



# Seed Your Future and the Society of American Florists Form New Partnership to Promote Careers in Horticulture and Floriculture

## Organizations Joining Forces to Strengthen the Workforce Pipeline

MARTINSVILLE, Ind. (February 22, 2021) — Today, Seed Your Future and the Society of American Florists announced their plan to join forces to promote increased awareness of horticulture and floriculture and inspire more people to pursue careers working with flowers and plants. Citing their close mission alignment and shared desire to consolidate and prioritize resources to strengthen the industry and ensure a long-term pipeline of green-collar professionals, the leadership of both organizations enthusiastically approved the partnership.

The trade association, **Society of American Florists** (SAF) was chartered by an act of Congress in 1884 and has a proven track record of increasing support for floriculture by expanding consumer awareness of the power of flowers to improve lives, and by strengthening the trade with support for growers, wholesalers, distributors, manufacturers and retailers. The **Seed Your Future** (SYF) movement was founded in 2016 and has grown to a coalition of more than 200 partners, including horticulture companies, gardening organizations, schools, colleges, universities, public gardens, youth organizations, nonprofit organizations, and individual advocates united in their mission to promote horticulture and careers working with plants.

“We started the Seed Your Future movement in order to address a critical issue across the breadth of the horticulture industry,” said **Anna Ball**, CEO and chairman of the board of Ball Horticultural Company and co-chair of SYF. “There have never been so many career opportunities in horticulture, yet awareness of these opportunities was at an all-time low.” SYF has quickly achieved stunning results including the development of an award-winning website ([SeedYourFuture.org](http://SeedYourFuture.org)) with resources for educators, parents and students, opening their eyes to the diversity of careers across the art, science, technology, education and business of plants. And, in partnership with Scholastic, the global children’s publishing, education, and media company, SYF’s youth-focused **BLOOM! initiative** has reached more than 4.5 million students and 700,000 educators with their free eye-catching, fact-based content including educational and fun videos, lesson plans and student activities, plant-focused games and an interactive online learning module.

“As a start-up movement, Seed Your Future has been housed under the supportive fiscal agency of Longwood Gardens,” said **Susan E. Yoder**, executive director of Seed Your Future. “As we have grown and expanded our reach, we’ve been exploring a permanent home for our work. Joining forces and creating a new 501(c)3 entity under the leadership of SAF is the perfect partnership to reach our long-term goals to open more eyes to the power of plants and flowers and the rewards of a green-collar career.”

The Society of American Florists is equally enthusiastic about the prospect this partnership will have on their work. “In 2019, we established career and workforce development as a top priority of our strategic plan,” said **Chris Drummond**, AAF, PFCI, president of SAF and owner of Penny’s by Plaza Flowers in Philadelphia. “We looked around to see what others were already doing in this area, and we were impressed by the momentum of Seed Your Future. Instead of creating a new initiative for SAF, the most impactful decision was to join forces and work together to build more interest in careers across horticulture and floriculture.”

Operational and governance transitions will occur throughout the year, with a goal of late 2021 for the finalization of the partnership. In the meantime, both organizations will work full speed ahead on their 2021 initiatives. For Seed Your Future,

that means the creation of new videos and resources for youth, families and educators; and the continuation of their #YearOfPlantPower and #NatureNeverCloses campaigns to show how – especially during these times of the global health challenge – plants and flowers have the power to calm, soothe, heal, nourish and inspire. For the Society of American Florists, it is about advocating for the industry’s interests in Washington, D.C. and getting education, training and marketing resources into the floral community so the industry can provide outstanding flower and plant buying experiences.

“I’m eager to work with the leadership and staff of Seed Your Future,” said **Kate Penn**, CEO of the Society of American Florists. “By teaming up, we can do so much more to ensure new talent is always joining the industry by showcasing both the power of plants and flowers, and the rewarding career opportunities available in horticulture and floriculture.”

*About the Society of American Florists*

*The Society of American Florists is the association that connects and cultivates a thriving floral community through training, education, marketing resources and advocacy. Our vision: The power of flowers in every life. For more information, visit [SAFNow.org](http://SAFNow.org).*

*About Seed Your Future*

*Seed Your Future is a national movement to promote horticulture and inspire people to pursue careers working with plants. Supported by more than 200 partner organizations, we envision a U.S. where everyone understands and values the importance of plants and the people who work in the art, science, technology, education and business of horticulture. For more information, visit [SeedYourFuture.org](http://SeedYourFuture.org).*