2015 PAX National Fellow

Paul A. Thomas, Sigma 138

Paul A. Thomas graduated with an AS from William Rainey Harper College (Illinois). He attended Southern Illinois University, earning a BA and an MS, where he became a member of Pi Alpha Xi. He later attended Pennsylvania State University earning his PhD. He worked for the USDA-ARS in Peoria, Illinois before joining the faculty at The University of Georgia in 1990.

In recognition of his contributions to students and industry, he has received numerous awards including seven times the Outstanding Extension Publication/ Educational Material/ Newsletter Award from the American Society for Horticultural Science and the Kenneth Post Award for Graduate Research in Floriculture chosen by the Floriculture Working Group of ASHS. He was named one of the Top Twenty Most Influential Faculty in the U.S. Floriculture Industry by Greenhouse Grower Magazine. He has received numerous other awards from the Southern Region ASHS, the South East Greenhouse Conference Board of Directors, and the Georgia Society of Association Executives. Closer to home he has received numerous teaching awards from the University of Georgia including the Agricultural Alumni Association Outstanding Faculty Award for Research, Teaching and Extension; the Career Services Center Positive Career Impact Certificate (three times); and the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences D.W. Brooks Award for Excellence in Diversity.

Paul has always enjoyed working with students. Over the years, he has taught Greenhouse Management, Interiorscaping and Tropical Plant Identification, Introduction to Horticulture, Greenhouse Management for Teachers, and Floral Design Principles. Students always rate his courses as excellent and appreciate Paul’s ability to relate theory to practice. He has also mentored undergraduate students conducting research and applying to national scholarships and internship programs, and served as major professor and on many committees for Master and doctoral students.

Paul is dedicated to the goals and ideals of Pi Alpha Xi and has supported and served the organization in many different capacities: as advisor of the UGA Tau Chapter of PAX since 2005, on numerous PAX National committees, and National Secretary (2009-2010).

PAX Fellow is presented to Paul A. Thomas in recognition of his dedicated service and distinguished leadership to horticulture, students, colleagues in the academy, and the public.