

NEWS for Immediate Release



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Contact: Elizabeth Daly

703-838-5235

edaly@safnow.org

Renato Cruz Sogueco, AAF, PFCI Receives Paul Ecke, Jr. Award at SAF Orlando 2022

ALEXANDRIA, VA — Sept. 15, 2022— Renato Cruz Sogueco, AAF, PFCI is the 2022 recipient of the Society of American Florists' Paul Ecke Jr. Award, which recognizes exemplary devotion to profession, industry, and community. This award is given to one recipient each year during the Stars of the Industry Awards Dinner at SAF's Annual Convention.

As SAF's former chief information officer and now BloomNet's vice president of digital strategy and education, Renato has served as the industry's "technology evangelist" helping countless florists through the intricacies of search engine optimization, social media, online marketing, and mobile strategy to grow web sales and engage customers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic Renato helped many floral businesses thrive by educating them on the importance of building a strong website with content to increase their organic searches, teaching them about SEO and advising them to invest in Google and Facebook ads.

In his remarks, Sogueco thanked his former and current employers for the opportunity to serve florists, as well as last year's recipient, the late Bob Williams II, AAF, PFCI, a longtime mentor and friend who set Sogueco straight when he briefly flirted with the idea of accepting a job outside the floral industry. "He told me, 'Renato, you love this industry and there's a lot more that you can give to it.' Those words ring true," Sogueco said.

Following 17 years at SAF, Renato joined BloomNet and the Floriology Institute in Jacksonville, Florida, in July 2016. There, he continues to educate florists through a weekly blog, monthly magazine column, monthly webinars, presentations at floral industry events, and phone calls with member florists. Renato is also always supporting the industry and is heavily involved with the American Floral Endowment.

He has volunteered with Memorial Day Flowers, the MIT Executive Forum, and the American Society of Association Executives, which honored him as a Diversity Executive Leadership Scholar in 2011.

Event photos will be available here: [SAF Photos's albums | Flickr](#)



About The Society of American Florists

The Society of American Florists is the association that connects and cultivates a thriving floral community through training, education, marketing resources and advocacy. Our vision: The power of flowers in every life. For more information, visit SAFNow.org.