

**PRESS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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[LaurenS@AmericanHort.org](mailto:LaurenS@AmericanHort.org) | (614) 884-1154 (direct)**AmericanHort's Cultivate'17 Experiences Record Numbers**

Columbus, OH -- The preeminent AmericanHort event Cultivate'17 continued to impress, inspire, and invigorate attendees this past July in Columbus, Ohio. A record number of 10,016 attendees from 34 countries and across all industry segments attended the bigger and bolder event.

Cultivate'17 is the largest trade show hosted annually at the Greater Columbus Convention Center and was the first event to use the entirety of the newly renovated space, which included the addition of 30,000 square feet to the trade show floor. Nearly 700 exhibitors showcased products and services and utilized the increased trade show space to its full advantage.

Ken Fisher, AmericanHort President and CEO, said, "We enjoyed strong performance and growth at Cultivate'17 by just about every measure. Exhibit space and exhibitors were up nearly 12% and overall attendance by about 5%. We had great feedback on the refreshed event layout, education, tours, keynotes, and receptions. The AmericanHort team is already hard at work preparing for Cultivate'18 and all great things to come from AmericanHort."

Highlights from the annual industry event included the opening keynote by Jon Gordon, renowned author and business expert. Gordon spoke on the power of positivity in work and life and how positive attitudes can transform a business for the better. AmericanHort CEO and President Ken Fisher, Senior Vice President Craig Regelbrugge, and Chief Economist Charlie Hall, PhD, presented a State of the Industry address, as well. The address detailed both current and upcoming business, legislative, and economic challenges for industry businesses, as well as outlined strategies to address challenges and to promote collective industry growth.

Cultivate'17 also debuted CareerUP, a first-of-its-kind event that welcomed nearly 150 young professionals for a day of communication skill development, stories from industry trailblazers, and discussions on thriving as a young professional in the industry. Stephanie Barlow from Dickman Farms and AmericanHort GenNext Community Coordinator emceed the event, while Nancy Fisher (The Ohio State University) led a morning workshop on high-stakes communication. Bridget Behe, PhD (Michigan State University), Kelly Norris (Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden), Steve Black (Raemelton Farm), and Tyler Baras (Hort Americas), all shared their experiences and best advice for cultivating a meaningful horticulture career.

Over 60 awards were presented at the [Interior Plantscape Awards Celebration](#), which recognized notable achievements of interiorscape businesses. *GPN* magazine hosted their annual reception applauding this year's class of [40 Under 40 recipients](#), and [Greenhouse Grower's Evening of Excellence](#) was again a showcase of the industry's finest. In addition, AmericanHort along with the Garden Center Group presented [16 Retailers' Choice Awards](#) for retailers' favorite products and plants from the show floor.

AmericanHort hosted several industry groups and welcomed them to Cultivate, including the National Interiorscape Network, Garden Writers Association, California Associations of Nurseries and Garden Centers, America in Bloom, Green Plants for Green Buildings, and ECGC.

Tom Demaline, AmericanHort Chairman of the Board and president of Willoway Nurseries, also an exhibiting company, commented, "The new and refreshed atmosphere of Cultivate'17 was felt by everyone. There seemed to be more conversations happening on the trade show floor, more discussions about industry trends and events, and just all around more energy. The AmericanHort team certainly addressed the needs of the industry for an all-encompassing event and then some!"

Cultivate'18 will be held July 14-17, 2018, in Columbus, OH.

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The AmericanHort community includes professionals from all facets of the industry. From growers to retailers, breeders to installers, suppliers to innovators, students to researchers, and everyone in between, businesses across the horticulture industry call AmericanHort their inspiration, voice, community, success, business partner, leader, and advocate. With \$163 billion of market influence and the generation of 1.15 million jobs, the horticulture industry is a key player in the global economy. AmericanHort supports businesses in their continuous growth and success with knowledge resources, staff development, in-person meetings, and government advocacy. The strength of our influence depends on the strength of our collaboration, and AmericanHort unites the industry as a major force.