHTS

BILINGUAL DESIGN PRESENTATION

The Secret Language of Sympathy Flowers

Rocio Silva AIFD CFD PFCI and Frank Feysa AIFD CFD PFCI

Underwritten by Smithers-Oasis

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Salon B



LUNCHEON • DESIGN PRESENTATION

Your Gateway to Inspiration

J. Keith White AIFD



Underwritten by FTD

2:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Lalique



ADVANCED HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOP

Enchanting Cascades

Brenna Quan AIFD

Underwritten by BloomNet

ARE YOU READY TO REGISTER?



TO REGISTER
Scan the QR code or
visit tsfa.org/expo



BUSINESS SESSIONS

Included in Registration



DESIGN PRESENTATIONS

Included in Registration



MEALS

Included in Registration



HANDS-ON DESIGN WORKSHOPS

Additional Registration Required



**THERE ARE
TWO WAYS
TO ENTER**



Scan the QR code.
Review the secrets you
need to know to open the
gate and become the next
Texas Designer of the Year!

Visit tsfa.org/designer-of-the-year

June 10
Entry
Deadline

June 27
Categories
I and II

June 29
Category III

June 29
Recognition

2025 AWARDS MADE POSSIBLE BY

**Texas State Florists' ASSOCIATION**

THE FIRST PLACE WINNER RECEIVES

- Recognition as the 2025 Texas Designer of the Year.
- \$1,000 Cash Prize.
- Official Silver Texas Cup and First Place Ribbon.
- Up to \$1,000 to Represent TSFA at the SAF 2025 Sylvia Cup Competition.
- Celebrated as a Star of Texas and Presented a Crystal Star.

THE SECOND PLACE WINNER RECEIVES

- \$300 Cash Prize.
- Second Place Ribbon.

THE THIRD PLACE WINNER RECEIVES

- \$200 Cash Prize.
- Third Place Ribbon.

Blooming with Brandy

PETALS, POLICIES AND PROFITS: SUMMER SHOP SMARTS

Summer can feel ... a little sleepy. The holidays are over, weddings slow down and, suddenly, you're alphabetizing ribbon colors for fun. But here's the secret: This "downtime" is your golden hour.



Think of summer as the behind-the-scenes montage in your flower shop's movie. This is when you tighten operations, freshen up policies and plant the seeds for a stress-free (and profitable) fall.

LET'S GET INTO FIVE SMART WAYS TO MAKE SUMMER WORK FOR YOU:

REVIEW YOUR SHOP POLICIES (BEFORE THEY REVIEW YOU)

No, it's not thrilling – but future you will thank you during the next holiday rush.

Grab your team (and coffee) and review:

- Substitution guidelines.
- Return and exchange policies.
- Delivery zones, fees and cut-offs.
- Custom design do's and "oh honey, no's".
- Wedding and event contracts.

Now's also the time to update your website FAQs and in-store signage. Keep it clear, kind and consistent.

CREATE REASONS TO CELEBRATE

Fewer holidays? No problem. Make your own reasons to party.

- Best Friends Day (June 8) or Red Rose Day (June 12).
- A floral class or sip-and-stem night.
- A pop-up collab with a local restaurant, boutique or photographer.

Pro tip: Team up with another small business and split the work and the marketing. More reach, less stress.



STREAMLINE ALL THE THINGS

This is your chance to tidy up the backend:

- Audit inventory and bundle slow-movers.
- Recheck your pricing (hello, inflation).
- Refresh staff skills with design drills or friendly speed challenges.
- Repaint, reorganize or fix that thing you've been ignoring for three months.

Also – get your team tracking their stems. It's like the buddy system, but for your margins.

GET WAY AHEAD (FUTURE YOU WILL CRY JOYFULLY)

Batch now, breathe later. Think:

- Write holiday emails and promos.
- Draft fall and winter graphics.
- Prep signage for Christmas or homecoming mums (yes, already).

You know it'll all hit at once later. Give yourself the gift of being smugly ahead.

