

Ignite Your Passion at the 2025 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo!



BY SAMANTHA BELONGA CF | ST. IGNACE IN BLOOM, ST. IGNACE, MI | 2025 GLFEE CHAIR

Calling all florists, event planners, and floral enthusiasts! The wait is over! Mark your calendars for the 2025 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo (GLFEE), happening Friday, February 28th through Sunday, March 2nd at DeVos Place in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

This year's theme, "Ignite & Inspire: Rekindle Your Floral Flame!" promises to be an event filled with inspiration, education, and opportunity. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting out, the GLFEE has something for everyone.

Here's a sneak peek at what awaits you:

INTERACTIVE LEARNING:

- **Hands-On Workshops:** Dive deep into specific floral design techniques with workshops like "The Art of the Whimsical Wedding" and "Serpentine Serenity: A Celebration of Life Workshop" these are only two of ten.
- **Business Sessions:** Gain valuable insights on essential topics like building your dream team, leveraging sustainability, and perfecting consultations that close sales. We have eleven total planned throughout the weekend.
- **Interactive Hands on/ Business Session/ Retail Shop Tour:** Learn best practices for profitable flower shop merchandising from industry experts.

MAIN STAGE SHOWS:

- **GLFA Annual Design Contest:** Witness the creativity and talent of floral designers from across the region.
- **Informative and Entertaining Presentations:** Gain valuable industry knowledge and be inspired by presentations like "Triple Play Container Twist "One Vase, Three Visions" and "Destination Weddings." These are only two of nine main stage designs offered during the event.

NETWORKING AND RECOGNITION:

- **Friday Night Mixer:** Enjoy pizza and mingle with fellow attendees at the fun-filled Friday Night Mixer with GLFEE Bingo.
- **Recognition & Awards Banquet:** Celebrate achievements in the floral industry and hear a captivating keynote address on sustainability from Jackie Lacey AAF, AIFD, CFD, FSMD, PFCI.
- **Sunday Annual Luncheon:** featuring "State of the Industry" keynote by Derrick Myers CPA, CFP.

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to learn, connect, and be inspired. Register now to secure your spot at the 2025 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo!

Read on for the full details. Registration information is on page 15.

Let's light those floral flames! ✨

GLFEE SPONSORS

Great Lakes Floral &
Event Expo 2025 Issue
February 28-March 2, 2025



THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 EVENT SPONSORS!

The Great Lakes Floral Association would like to extend our gratitude to the many wholesalers, suppliers and service providers who support the association and its many initiatives throughout the year. Without their continued financial and product support, events like the Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo would not be possible.

A special thank you to our GLFEE sponsors listed below. Please show your support by visiting with them at the Trade Show, attending the programs they have sponsored, and by using their products and services.

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28 GLFEE SESSIONS

*INTERACTIVE HANDS ON/BUSINESS SESSION: BUYING AND MERCHANDISING FOR PROFITABLE FLOWER SHOPS

Join us for a full-day educational experience designed to empower shop owners and floral designers with strategic buying and merchandising techniques. During the morning session, attendees will explore systems to streamline profitable planning, buying, and inventory, followed by hands-on activities to create inspiring displays and designs. Learn the art (and science) of store layout and displays. Afterward, enjoy a flower shop tour and progressive luncheon around Grand Rapids, Michigan, where you'll see merchandising and color story strategies in action at 3 local shops, Ball Park Floral, Eastern Floral & Kennedy's Floral. Walk away with practical tips, digital resources, and a fresh perspective on inventory planning and store setup. This session runs 9am - 4:30pm; a computer or tablet is optional, floral tools required.

SPONSORED BY: Flower Shop Network
PRESENTED BY: Doug Bates AIFD, CF, CFD,
and Kelsey Thompson AIFD, CFD
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | River Overlook C
**Additional fees apply, bring your tools*



*HANDS ON WORKSHOP: THE ART OF THE WHIMSICAL WEDDING

Learn wild and airy floral design from Stefanie Rutherford. In this hands-on workshop, create stunning bouquets and centerpieces. Discover her signature techniques and bring your floral visions to life. Spaces are limited, so reserve your spot today and prepare to be inspired!

SPONSORED BY: DWF
PRESENTED BY: Stefanie Rutherford CF, CFD
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. | River Overlook A
**Additional fee applies. Bring your tools.*



*HANDS ON WORKSHOP: FFA PREP: INSPIRING UNIQUE MASK DECORATING

Transform your mask into a floral masterpiece! Learn to create stunning designs with fresh flowers, greenery, gems, and accessories. Unleash your creativity and discover the magic of floral mask art.

