

## SCHI Trade Show Internship

By Alexis Anthony



My name is Alexis Anthony and I am a junior, horticulture student from Clemson University. When presented the opportunity to be an intern for the South Carolina Nursery and Landscape Association trade show, I couldn't help but evaluate what horticulture meant to me. I have always had a desire to be a caretaker of the living but it wasn't until after the trade show that I fully understood why I wanted to be in this industry.

The fresh scent of potted plants and growing trees filled every breath with ease and hope as I entered the trade show floor. Plants men positioned and sorted their vegetative growth, as a mother would place her babies before walking into the 11:00 church service. I have rarely witnessed such pride in one's product as I did during my walks amongst the show. As I ventured around the room on the quest for internship opportunities and to gain more knowledge on the world of plants, I found the same excitement

about woody perennials and annuals as I had in Landscape Plants with Dr. Polomski; the same dedication to the production of herbaceous plants as I have with Dr. Faust in Spring and Fall Garden Plants; and the same enthusiasm and life about the future of Horticulture that I have found in all of my classes with Dr. Vincent (Intro to Horticulture, Sustainable Landscape Design and Landscapes and Health). The horticulture department at Clemson is full of hope that students will grow into world-renowned plantsmen and women and it was beautiful to see the same hope amongst the people that attended the trade show.

This experience prepared me for future internships and jobs in many ways. From working at the registration desk to sitting at the booth for the SCNLA, I was able to refine my communication and problem solving skills. With the great guidance from Mrs. Donna Foster, the other interns and I were delegated tasks, and as in a formal work setting, were expected

to perform the task that was assigned to us. Some of my duties were writing down the names of buyers from the silent auction, helping Dr. Sarah White with moderating discussions, and sitting at the SCNLA booth. My favorite part of being an intern was sitting at the booth. I was stationed across from a company that produces an organic fertilizer. I was able to ask relevant questions due to the knowledge I have gained in Growing Fall and Spring Garden Plants class because we evaluate the soluble salt contents that is needed for good growth in those classes. I enjoyed being able to relate the material I have learned in the classroom to the products and plants that I saw at the show.

Through this experience I was able to witness first hand how the horticulture industry is full of life and excitement. I do not know the exact path that I will take in this industry, but after my time with the lovely people at the trade show, I am positive that I will be successful in any route I take. I am sincerely thankful for this opportunity.