LAUNCH A SUBSCRIPTION THAT SELLS ITSELF

Steady income? Yes, please. Subscriptions are great for customers and your cash flow.

Think through:

- How often? (Monthly, quarterly or designer's whim?)
- Pickup only or delivery?
- Surprise bouquets or client-chosen?

Customer favorites:

- Plant subscriptions: 4", 6" and 8" plants with cute add-ons.
- Bouquet-of-the-month: Especially popular with forgetful spouses.
- Seasonal gift boxes: Florals one month, spa vibes the next.

Just don't over-promise. Flexibility = your best friend.

Summer might not feel busy, but it's packed with potential. Use this time to reset, clean house and set yourself up to bloom big come fall. Remember, what feels like "downtime" might just be your biggest power move yet.

You've got this. Now go make that flower magic happen, sunshine.

Beyond THE BIO

with

Brandy Ferrer
AIFD CFD TME



WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF FLOWERS?

My Granny Gillham had a magical green thumb. I still remember her enormous rose bush and how she'd send me home with a small bundle, carefully wrapped in a wet paper towel and foil. I'd bury my face in those roses the whole ride home. That scent still brings me comfort to this day.

WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

While earning my teaching degree, I worked at The French Tulip in Oklahoma City and fell in love with floral design. A few years later, I created all the flowers for a family wedding when their florist canceled last minute — and that was the moment I knew this was what I was meant to do. In 2017, I left public education and bought a flower shop in Gilmer, Texas, officially diving into my dream full-time.

WHAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO YOUR DESIGN EDUCATION?

I began as a self-taught designer, soaking up every book and resource I could find. Floral retreats were a turning point — where I found my "Flower Family" and gained invaluable mentorship. Studying industry leaders and learning from their creativity and technique continues to shape my perspective and push my growth.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

Creating sympathy designs is deeply personal for me. I've experienced a lot of loss — losing a best friend in 4th grade, my father by 26, and many close family members — and I created the flowers for many of them. I see sympathy work as the final gift we give to someone we love. That feeling stays with me every time I help someone through that process.

YOU WON THE TEXAS DESIGNER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION IN 2024. WHAT INTRIGUES YOU ABOUT THE COMPETITION PROCESS?

I love the pressure. There's something about a timed challenge that forces me to trust my instincts and lean into creativity without overthinking. It's like creative boot camp — you walk in as one version of yourself and leave with a new edge and fresh perspective.

WHAT DO YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THESE EXPERIENCES?

Beyond the design table, competitions have given me a sense of belonging in the industry. I've built real friendships, found mentors and

discovered a floral "family" that celebrates and challenges me. Each event reminds me why I love this work — not just for the flowers, but for the people and the shared pursuit of something beautiful.

WHAT LED YOU TO STUDY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN FLORISTRY?

I started exploring AI as a way to simplify my life — automating emails, organizing marketing and saving time as an exhausted small business owner with a tiny budget and big dreams. But I quickly realized AI could do more than streamline operations — it could spark creativity, too. It became a tool to generate design inspiration, color palettes and even storytelling. That led to my AI presentations at AIFD and my mission to help florists use tech not just to survive, but to thrive.

WHAT DO YOU PREDICT MAY BE OF MOST BENEFIT TO RETAIL FLORISTRY?

AI can help florists save time, cut waste and connect better with customers. Predictive tools for inventory and automated content creation are huge time-savers. But the biggest win might be using AI to enhance creativity—helping florists stay inspired, focused and competitive.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED MEMORY FROM THE ORCHID DINNER?

My favorite moment was quietly watching guests linger at my table, taking in every detail of my centerpiece as it glowed under the lights of the Plaza Hotel ballroom — surrounded by orchids, elegance and the work of floral legends. As a girl from small-town Texas, that moment of connection — right there in the heart of New York City — was a surreal and humbling reminder that creativity can speak louder than words.

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF FLORAL EDUCATION?