SPONSORED BY: DWF
PRESENTED BY: Steve Chase, and Laurie Williams
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. River Overlook C
**Additional fees apply. Bring your tools.*



*HANDS ON WORKSHOP: INSPIRE TO BE A CERTIFIED FLORIST

Get ready for your CF exam! This class covers essential techniques like vase arrangements, corsages, and foam designs. Wedding bouquets and glued wrist corsages to ace the practical exam will be shown. Perfect for aspiring and experienced florists.

SPONSORED BY: Great Lakes Floral Foundation
PRESENTED BY: Cindy Hall AIFD, CF, CFD and
Jedidiah Daddow CF
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. River Overlook B



FRIDAY NIGHT MIXER

Mix and mingle with fellow GLFEE attendees from 8:00 p.m. - 10:00p.m. We'll have fun and games accompanied by a playlist that will get your heart and soul pumping. They'll be chances to win a drink from the cash bar all while enjoying some delicious pizza and creating new connections!

SPONSORED BY:
Mayesh
8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. River Overlook Foyer



GLFEE SATURDAY SESSION DETAILS

KEY:

Business Sessions (Green)

Hands-On Classes (Blue)

Main Stage Design Shows

(Pink)

***Additional fee applies**

SATURDAY, MARCH 1

*Hands On: Inspired Sustainable Wedding Bouquet

Presented by: Gina Thresher AIFD, CFD, EMC, IMF

Sponsored by: BloomNet



8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. River Overlook A

This hands-on class will be focused on creating sustainable wedding bouquets. You'll learn eco-friendly techniques and best practices. Gina will guide you through the process of creating a beautiful bouquet while emphasizing sustainability. Participants will explore various design styles while focusing on minimizing environmental impact.

***Additional Fees Apply, Bring Your Tools.**

*Hands On: So Fetch (Floral Accessories Workshop)

Presented by: Grace Morrow CF and Kymbra Tucker CF

Sponsored by: Mayesh



8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. River Overlook B

Get ready to make fetch happen with a "Mean Girls" floral design workshop! Learn to create bold, edgy corsages, nosegays, and pocket squares. Join us on March 1st for a fun and stylish floral experience.

***Additional Fees Apply, Bring Your Tools.**

*Hands On: Serpentine Serenity: A Celebration of Life Workshop

Presented by: Dondi Richardson CF

Sponsored by: FloraCraft



8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. River Overlook C

Join FloraCraft senior designer, Dondi Richardson, CF, to learn how to incorporate fresh and permanent botanicals with a nod toward the trend of Celebrations of Life without a casket. You will get to create a tablescapes that evokes an emotional depth which can be personalized to express honor and love for the deceased. With modern commemorations such as this, the focus shifts from traditional mourning to a celebration of life, memories, and legacy.

***Additional Fees Apply, Bring Your Tools.**

Main Stage Panel Show: Cracking the Code of Floral Certifications

9:00a.m. - 9:30a.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Presented by: Amber Kirkland AIFD, CF, CFD, Jerome Raska AAF, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, & Amanda Rosencrantz CF.



Sponsored by: Great Lakes Floral Foundation

Curious about what AIFD, CFD, CF, PFCI, EMC, PFDE, and AAF stand for and how they can elevate your career? Join us for Alphabet Soup, an interactive Jeopardy-style workshop where we'll decode these prestigious floral designations. Perfect for both seasoned professionals and aspiring florists, this session combines fun, education, and inspiration to help you navigate the path to floral excellence. Don't miss it!

Main Stage Panel Show: Certified Florist (CF) Tips and Tricks!

9:30a.m. - 10:00a.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Presented by: Jerome Raska AAF, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI, Alice Waterous AIFD, CF, PFCI, Amber Kirkland AIFD, CF, CFD,

Sponsored by: Great Lakes Floral Foundation



Become a More Efficient and Profitable Florist!

This session is packed with tried-and-true tips and tricks from Certified Florists (CF) to streamline your floral business.

Learn how to:

- Design Faster: Master time-saving techniques without sacrificing quality.
- Optimize Your Office: Improve organization and communication for smoother workflows.
- Reduce Customer Complaints: Implement strategies for increased customer satisfaction.

Elevate your skills and your bottom line!

All tips show will be available for download on the Certified Florist website for future reference.

Main Stage Design Show: Designer of the Year Run Off

Presented by: Jerome Raska AAF, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI

Sponsored by: FloraCraft & CalFlowers



10:15 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

One of the most exciting events at the Expo is the Designer of the Year contest. Five outstanding floral designers from the Professional Division will compete for the title using identical materials. A distinguished panel of judges will choose the winner who will be announced at the banquet on Saturday night. Be sure to attend, cheer on your favorite, and be inspired by the fabulous design work.

