

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Marvin and Dwight: Our New Ambassadors

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Two deserving individuals—one a long-time GrowerTalks contributing hortistician—have earned the brand new American Floral Endowment (AFE) Ambassador Awards. The AFE Ambassador Award “recognizes an individual, organization or institution in the floral community for their exceptional leadership, advocacy and devoted service to the Endowment’s mission.”

By acting as an ambassador and champion of AFE, the recipient reinforces the Endowment’s advancements in floriculture research, education and innovation. The award is chosen through a nomination process by AFE’s Board of Trustees.

The recipients were announced during AFE’s Friends of Floral Annual Donor Event & Reception held in conjunction with SAF’s convention back in September.

The first-ever recipients of this award, Dr. Marvin Miller of Ball Horticultural Company, and Dwight Larimer, formerly of Smithers-Oasis/DESIGN MASTER, were both surprised with the recognition and were honored for their advocacy, support and leadership through their involvement with the Endowment.

Pictured left to right: Dwight Larimer; AFE Executive Director Debi Chedester, AAF; Marvin Miller; and Cathy Nell with her husband, Terri, the newest member of SAF’s Hall of Fame.

Marvin has 40 years of industry service as Market Research Manager for Ball Horticultural Company. He’s been with the company since 1983. He has a B.S. in Horticulture and an M.S. in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University, and a Ph.D. in Food and Resource Economics, with a major in Agricultural Marketing from the University of Florida. The focus of his research efforts involves the changing structure, conduct and performance of the horticulture industry.

Through AFE, Dr. Miller is a past Trustee who served multiple terms, continued as an Emeritus member, and still

sits on the Research Committee. He provides expertise in research for both AFE directly and the Floriculture Nursery & Research Initiative (FNRI) projects.

Dwight has been an unofficial ambassador to AFE for over a decade. With his 40-plus years of industry service, he's leveraged his knowledge and industry connections to support the industry and AFE. In addition to his terms as a Trustee, Dwight also served as AFE's Chairman of the Board from 2016 to 2018. Additionally, and throughout his Board service, he served on AFE's Education, Floral Marketing Fund (FMF) and PR/Development Committees—serving as Chair for both Education and FMF.

With a passion for education and young professionals, Dwight helped create AFE's Young Professionals Council in 2015, serving as the Board Liaison to the group, and developing programs to support their professional development. Currently, he still serves as Chair of AFE's Vic & Margaret Ball Internship Committee, a program that places undergraduate students in three, four or six-month internships in floriculture production. **GT**