I want to keep bridging tradition with innovation — teaching design, but also the business and tech skills florists need to thrive. I see myself mentoring, leading workshops, speaking at events, writing articles and creating resources that inspire growth at every stage of the floral journey.



An opportunity to study with Brandy Ferrer during the Texas Floral Expo

Secrets of AI-Powered Floral Artistry
Friday, June 27 • 9 - 11 a.m. • Hands-on Design Workshop
Underwritten by South Central AIFD

Beyond THE BIO

with

Derek Woodruff
AAF AIFD CFD PFCI CF



WHAT LED YOU TO YOUR APPROACH TO RETAIL?

I learned early on in my business that manning a retail store was not for me. From here, I decided that e-commerce was my best bet. This, plus pop-up retail as popularity allows, feeds my soul for selling flowers.

WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS IN YOUR APPROACH TO RETAIL?

Making my ordering process easy online for sending flowers, booking workshops or visiting my pop-up shops has been the major fundamental approach to how I manage selling flowers.

YOU WON THE SYLVIA CUP IN 2016. WHAT INTRIGUES YOU ABOUT THE COMPETITION PROCESS?

I have always had a fondness for competition. When I was 16, I won my first student competition and wanted more. For each year after that, for seven years in the professional division, I didn't win a thing. It wasn't until I started asking the evaluators questions about my work that I started to win big again. It turns out, you learn more from losing than winning!

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF FLOWERS?

When I was a kid, my dad would always take me to the garden center in the spring and let me pick out the flowers for our flower boxes around our house and yard. Then, we would take them back and plant them all up.



WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

As a child, I often thought that I would grow up to be a paleontologist because I had always loved dinosaurs. After seeing a major blockbuster dinosaur movie, I also learned about plants and what made them tick. I made my way to vocational school, where my interest in plant science led me to floral design and later, my First Place win!

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF FLORAL DESIGN EDUCATION?

I look forward to training future educators in the floral industry so they can move on and teach what they are experts at, in the way of floral design.

WHAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO YOUR DESIGN EDUCATION?

My teachers in vocational school were heavily focused on the Certified Florists program from the Great Lakes Floral Association. We spent two full years studying this curriculum and had the opportunity to attend the yearly expo and compete in the student competition. This was the biggest and earliest influence in my design education.

IN THOSE EARLY DAYS OF EDUCATION, WHO WAS MOST INFLUENTIAL?

Jerome Raska, Robbin Yelverton, Jackie Burrell and Helen Miller were my biggest influencers in my early years attending the Great Lakes Floral Expo.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

My favorite job in the floral industry is my current job. As the Lead Designer and Educator for Syndicate Sales, I get to travel around the country, sharing my floral design knowledge with everyone I meet!



An opportunity to study with Derek Woodruff during the Texas Floral Expo

The Secret to Sustainability in Bespoke Design

Friday, June 27 • Noon - 2 p.m. • Hands-on Design Workshop

Underwritten by Syndicate Sales

Beyond THE BIO

with

Charlie Groppetti AIFD



WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF FLOWERS?

I can remember picking some purple blooming flowers with clover-like leaves. I thought they were so beautiful. I picked them and gave them to my teacher. As an adult, I realized it was blooming alfalfa. I gave my second-grade teacher hay! However, I still think farming is a thing of beauty.

WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

I think watching the floral design students at Cal Poly and their creative projects made me curious. It was later, after graduation, that I attended my first regional AIFD program and was completely inspired to develop my floral design skills.

WHAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO YOUR DESIGN EDUCATION?

Certainly, the Cal Poly motto, "Learn by doing," was very important. You can learn very quickly by trying. Attending the AIFD Symposium was very important, as well as the educational opportunities the wire services provided. For me, it was FTD.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

My job as Creative Director for Porch View Home and my work in creative development of new products have been my favorites.

WHAT INFLUENCE(S) LED YOU TO THE FIELD OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT?