Business Session: Building Your Dream Team: The Blueprint for Success and Scalability

Presented by: Brandee Gaar

Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. River Overlook E (Also Sunday at 1:00 p.m.)

Build a Dream Team: The Key to Business Success

Learn how to:

- Identify key roles for business growth
- Attract top talent aligned with your vision
- Delegate effectively and empower your team
- Lead with clarity and foster collaboration

This session is for entrepreneurs and business leaders ready to build a high-performing team and achieve business goals.



Business Session: Building a Brand Through Customer Service.

Presented by: Derrick Myers CPA, CFP

Sponsored by: Crockett, Myers and Associates

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. River Overlook F (Also Sunday at 1:00 p.m.)

Transform Your Customers into Raving Fans!

Elevate Your Customer Service: Create Raving Fans

Learn to:

- Deliver exceptional customer experiences
- Build strong customer relationships
- Handle challenges gracefully
- Foster a customer-centric culture

Join us to transform your customers into loyal advocates.



Main Stage Design Show: Triple Play Container Twist "One Vase, Three Visions"

Presented by: Helen Miller AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI

Sponsored by: Teleflora



11:30a.m.-12:30p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Join Helen and two local shop designers as they transform a simple container into three stunning arrangements. Discover their creative interpretations, inspirations, and techniques. Learn from their expertise and gain fresh ideas for your own floral designs. This workshop is perfect for anyone seeking inspiration and new perspectives.

Main Stage Design Show: A Touch of Solace: Elevating Sympathy Expressions

Presented by: Neville MacKay

Sponsored by: Smithers Oasis



SMITHERS-OASIS

1:00p.m.-2:00p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Join us for an inspiring and heartfelt presentation with the renowned Neville MacKay CAF, PFCI from Nova Scotia. With his signature charm and expertise, Neville will guide you through creative approaches to sympathy arrangements and offerings. This main stage program featuring products from Smithers-Oasis, is designed to help you craft meaningful tributes that resonate deeply with your clients during life's most tender moments. Discover how to balance artistry and compassion, ensuring your sympathy designs leave a lasting impact.



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GLFEE SATURDAY / SUNDAY SESSION DETAILS

SATURDAY, MARCH 1 (CONT.)

Business Session: Eco-Engagement: Leveraging Sustainability to Drive Floral Sales

Presented by: Renato Sogueco AAF, PFCI & Eric Black

Sponsored by: BloomNet/Syndicate Sales

1:00p.m.-2:00p.m. River Overlook E

Embrace Sustainability: Attract Eco-Conscious Customers
Learn how to:

- Implement sustainable practices in your floral business
- Effectively communicate your sustainability efforts to customers
- Leverage insights from recent industry studies to enhance your shop's appeal

Join us to discover how to connect with environmentally conscious consumers and build a thriving, sustainable floral business.



*Recognition & Awards Banquet Keynote: Making Sense of Sustainability: How Sustainability Can Help

Presented by: Jackie Lacey AAF, AIFD, CFD, FSMD, PFCI

Sponsored by: American Floral Endowment

7:00p.m.-9:30p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Embrace Sustainability: A Greener Future for the Floral Industry
Discover how to:

- Implement sustainable practices in your floral business
- Leverage resources from the American Floral Endowment's Sustainability program
- Contribute to a more sustainable floral industry

Join us to learn how to make a positive impact on the environment and build a thriving, eco-friendly business.



Main Stage Design Show: Destination Weddings

Presented by: Edward Smith

Sponsored by: FloristWare

2:30p.m.-3:30p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Why not have your destination wedding right here at home? Transform your space into a tropical paradise with an array of vibrant flowers and lush foliage. We'll help you create stunning bridal bouquets, centerpieces, altar arrangements, and more, bringing the essence of the tropics to your special day.



SUNDAY, MARCH 2

*Hands On: Attainable, Sustainable Floral Design

Presented by: Kelly Shore

Sponsored by: Syndicate Sales

8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. River Overlook A

Join Kelly Shore in a hands-on workshop on how to create seasonal garden styled centerpieces and arrangements for retail or events using American grown, including attainable Michigan product, using the latest in domestically produced mechanics and containers.

*Additional Fees Apply, Bring Your Tools.



Business Session: How to Make a Lasting Impression

Presented by: Fayez Radwan, Bellman, Amway

Grand Plaza Hotel, Sponsored by: Great Lakes Floral Foundation

2:30p.m.-3:30p.m. River Overlook E

Learn the secrets of exceptional customer service from Fayez Radwan, a renowned bellman. Discover how to create memorable moments, build lasting relationships, and boost your business's success.



