

PURSuing PASSION AND THE INDUSTRY'S FUTURE

The horticulture industry is full of passionate people. That passion is the foundation of our industry and what helps drive it forward.

Karen Schneck is passionate about horticulture and she hasn't even "officially" become a horticulture professional — but she will soon. She is a senior at Kansas State University and is the 2018 GPN/Nexus Intern of the Year.

Karen "inherited" her love for plants and gardening from her mother and grandmother at a young age. It is also what led her to pursue a degree in horticulture at KSU.

"Plants are happiness. I just find great satisfaction in watching little plants take off ... It's something special and magical," she says.

In 2017, Karen's passion took her to Mount Vernon, Washington, where she completed a six-month internship at Skagit Horticulture.

It was there that she had the opportunity to really delve into the entire production process and learn about all of the different elements it takes to commercially produce a plant. "Being able to put meaning and use to a passion is what I have found to be the key thing that makes growers stand out," Karen wrote in her application essay.

Karen believes that her desire to work in this industry was really reinforced by her internship at Skagit.

"Having hands on experience, especially for six months, has made me confident that I love the greenhouse and want to grow plants the rest of my life. If I had not had a six-month internship, I would not have the deeper understanding that I do now," she says.

Our industry needs more Karens. That is what the Seed Your Future movement is all about — connecting with young people to get them involved with plants (and eventually the industry). Research shows that the earlier a child is exposed to plants and the different benefits plants offer, the more likely they are to pursue a career in horticulture. It worked for Karen.

Turn to page 24 and learn more about Seed Your Future and how you can help inspire young people and get them involved in "plantology" and become passionate about horticulture.

You can learn more about Karen in Ana Olvera's article, "Growing Plants and Relationships," on page 16.




THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME LEFT

Do you know any young professionals who are passionate about horticulture and are currently helping drive the industry to new heights?

If you do, you should nominate that person for GPN's 40 Under 40 Class of 2018.

If you know a young horticulture professional (under the age of 40) who you think will be instrumental in shaping our industry's future, then go to www.gpnmag.com/40-under-40-awards and nominate that person today.

We will accept nominations through Jan. 22, 2018. 




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