My mentor Michi Burrell was one of the first American designers, along with Jim Marvin, to travel to China and create florals for the silk flower factories located there. She recommended me to a factory looking for new designers, and I really found and developed my best skill.

WHAT LED YOU TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHAT WE ALL KNOW TODAY TO BE A SIGNIFICANT INTERIOR TREND?

It was a shared experience of growing up on a rural farm. Todd and I were both working in China in product development and met with the leading importers and large retail stores. At this time, no one was interested in Farmhouse. We decided to develop our own line and import it ourselves.

If we liked it, we thought others would, too. It just happened to coincide with Antiques Roadshow and the beginning of Fixer Upper. The timing was us doing what we love, and it turned out to be perfect timing!

SHARE THE PATH THAT LED YOU TO DEVELOP PORCH VIEW HOME.

As often in business partnership, there comes a time when financial partners differ from the designer's vision. When outside consultants and other "suits" start to make design decisions, it can be a very stressful time. This process came to a crossroads just as the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Many of us were evaluating our lives and what really made us happy. It was the most difficult decision and process to leave behind the company we founded, but just as the farmhouse style had begun to transition, so did we.

WHAT LED YOU TO BRING PERMANENT BOTANICALS TO PORCH VIEW HOME?

It is a combination of our love of flowers, our work experience in the silk flower factories and simple customer demand. We want to treat flowers as an interior design accessory. We saw a need in the market for botanically correct stems that are at a marketable price and available in stock.

YOU WERE PRESENTED THE AIFD AWARD OF DESIGN INFLUENCE IN 2022. WHAT DID THAT RECOGNITION MEAN TO YOU?

It was a great honor that I honestly think I am still earning. I have so much more experience to build on and so many more ideas to develop. I believe the best is yet to come. It was certainly a signpost of what has been designed and accomplished. Most importantly, the recognition of my peers means a great deal to me.

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF FLORAL DESIGN EDUCATION?

I think my experience can be very valuable to share with new designers and hopefully inspire them as I was once inspired by the many designers I watched. I also make it my mission to encourage others as I was encouraged. It really is passing on the information and inspiration that was passed on to me.



Opportunities to study with Charlie Groppetti during the Texas Floral Expo

Secrets for Creating Marketing Videos

Friday, June 27 • Noon - 2 p.m. • Hands-on Design Workshop

Underwritten by Texas Floral Education Underwriters

Christmas Secrets Revealed

Saturday, June 28 • 11:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m. • Luncheon Design Presentation

Underwritten by Texas Floral Education Underwriters

Beyond THE BIO

with

Brenna Quan AIFD



WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

I grew up a dancer with many, many performances as a seasoned professional. I was the recipient of all kinds of flowers when greeting my guests afterwards, which later on piqued my interest in the art of arranging them! From then on, there was never a doubt in my mind that I would eventually transition from life as a performing artist to creating art with flowers!

WHAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO YOUR DESIGN EDUCATION?



Floral design books and learning on the job were my humble beginnings in retail. I have my floral bestie of almost two decades, Shelly Huynh AIFD, to thank for opening up my eyes to a floral art world that went "beyond the vase". After moving back to Vancouver from Salt Lake City, I found mentorship in THE Hitomi Gilliam! I wouldn't be the designer or educator I am today without her guidance, support and friendship.

YOU HAVE HAD SUCCESS IN MANY COMPETITIONS. WHAT INTRIGUES YOU ABOUT THE COMPETITION PROCESS?

Besides being onstage again (once a performer, always a performer), the draw to competition is the opportunity to push myself outside my comfort zone and be amongst and learn from my fellow competitors. I have profound respect for those who study their craft and continue to push themselves and inspire so many. Also, I grew up competing in the dance world, so perhaps discovering this aspect of floral design has awoken my competitive spirit!

