Letter from your President

Dear Friends of the Lotus,

As we rapidly approach summer, many of us are in the midst of grading exams and final projects for students. Some of those students are about to embark on new paths. Whether the paths are new careers, graduate school, international travel, or reconnecting with their roots, we are exuberant to see their potential for success knowing that in some small way we were able to contribute to their future. Such is the hope for tomorrow.

Many of you are aware that the efforts undertaken last year to partner with AHS, AFE, ACB and other horticultural groups to develop an annual “National Collegiate Undergraduate Horticulture Convention” failed to resolve declining undergraduate participation in sponsored events. The Annual Floral Evaluation and Design Competition was once again cancelled due to limited participation by PAX chapters, competition from other events and budgetary challenges at many institutions. Personally, I do not see these challenges going away anytime soon. Hope remains as PAX, ASHS and ACB leaders have agreed to set aside time at the ASHS National meeting in August to openly and honestly evaluate what avenue will best serve our discipline. Look for additional information about this meeting in the near future.

The Pi Alpha Xi Photography Contest is highly anticipated again this year. We went digital last year and will maintain this format in 2010. Announcements for entering the contest have appeared in the ASHS Newsletter and PAX website (http://ashs.org/pax). Remember the contest supports scholarships to students in local chapters so encourage everyone to participate.

My time as PAX President is rapidly drawing to a close. I too will be taking a new path in the future. Not just because I will be stepping down from the presidency, but because I have chosen a new career path. In June, I will be joining Monsanto as their Biotechnology Greenhouse Management Platform Lead. I remain honored to be a PAX member and will cherish the friendships and memories of my time as president. I look forward to maintaining close relationships with everyone and I wish you all a great summer.

With positive and forward thoughts,

Daniel

Daniel Warnock, President
University of Illinois
1029 Plant Science Lab
1201 S. Dorner Drive
Urbana, IL 61801
Email: dwarnock@uiuc.edu
Phone: 217-244-9380
Fax: 217-244-3469

John C. Peterson, Vice President
California Polytechnic State University
Horticulture & Crop Science Department
1 Grand Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
Email: drjohncp@calpoly.edu
Phone: 805-756-1237
Fax: 805-756-6504

Paul Thomas, Secretary-Treasurer
University of Georgia
Dept. Extension Horticulture
222 Hoke Smith Building
Athens, GA 30602-4356
Email: pathomas@uga.edu
Phone: 706-542-2861
Fax: 706-542-2375

Dawn Mancini, Executive Secretary (ex-officio)
American Society for Horticultural Science
113 South West Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314-2851
Email: webmaster@ashs.org
Phone: 703-836-4606
Fax: 703-836-2024

Ellen Paparozzi, Immediate Past President
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
377 Plant Sciences
Department of Agronomy & Horticulture
Lincoln, NE 68583-0724
Email: etp1@unl.edu
Phone: 402-472-1129
Fax: 402-472-8650

Doug Needham, Past President
Longwood Gardens
Department of Education
P. O. Box 501
Kennett Square, PA 19348-0501
Email: dneedham@longwoodgardens.org
Phone: 610-388-1000
Fax: 610-388-2908

Newsletter Editor
Dr. John C. Peterson
California Polytechnic State University
Every issue of the Lotus Leaflet is an opportunity for members to share information about your activities, what’s working or not, what’s on your minds. We welcome all submissions.
(Please send your submissions to drjohncp@calpoly.edu.)

From California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

Last spring we wrote that our Horticulture and Crop Science Department (HCS) engaged the well-respected Iowa-based firm, Stamats, for a marketing study to enable HCS to better identify and communicate with qualified potential students. The data gathered told us that students needed more time to fully explore their options before having to declare a specific major. They reacted positively to environmental concepts, such as sustainability, but they do not have a clear understanding of what horticulture and crop science is. As a result of the study, we have changed our curriculum to offer a single broad major (Agricultural and Environmental Plant Sciences) which would allow students to explore a variety of concentrations and specializations before they decide exactly what it is they want to study.

As part of their work, Stamats looked into the tools and terminology used by our department to communicate with students. This gave us a starting point for a brand portfolio of comprehensive marketing materials for student recruitment to Cal Poly, materials written in a language that 18-year-old students—not 50-something PhDs—appreciate. This brand portfolio includes a statement of what HCS represents (our “promise”), a set of departmental attributes, a tagline, and a thumbnail sketch of the HCS Department (our “elevator speech”).

Stamats invited a sampling of Cal Poly alumni, current students and faculty to participate in the online testing of six HCS promise statements. Survey results showed that audiences acknowledged the phrases “real-world experience” and “next generation of leaders in the agricultural and environmental plant sciences” as particularly compelling for HCS. The statement that best seems to embrace these ideas is:

The Cal Poly Horticulture and Crop Science Department excels at providing innovative academics, technical skills training, and real-world experience to the next generation of leaders in the agricultural and environmental plant sciences.

