That’s been Pi Alpha Xi’s motto for nearly 90 years. In 1923 a group of Cornell faculty lead by Arno Nehrling, had a vision to create an honor society to recognize academic achievement of floriculture students. Over the decades, Pi Alpha Xi has morphed to keep pace with changes in horticulture programs. Today, 23 active chapters gather on university campuses to honor all students, faculty, alumni, and industry leaders who excel in horticulture.

Active chapters exist across the United States at universities offering horticulture studies. If you don’t know if there is a chapter on your campus, check the list of chapters given on the PAX website or contact me and I’ll let you know. If your campus chapter is inactive, PAX National can provide guidance for reactivation.

I feel privileged to serve as President of Pi Alpha Xi National. My affiliation with Pi Alpha Xi goes back to the spring semester of 1975 when I was inducted into the Zeta Chapter at Rutgers University. My membership certificate is signed by Dr. Marvin C. Carbonneau, President (Beta 155; PAX Fellow, 1998); Dr. Roy A. Larson, National Secretary-Treasurer (Alpha 339; PAX Fellow, 1992); and Dr. Ellen Paparozzi, who was President of the Zeta Chapter (Zeta 175) and is now National Past-President. Throughout my career, I’ve maintained my connection with Pi Alpha Xi as a graduate student in The Ohio State University Epsilon Chapter, as a faculty advisor of the Kansas State University Omega Chapter, and now as a member in the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Alpha Beta Chapter. My history is not unusual for those who have careers at universities. However, there are many members who have not had their careers tied to universities and we need to reach out and engage our alumni at the chapter and national levels.

My goal as president is to spread the word that Pi Alpha Xi honors excellence in all of horticulture, not just our founding discipline of floriculture. We recognize horticultural diversity through the annual photography contest showcased at the annual ASHS conference. In the recent revision of the Constitution and By-laws, we restructured two committees - Member Services and Student Activities - to address today’s needs of our members and students at the national level.

Of course, Pi Alpha Xi can only continue to excel if your officers have your help and support and if you become engaged in the campus chapters.

Best regards,

Mary Lewnes Albrecht, PhD, Zeta 166
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