YOUR CAREER HAS TAKEN YOU ON QUITE THE JOURNEY. WAS THERE ONE OR MORE MOMENTS THAT CHANGED YOUR PATH TO LEAD YOU TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

My first industry mentor encouraged and facilitated my PFDE after we took an unexpected trip to experience our first AIFD National Symposium in Palm Desert. Achieving accreditation was the first step,

but it wasn't until five years later that I became actively involved, which led to leadership roles as an AIFD member and a greater dedication to education.

UNDERSTANDING FLORAL DESIGN AT THE HIGHEST OF LEVEL, WHAT DO YOU PREDICT TO BE THE GREATEST CONSTANT AND THE GREATEST CHANGE?

Flowers will always connect people emotionally, as they have done in almost every culture – if not all cultures – since the beginning of mankind. The greatest change will have to be finding more ways to apply methods of sustainability within the industry so we can honor this long-standing tradition and keep the culture (and our Mother Earth) alive for future generations.

HOW DOES FLORAL DESIGN AS AN ART EXPAND TODAY'S FLORAL INDUSTRY?

Artists of the world take every type of art form and develop new techniques, blending various media and experimenting to evolve ways of expressing human emotion. Floral and botanical art is no different! With breeders and growers supplying us with infinite choices in materials, paired with easy accessibility to share and discover creations, making statements with botanical art finds the masses. Those who get a glimpse of this type of art will find themselves seeking out more, as its ephemeral nature is truly a thing to be appreciated.



WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF FLORAL DESIGN EDUCATION?

I just wish to continue igniting sparks of inspiration to other passionate floral creatives so the artistic side of floral design can be discovered and appreciated and, hopefully, bring about engaging dialogue person to person.

ANOTHER GLIMPSE BEYOND THE BIO

I'm so grateful for the travel opportunities outside of my home country that my passion has provided me! From the Hawaiian Islands, coast to coast in the United States and on to South America. I have yet to get myself overseas for floristry, which I hope to do eventually! Otherwise, being back home with my family, including a son and daughter, keeps life interesting and fulfilling, to say the least!

Opportunities to study with Brenna Quan during the Texas Floral Expo

Floral Sorcery: Transforming Ideas Into Art

Saturday, June 28 • 2 - 3 p.m. • International Insights Design Presentation

Underwritten by BloomNet

Enchanting Cascades

Sunday, June 29 • 2:30 - 5 p.m. • Advanced Hands-on Design Workshop

Underwritten by BloomNet

Beyond THE BIO

with

Renato Cruz Sogueco
AAF PFCI



WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

My maternal grandmother was a gardener, as is my mom. Their houses were always filled with beautiful flowers and plants, and this same passion for natural beauty continues through the generations with myself and my son. We extended our generational gardening repertoire into growing food crops. So when the opportunity to apply for the Society of American Florists (SAF) presented itself early in my career, I thought the position was just a fantastic fit to merge my love for flowers and a way to launch a career in the non-profit space. The fact that I still remain in the flower industry after 25+ years is testament to that sound decision to be part of this great industry.

WHAT PART OF YOUR EDUCATION HAS PREPARED YOU BEST FOR YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

The flower industry is truly a diverse community of creative, thoughtful and passionate personalities. Fortunately, having studied psychology and journalism provided the ideal preparation to engage with floral designers – and tell their stories. I was a writer and publisher for the first few years at SAF.

WHO WAS MOST INFLUENTIAL DURING YOUR EARLY DAYS IN THE INDUSTRY?

Definitely not just one person. When I first started my career, a community of mentors welcomed me with open arms and shared their wisdom. Here are few names that taught me all about the business side: Red Kennicott, Tom Butler, Mark Nance, Bob Williams and Jim Leider. When I started to present in front of florists, Kirk Pamper and Sharon McGukin were willing role models providing great insights. As I went further with my floral career, my boss and mentor Peter Moran provided continued sound guidance. And most recently, I'm proud to have good friends Jackie Lacey, Donald Yim and Dianna Nordman as close counsel.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

An event coordinator as part of SAF's participation at the Presidential Inaugurations – it was in these trenches that many of my closest relationships with floral peers were forged.