This is a concise articulation of what we promise to our target audiences — something we hope has value for prospective students personally. In a highly competitive marketplace, it is becoming increasingly important to build our strong reputation based on the distinctive or unique competencies
Cal Poly offers. Approving and using this promise statement allows HCS faculty, staff, alumni and students to speak with a powerful, united voice.

Departmental attributes are essential tools for highlighting the important characteristics of the Cal Poly experience, regardless of which concentration a student might choose. Attributes consisted of:

- Collaborative
- Learn by Doing
- Broad Spectrum of Opportunities
- Real-world Applications
- Truly Personal Advising
- Work in Industry Right on Campus
- The Science Behind the Practical Applications
- Passion for Plants

Through on-campus interviews of departmental leaders, instructors and staff representing each of the seven concentrations we offer, Stamats derived these attributes that speak to the many facets of the Cal Poly experience and can be used consistently in all HCS materials.

Stamats also developed a tagline for HCS, a succinct, memorable, meaningful statement that provides an instant association with the HCS Department. Based on a comprehensive review of the department, its promise and attributes, Stamats recommended:

**Learn. Do. Lead.**

This tagline incorporates the first word of the University’s “Learn by Doing” tagline, which provides a vital connection to the larger University. “Do” refers to several aspects of a Cal Poly education, including hands-on experiences, real-world applications and internships. It implies that our students are not just *learning*, they’re out there in the real world *doing*. “Do” says to employers that HCS students offer more than knowledge; they offer critical skills and abilities right out of the block. “Lead” not only refers to how HCS prepares the next generation of leaders in the agricultural and environmental plant sciences, but proclaims an aspiration for our students, who want to come out of college ready to make a difference, ready to inspire and ready to lead. “Lead” also tells an employer that Cal Poly students are well prepared to lead, supervise and manage.
“Learn. Do. Lead.” also gives us the foundation for a succinct description of the HCS Department, its offerings and its results that incorporates elements of our promise and attributes in a way that will foster the Department’s reputation. People call this an “elevator speech,” or a conversation guide for a casual setting that any student, faculty or alumnus can use. The HCS elevator speech is:

The Horticulture and Crop Science Department at Cal Poly offers students an opportunity not just to learn, but learn by doing. Our students benefit from a broad spectrum of opportunities ranging from hands-on experiences in our working fields, groves, nurseries and greenhouses to real world applications through internships and other collaborations with our industry partners. We also excel in providing a foundational plant science background and instilling a passion for plants as we produce the next generation of leaders in the agricultural and environmental plant sciences.

With all this information and so many new tools at our disposal, the HCS Department is committed to a stepped-up recruitment effort for Cal Poly students. We are using our promise, attributes and tagline in our new recruitment and promotional materials. We are developing lists and descriptions of career possibilities to help fill in the blanks for prospective students who have a general idea of their interest, but little specific knowledge of outcomes and careers. This includes gathering data from alumni about their jobs, number of job offers or percent working in their desired fields. We are developing brochures for the one major and each concentration that discuss outcomes, distinctive strengths and advantages, a semester by semester sequence of courses, hands-on learning opportunities and how to find more information on our website. This integrated marketing plan incorporates and guides all our future marketing and communication efforts.

To be successful, this marketing program requires department-wide (as well as campus-wide) acceptance and endorsement. Each individual in our department needs to consider this campaign his or her responsibility. Likewise, we call upon students, their parents and alumni to be champions of HCS, helping us leverage the impact of third-party endorsements and word-of-mouth communication. Not only does HCS have to say it right—we have to live it too.
2010 Open Horticultural Photography Contest  
Sponsored by Pi Alpha Xi – The Honor Society for Horticulture

**Purpose:** To promote Pi Alpha Xi (PAX) to ASHS membership, to support PAX’s scholarship program, and to encourage horticulture-related photography. **Contestants need not be members of PAX to participate.**

Four entry categories:

- **Flower** – The flower, flowers, or flower parts of a plant; or a floral arrangement.
- **Plant** – A plant or plant part, other than flowers.
- **Landscape** – A landscape or interiorscape with plants as the principal focus.
- **Challenge category – Fruiting structures** (fungi and more)

**Regulations:** Contestants must submit image files, technical data cards and fees 1) to Bob Stamps, Univ. of Florida, 2725 South Binion Road, Apopka, FL 32703-8504 by July 23rd or 2) at the ASHS Registration Desk prior to the beginning of Poster Session I at the ASHS annual conference. The entry fee is $10 per image, by check made payable to Pi Alpha Xi. Images should not be excessively manipulated and should conform to “truth in Nature” standards.

You may enter up to four (4) images (overall total)—all in one category or distributed among categories. Image files should be numbered (1, 2, 3, 4) to correspond with the numbers on the Digital Image Data cards below, but numbers, dates, borders, copyright symbols, etc. (i.e., human artifacts) cannot be visible/present on the image. A text file—giving the photographer’s name, image numbers, entry categories and subject matter—and two digital images for each entry in *.jpg format (jpg, joint photographic experts group)—one low resolution for projection (file size of 1 MB or less) and one high resolution for printing (if a winner)—are required. Files should be supplied on a CD labeled with your name and address and readable by PC-based applications. Please note that you can have your prints, negatives and slides (transparencies) converted to digital images to enter this contest.

