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A New Chapter Opens for TSFA Executive Director Dianna Nordman AAF

Some thirty two years ago, in 1991, a young woman, well versed in finance and serving as Manager of the TSFA Credit Union, accepted the promotion as Executive Director of the Texas State Florists' Association. Over three decades, she has celebrated the peaks and addressed the valleys that have contributed to an association that is known today as one of the strongest floral associations in the country with achievements on multiple platforms. At the dawn of her retirement, we highlight a few of the accomplishments that will define the legacy of TSFA Executive Director Dianna Nordman AAF.

Her thorough understanding, that an association is centered around member representation, underlies each advancement. She has long directed projects to completion while always giving the credit to others. She has long understood that her purpose was focused on the greater good, illustrated best by her work with the Texas Department of Agriculture at the onset of Covid. Her dedicated work, on behalf of TSFA, resulted in listing Texas florists and their suppliers as essential businesses, keeping doors open throughout the pandemic. While this work addressed a vital member need, it also provided an opportunity for the Texas floral industry to excel during this most challenging time.

In the early days, time was spent overseeing TSFA Conventions with more than a thousand attendees and more than one hundred industry vendors. You can only imagine the level of work that went into the management of an event of this size. The TSFA Convention along with an Insurance Program, Credit Union and a newly formed Texas Floral Endowment were only a few of the ways that she spent those early days!

TSFA had built a headquarters building, just prior to Dianna becoming Executive Director. When our insurance program ceased to exist, due to changes directed by the insurance industry, the TSFA Board of Directors worked through the financial challenges with tremendous guidance from Dianna. Her frugal ways and attention to detail, along with dedicated member involvement, reviewed our needs and a look at the available real estate surrounding Austin. Investing in the building, where we office today, was the result of this extensive research.

Continuing education for both member and non-member evolved over the years in a variety of ways with the best of the best secured to teach the business of flowers as well as the varying trends and techniques to ensure the importance of professional floral design. This education is offered today, in a variety of formats to include alternating the Texas Floral Expo and Forum annually with additional opportunities through Texas Floral Showcases and Spotlights.

Shared in the article announcing her as the 2022 Floriology Perennial Award Recipient, BloomNet celebrated her success. “Dianna will long be remembered for her integral role in managing the many aspects of TSFA and the Texas Floral Endowment and overseeing Certification for Texas High School Students. The Certification Program, that for over the course of nearly two decades, has helped to foster the next generation of floral designers and meet retail florists’ ongoing need for talent. Working hand-in-hand with the TSFA Education Committee, Dianna helped develop the Texas High School Level 1 and Level 2 Certification program, which is among the Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) approved list of high school certifications. What sets TSFA’s program apart is that it is industry-based with a hands-on component. To accommodate thousands of test takers, a digital grading platform was developed to streamline scoring. This platform was truly the brainchild of Dianna and also opened the door to Knowledge based certification when the pandemic ceased in person testing. A quick pivot opened new opportunities. The revenue streams that this program offers, with the oversight of the TSFA Finance Committee and TSFA Board of Directors, has secured TSFA’s future and significantly contributes to Dianna’s legacy.”

During the years of certification development, TSFA also wrote the Floral Design Curriculum that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved with the highest possible rating of 100% TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). This curriculum continues to be taught by Texas High School Floral Design Teachers and though it is not required for certification, teachers find it most helpful in preparation of coursework.

Highlighted in the Perennial Award recognition, “In both of these examples, Dianna has been the one behind the scenes, dotting the i’s and crossing the t’s. She is able to take the visions of others and help them achieve those visions. Not everyone can set aside their own ego and work with others towards shared success. Dianna has done just that because she cares about the association and its mission. She has, for over 30 years, seen value and purpose in TSFA. She truly loves the association and the members.”

It is easy to see why TSFA awarded her the Lifetime Achievement Award not once, but twice. It is easy to see why the National Alliance of Floral Associations looked to her for leadership. It is easy to see why the Board of Trustees of the AIFD Foundation appreciated her guidance.

...and now her retirement from TSFA opens a new chapter filled with the gift of time and the love of family. When Dianna began her role as TSFA Executive Director, she was a single mother of two young children. With Scott and Siobhan now having families of their own and her husband Karl, by her side, to share the love of five grandchildren who light up their life, we have no doubt that the best is yet to come!

TSFA President Susan Piland AIFD CFD TMF recently shared with the TSFA membership “Let us all wish TSFA Executive Director Dianna Nordman AAF a retirement blooming with relaxation, adventure and new opportunities. Over the years, her contributions have been invaluable and her forward thinking has provided deep roots for a strong foundation. Dianna’s legacy will forever be part of the history of TSFA and we are forever grateful.”

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