WHAT DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE CONTRIBUTED THAT HAS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN RETAIL FLORISTRY?

Sharing the mindset with florists to always recognize technology, new consumer trends and digital marketing as a critical part of their business – back then, now and into the future.

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY?

Continuing to be educator and advocate for florists and evangelist for anything that would contribute to their success.



Renato shares the family's "passion for natural beauty" with his son Raphael.



Opportunities to study with Renato Cruz Sogueco during the Texas Floral Expo

Unlocking Social Media Best Practices

Friday, June 27 • 1 - 2 p.m. • Business Workshop

Underwritten by BloomNet

Uncovering the Latest Website Tips, Tricks and Trends

Saturday, June 28 • 3:15 - 5 p.m. • Business Session

Underwritten by BloomNet

Beyond THE BIO

with



Corrine Heck PFCI

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF FLOWERS?

I grew up in Apopka, Florida, where my family ran flower greenhouses, so flowers have always been a part of my life. My earliest memory goes back to when I was five years old, helping my mom in her greenhouse filled with African Violets. We'd spend hours getting them ready for the local farmers market.

From age five to thirteen, I spent every weekend selling flowers alongside my parents—it was my version of a "lemonade stand," and it sparked my love for business. For as long as I can remember, those early experiences planted the seeds (literally!) for my lifelong passion for flowers and entrepreneurship.

WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

As the Director of Awards for Panhellenic at the University of Florida, I was always drawn to the florals at our events. Whether it was for a high-profile VIP guest or a formal ceremony, the flowers stood out to me—they elevated the experience and made everything feel more special.

I realized that if I wanted to be part of high-end, beautifully crafted events, flowers were a natural starting point. That curiosity led me to a job at a local retail florist—and from there, I was hooked!

WHO WAS MOST INFLUENTIAL DURING YOUR EARLY DAYS IN THE INDUSTRY?

My best friend, Sherri Meyers, played a huge role in shaping my career. We met at a bridal show when she was a local cake baker, and she showed me how to sell flowers for luxury weddings. Her mentorship gave me the confidence to dream big and fully dive into my passion.

We became more than close friends—we became business allies. When I opened my flower shop across the street from her bakery, we built a one-stop wedding destination. With my flowers, her cakes, and my husband's photography, we were an unstoppable team. That experience of working with wedding professionals eventually led me to Details.

WHAT DID YOUR EDUCATION PROVIDE THAT RELATES TO YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TODAY?

When I first started out, having the opportunity to work with incredible professors was a huge advantage. I also had the chance to work with the UCF Business Incubator, which opened opportunities all over Florida. Winning the Rollins College Venture Pitch was another game-changer—it helped set the foundation for our long-term success.

We've worked with several universities, including Stetson and the

University of Florida, to mentor students and offer insights into the business side of the floral industry.

I serve on the board of Stetson University's Business School and Seed Your Future, both allow me to advocate for the next generation of florists and entrepreneurs. Education is a huge passion of mine, which is why we also launched Details University, a free masterclass series where we teach florists about business strategies, industry trends, and best practices from leading experts.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

Being the CEO of Details has been my favorite role! It allows me to channel my love for process, innovation, and education in a way that truly fulfills me.

One of the best parts of my job is traveling and connecting with florists who "get it"—the ones who appreciate the passion and effort we've poured into every detail of our software. The most rewarding feeling is seeing their excitement when they realize how much easier their business can run.

HOW ARE YOU MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN RETAIL FLORISTRY TODAY?

I'm making a difference in retail floristry by helping thousands of florists build stronger, more profitable businesses each year.

When a florist succeeds, it impacts their team, their families, their clients, and their suppliers. Every design they create spreads joy, and knowing we play a small part in that is incredibly fulfilling.

We're giving florists the tools to work smarter, not harder. I love seeing those "aha" moments when they realize how much time they can save and how smoothly their business can run. Watching them thrive is the best part of what I do.

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY?

