

# floral management

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## A BOLD NEW FUTURE FOR THE INDUSTRY – AND SAF

> Over the past year, the Society of American Florists' board of directors and staff have been challenged to answer fundamental questions about our industry and our organization: What are the biggest challenges we face, and which ones is SAF uniquely positioned to help solve?

SAF's new strategic plan answers those questions, and in doing so, unifies and energizes the organization and our industry.

The plan, driven by direct feedback from members and nonmembers, volunteer leaders and staff, along with expert counsel from an outside third party, empowers our 135-year-old organization to more robustly engage with pressing challenges facing floral professionals today — including a critical labor shortage — and to play a central role in connecting and creating a thriving floral community in the future.

Moving forward, we will double down on our current strengths — government relations, education and marketing. We will also tackle issues that we know have the biggest impact on our members' ability to thrive, and in doing so, we will help create a more unified, energized industry.

Specifically, the new plan focuses on connecting industry members who want to learn, share ideas and grow; helping the industry recruit and retain talent; and providing guidance to the industry to prepare for and navigate the future.

These issues came up repeatedly during surveys of current and former members. You told us you're struggling with how to get a handle on labor, where to go for help, and how to create a business that's durable and successful in a time of real change.

By looking closely at these issues, and the role SAF is uniquely situated to play in addressing them, we've been able to craft a strategy that allows SAF to respond nimbly with new services, resources and support.

In addition, the plan builds on our long and active history in government relations as a trusted partner to our members, other industry groups,



Congress and government agencies. SAF will continue to work with the deep bench of lobbying resources with our longtime partner Cornerstone Government Affairs.

Indeed, the SAF-Cornerstone partnership has helped us achieve significant regulatory and legislative successes in recent years, including increased funding for the Floriculture and Nursery Research Initiative and Floriculture Crops Report, and a heightened profile for SAF and key industry issues year round on Capitol Hill and during SAF's annual Congressional Action Days. SAF will remain the face of floriculture in Washington, advocating for the issues that matter most to our industry.

SAF also is still steadfast in its commitment to being an important marketing resource. We will continue to help you drive local sales and create local awareness of the power of flowers and plants with our rich pool of local marketing resources, including Petal it Forward, university research on the benefits of floral gifts, ready-to-go digital and print marketing materials and more.

I look forward to telling you more about our bold new mission during the "State of the Industry — and SAF" address at SAF Amelia Island 2019. We will also livestream the presentation on Facebook on Thursday, Sept. 19, at 7:30 a.m. Eastern.

In the meantime, if you have questions about anything, please contact me or hop on [safnow.org](http://safnow.org) and ask away via our LiveChat. Thank you for your support of SAF, and I hope to catch up with you at SAF Amelia Island 2019. 🌸

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