**Use of photographs:** Rights to all images are granted to PAX for potential use by PAX and ASHS in advertising, promotional, or fund-raising materials, and/or publications of the societies without monetary compensation to the photographer; however, photographer credits will accompany each use.

**Judging:** Judges will score the photographs according to the following criteria.

- **Technical** (25 pts) Focus, exposure, color, free from blemishes, etc.
- **Impact** (25 pts) Eye-catching, distinctive.
- **Composition** (25 pts) Effective arrangement of elements.
- **Creativity** (25 pts) Unique viewpoint, lighting or perspective.

**Awards:** Three awards in each category and Best of Show will be announced at the Pi Alpha Xi luncheon during the ASHS annual conference.

- **First place:** $20 and ribbon
- **Second place:** $10 and ribbon
- **Third place:** $5 and ribbon
- **Best of Show:** $25 and ribbon

**ADDITIONAL RULES AND INFORMATION:** Images/photos must be the original work of the person entering the contest. PAX cannot be responsible for damage or loss of entries and CDs will not be returned. Each person submitting entries must sign the entry form to acknowledge acceptance of all entry rules.

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Congratulations to the 2009–10 initiates from the national offices of Pi Alpha Xi. We are honored to have you join us in Pi Alpha Xi and we look forward to following your success in horticulture.

**Colorado State University**  
*Chi—November 10, 2009*  
740 Remy Van Grack  
741 Justin Feigitsch  
742 Keely McDonald  
743 Nicole Covington

**Iowa State University**  
*Alpha Theta—April 12, 2010*  
133 Amy Horras  
134 Tim Valicka  
135 Rachel Kreis  
136 Linley Davidson  
137 Kara Simon  
138 Nicholas Dunlap  
139 Brandon Carpenter  
140 Breanne Kastler  
141 Crystal Seeley  
142 Quincy Law  
143 Lisa Wasko  
144 Kevin Duerfeldt

**The Pennsylvania State University**  
*Gamma—November 17, 2009*  
1105 James Wyble  
1106 Brittney Hunter  
1107 Nicholas Steffan  
*Gamma—March 18, 2010*  
1108 Alison Roch  
1109 Margaret Hoffman

**South Dakota State University**  
*Phi—April 29, 2010*  
234 Natalie E. Erdman  
235 Shannon E. Fischer  
236 Cara A. Hanson  
237 Laura J. Henery  
238 Andrew R. Jacobs  
239 Christopher K. Klay  
240 Matthew R. Knutson  
241 Lucas W. Lesher  
242 Cole D. Neubauer  
243 Ashley E. Marrin  
244 Charlotte M. Vetter

**Texas State University**  
*Alpha Xi—April 20, 2010*  
28 Cole Etheredge  
29 Gregory Frank  
30 Ramona Gallia  
31 William Glenn  
32 Cale Heinrich  
33 Kymberli Herron  
34 Erica Meier  
35 Mindi Miller

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University**  
*Kappa—February 25, 2010*  
650 Stephanie Barker  
651 Zeb Ethier  
652 Jason Focht  
653 Kathleen Gudman  
654 Ned Harm  
655 Paul Hutcheson  
656 Daniel King  
657 Samantha Massa  
658 Kerry Meier  
659 Kip Osbornough  
660 John Pancake  
661 Katherine Pate  
662 Tish Poteet  
663 Jonathan Snelson  
664 Cathleen Violand  
665 Evan Ware  
666 Josh Willis

**University of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign**  
*Beta—April 5, 2009*  
698 Terese Adamiec  
699 Michael Annes  
700 Evan Hultine  
701 Veronica Hutchinson  
702 Samuel A. Kibler  
703 Jimmy Klick  
704 Candice Miller  
705 Steven McKenzie Still

**University of Nebraska—Lincoln**  
*Alpha Gamma—April 17, 2010*  
275 Michael S. Fallon  
276 Deb Hegemann  
277 Benjamin A. Loseke  
278 Aaron M. Sedivy  
279 Katie Wiepen

**University of Wisconsin—River Falls**  
*Alpha Zeta—November 30, 2009*  
193 Amber Hahn  
194 Anthony Celley  
195 Brita Thompson  
196 Heather Lee  
197 Joanna Kusilek  
198 Molly Gilbert  
199 Richard Hoff  
200 Ryan Hansen  
201 Stacey Reetz  
202 William Gerten
mission
The purpose of Pi Alpha Xi, the honor society for horticulture, is to recognize high scholarship, to foster good relationships among its members, to promote or to facilitate the exchange of ideas among members of the professions, and to establish cordial relations among students, educators and industry members.

chapter dues
Chapter dues are $20 and due January 1st. Please send to:

   Dawn Mancini  
   American Society for Horticultural Science  
   113 South West Street, Suite 200  
   Alexandria, VA 22314-2851

If you are unsure if your chapter’s dues were paid, please contact Dawn at dmancini@ashs.org.

Initiate Fees are $25 (one-time fee), for pin, certificate and mailing.