I've spent my career learning every aspect of this industry. Over the years, I've built strong relationships and gained a deep appreciation for what makes the floral world tick.

I see my role in the future as someone who continues to push the industry forward. If I can play a small part in shaping the future of floristry, that would be incredibly fulfilling. My goal is to ensure that florists and everyone in the supply chain feel supported, valued, and empowered to keep doing what they love.

BEYOND THE BIO: WHO I AM AT HEART

At my core, I'm a problem solver, a creative thinker, and someone who loves bringing people together. While flowers and business are a huge part of my life, I'm also passionate about mentorship, travel, and building meaningful connections.

When I'm not working, you'll find me traveling or seeking out the best local spots. I love exploring new places, meeting inspiring people, and finding beauty in the small details.

What fuels me most is community. When people come together with a shared purpose, incredible things happen. That's why I'm always looking for ways to give back, whether through mentoring students, hosting workshops, or simply being a resource for florists who are looking to grow.

I'm very grateful for this journey and excited for what's ahead. The floral industry is evolving, and I'm honored to be part of shaping its future!

An opportunity to study with Corrine Heck during the Texas Floral Expo

Secrets of Top Event Florists: Turning Vision Into Profitable Designs

Sunday, June 29 • 8 - 9 a.m. • Business Session

Underwritten by Details

Beyond THE BIO

with

Vonda LaFever
AIFD CFD PFCI



WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF FLOWERS?

Picking wild violets and dandelions in the yard as a child is an early memory.

WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

My first job was cleaning shelves in a really cool flower shop. The owner was kind, encouraging and instilled in me a love of flowers – and encouraged me in the industry.

WHO WAS MOST INFLUENTIAL DURING YOUR EARLY DAYS IN THE INDUSTRY?

Peggy Harrison, the owner of the flower shop, managers at a local wholesale house in Iowa, Bobbi Ecker-Blanchford AIFD, Kearney Broussard AIFD and the articles written by Herb Mitchell AIFD in PFD magazine. So many since the VERY early days!

WHAT CONTRIBUTED MOST TO YOUR DESIGN EDUCATION?

My job at the flower shop with Peggy, working 1:1 on a daily basis – she not only influenced me, but was an excellent role model. I am also eternally grateful to the employees at Florist Supply in Des Moines, Iowa, who trusted me to work with and assist designers with preparations at their wholesale shows!

WHAT DID YOUR EDUCATION PROVIDE THAT RELATES TO YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TODAY?

The love of the industry, the desire to share what I've learned and pay it forward and that you always have more to learn.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

My current role, founder and CEO of Flower Clique!

HOW ARE YOU MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN RETAIL FLORISTRY TODAY?

With my experience as owner of a flower shop, I know how much hard work and dedication goes into building a successful business. With Flower Clique, our team uses our many areas of expertise to assist in the success of the shop, which allows the owner to focus on what they do best. There are few things more satisfying than seeing others succeed!

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY?

I see myself continuing to mentor and teach others to succeed, love our industry and become a better version of themselves.



Vonda and her daughter Ellie shop the ever so famous Maison & Objet Gift Show in Paris.



Beyond THE BIO

with

Lori Wilson PFCI



WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF FLOWERS?

One of my earliest memories of flowers is walking into our local flower shop with my grandmother. She was ordering flowers to send to my aunt, who lived in a state far, far away. At just seven years old, I was fascinated – and honestly a little puzzled – trying to figure out how these flowers we were choosing were going to travel all that way without wilting or dying!

WHAT EXPERIENCES LED TO YOUR INTEREST IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

To be honest, I stumbled into the floral industry by chance. I had no floral background, no design skills, no childhood flower shop job – but what I did have was an open mind. And once I stepped into this world, I was hooked. The beauty of the flowers pulled me in, but it was the people – the creative, kind and passionate hearts – that made me stay and fall completely in love with this industry.



Lori and her son, Reece "petal it forward" at a local senior center.

