

## 2017 PAX National Fellow

Robert E. Lyons, Lambda 94



Robert E. Lyons graduated from Rutgers College of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey with a B.A. in Biology. He then attended the University of Minnesota earning both the M.S. and Ph.D. in Horticultural Science. It was at the University of Minnesota where he was initiated into Pi Alpha Xi. He started his professional career at Virginia Tech where he was co-founder and director of the VT Horticulture Gardens. After 17 years, he assumed the J.C. Raulston Distinguished Professor chair in Horticultural Science at North Carolina State University where he was also the Director of the JC Raulston Arboretum. He ended his career at the University of Delaware where he was the Director of the Longwood Graduate Program in Public Horticulture.

Over the course of his career, Bob received numerous awards recognizing his contributions to horticulture, and specifically, to public horticulture, including the Award of Merit from the American Public Gardens Association, Fellow in the American Society for Horticultural Science, Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award from the University of Minnesota, Wine Award for undergraduate teaching at Virginia Tech, Chadwick Award from the American Nursery and Landscape Association, and Outstanding Educator Award from the American Society for Horticultural Science.

Professionally, Bob has contributed to the advancement of horticulture through his work as a photographer and a scientist, combining both the art and science of horticulture into a career that spans over 30 years. Early in his career, his research focused on the physiological and environmental conditions that trigger flowering in herbaceous perennials. Later on, he shifted his focus to the human-plant interaction and various aspects of public garden management and operation.

Outside of his role as a university professor, he has been involved with Hortiopia, Inc., a publisher of plant reference software since founding in 1991. He has also been a consulting editor the Public Horticulture section of *HortTechnology*, the primary outreach publication of the American Society for Horticultural Science. Bob is probably best known for his promotion of horticulture through his photography, being a sought after speaker on the topic of horticultural photography, landscape and garden design and maintenance, and a judge of photography and garden shows. It is for his contributions to horticulture, the promotion of horticulture with the gardening and non-gardening public, and his work with the Pi Alpha Xi Photography Contest over the years, that Bob is nominated for Fellow of Pi Alpha Xi.