WHO WAS MOST INFLUENTIAL DURING YOUR EARLY DAYS IN THE INDUSTRY?

Vonda LaFever – without a doubt. She saw something in me early on that no one else did. Believe it or not, I actually started in this industry in more of a tech role. But Vonda quickly realized that wasn't where I belonged. She pushed for me to move into a position where I could connect with people, listen to their needs and figure out how we could truly help them. That shift changed everything for me, and I've never looked back!

WHAT DID YOUR EDUCATION PROVIDE THAT RELATES TO YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS TODAY?

I lean on my education more than I ever expected to. My communication degree shows up in so many ways – whether I'm working with florists, speaking to a crowd or leading a team discussion. And my Education degree? That's my secret weapon. It's helped me fine-tune how I teach, coach and create new training programs for Flower Clique, all with the goal of helping florists grow and succeed.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE JOB IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY?

Honestly? The one I have right now. I truly couldn't be happier. Every day, I get to do meaningful work alongside amazing people, and it just feels like exactly where I'm meant to be.

HOW ARE YOU MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN RETAIL FLORISTRY TODAY?

This is a tough one – I'd love to hear how others would answer it! But if I had to say, I believe I'm making a difference by being a trusted resource and sounding board for florists. I listen, I guide when needed and I help them problem-solve in ways that strengthen both their confidence and their business. Whether it's sharing strategies, offering encouragement or just reminding them they're not in this alone, my goal is to help florists feel supported and empowered every step of the way.

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF PLAYING IN THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY?

I just want to keep doing what I'm doing – supporting florists, helping them grow and being someone they can count on. If I can continue to make a positive impact and help move the industry forward, that's exactly where I want to be.



An opportunity to study with Vonda LaFever and Lori Wilson during the Texas Floral Expo

Service & Synergy: Build a Customer-First Dream Team

Saturday, June 28 • 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. • Business Session

Underwritten by Flower Clique



PLAN
YOUR
STAY



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AND CONFERENCE CENTER**
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TSFA Calendar of Events

Designer Credit | Beth O'Reilly AIFD CFD TMF
Featured presenter at the recent Texas Floral Spotlight in San Antonio.



MAY

- 1 May Day
- 5 Cinco de Mayo
- 6 National Nurses' Day
- 10 Hispanic Mother's Day
- 11 Mother's Day
- 15 Bring Flowers to Someone Day
- 16-19 Texas Master Florist Classes
in Leander
- 17 Armed Forces Day
- 26 Memorial Day

JUNE

- 7 World Caring Day
- 8 National Florists' Day and
Best Friends Day
- 12 National Red Rose Day
- 14 Flag Day
- 15 Fathers' Day
- 27-29 **TEXAS FLORAL EXPO
SECRETS** 2023
- 30 Social Media Day

JULY

- 4 Independence Day
- 20-25
TSFA Presents at ATAT Conference
- 27 Take Your Houseplants for a
Walk Day
- 30 International Day of Friendship

**INTRODUCING
TSFA'S NEW BLOG!**

Read More tsfa.org/blog



FIESTA FUN DURING THE TEXAS FLORAL SPOTLIGHT IN SAN ANTONIO



Platinum Level Texas Floral Education Underwriter Bill Doran Company opened their doors and made learning lots of fun with presenter Beth O'Reilly AIFD CFD TMF!



Scott Jewett and Beth O'Reilly developed the program theme for this event!

TSFA extends our appreciation to TSFA Past President Cheryl Vaughan CFD PFCI TMFA for chairing this spotlight!

Three design assistants brought their absolute best!

THANK YOU!

Dawson Clark TMF

Betsi Doherty TMF

Gaby Ponsaerts TMF

PRODUCT PARTNER

All product was provided by Bill Doran Company. A special thank you to Scott Jewett and all those at Bill Doran Company who contributed to the success of this event!



READ MORE ABOUT FIESTAS WITH FLAIR IN TSFA'S NEW BLOG!



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BRONZE



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