*Hands On: "Embracing Memories: Crafting Cremation Memorial Designs"

Presented by: Neville MacKay CAFA, PFCI

Sponsored by: Smithers Oasis

8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. River Overlook B

Extend the inspiration from Neville MacKay's main stage presentation with this immersive, hands-on workshop. In this class, you'll create a personalized cremation memorial piece that beautifully balances elegance and meaning. Guided by expert techniques, you'll explore creative ways to incorporate urns, keepsakes, or mementos into floral designs that offer comfort and celebrate life. This design will be yours to take home, providing a tangible reminder of how artistry and compassion can unite to honor cherished memories. Perfect for florists looking to expand their sympathy offerings with heartfelt and timeless designs.

*Additional Fees Apply, Bring Your Tools.



Main Stage Design Show: Modern Wedding & Event Design: Rooted in Sustainability

Presented by: Kelly Shore

Sponsored by: Syndicate Sales

4:00pm-5:00p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Join Kelly Shore as she shares her journey from retail to event florals and her commitment to sustainable practices. Discover how to:

- Transition to foam-free design
 - Source American-grown products
 - Sell seasonality and origin to customers
 - Create stunning seasonal tablescape with locally grown flowers
- Don't miss this opportunity to learn from an industry expert and elevate your floral business.



Business Session: Assume the Sale: Perfecting Consultations That Close Every Time

Presented by: Brandee Gaar

Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation

4:00p.m.-5:00p.m. River Overlook E (Also Sunday at 9:30a.m.)

Master the Art of Closing Deals

Learn how to:

- Structure consultations for maximum impact
- Eliminate objections and build trust
- Position yourself as the go-to expert
- Confidently guide clients to a "yes"

This workshop will provide you with practical strategies to close more deals and grow your business.



GLFEE SUNDAY SESSION DETAILS

KEY:

Business Sessions (Green)

Hands-On Classes (Blue)

Main Stage Design Shows

(Pink)

***Additional fee applies**

*Hands On: Destination Wedding Bouquets

Presented by: Edward Smith

Sponsored by: FloristWare

8:00a.m.-10:00a.m. River Overlook C

Escape to Paradise with a Tropical Bridal Bouquet

Say "I do" to a bouquet that transports you and your guests to an island paradise. Imagine vibrant orchids, lush greenery, and exotic blooms, all artfully arranged to create a stunning masterpiece that captures the essence of the tropics. Let us design a bridal bouquet that embodies your dream destination wedding, bringing the beauty and romance of the islands to your special day.

***Additional Fees Apply, Bring Your Tools.**



Business Session: Assume the Sale: Perfecting Consultations That Close Every Time

Presented by: Brandee Gaar

Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation

9:30a.m.-10:30a.m. River Overlook E (Also Saturday at 4:00p.m.)

Master the Art of Closing Deals

Learn how to:

- Structure consultations for maximum impact
- Eliminate objections and build trust
- Position yourself as the go-to expert
- Confidently guide clients to a "yes"

This workshop will provide you with practical strategies to close more deals and grow your business.



Business Session: Cash In on Collaborative Classes

Presented by: Jennifer Linehan AIFD, CF, CFD

Sponsored by: Beautiful Blooms By Jen

9:30a.m.-10:30a.m. River Overlook F

Boost Your Business: Partnering for Profitable Floral Workshops

Learn how to:

- Identify strategic business partnerships
 - Create engaging floral workshops that attract new customers
 - Utilize joint marketing for maximum exposure
 - Increase revenue through collaborative events
- Join us to discover how to expand your business and generate more sales.



Main Stage Design Show: Inspiring , Sustainability in Wedding Designs

Presented by: Gina Thresher AIFD, CFD, EMC, IMF

Sponsored by: BloomNet

10:00am-11:00a.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Marketing sustainability in wedding design can attract eco-conscious couples and set your business apart. Clearly communicate your sustainable sourcing, such as using local and seasonal flowers, eco-friendly materials, and waste reduction methods. Showcase these practices on your website and social media. Showing examples of sustainability in wedding design.



Sunday Luncheon Keynote: State of the Industry: Where do we go from here!

Presented by: Derrick Myers CPA, CFP

Sponsored by: Crockett, Myers and Associates

12:00 p.m.-12:45 p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

After taking a brief look at the last two years, Derrick will share his projections for 2025 and the industry outlook.



Main Stage Design Show: Profitable Plants: Beyond the Basket and Bow

Presented by: Samantha Bates, AIFD, CF, CFD

Sponsored by: FTD, 1:00pm-2:00p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

A plant in a basket with a bow no more! Join Samantha Bates AIFD as she reinvents the classic plant arrangement, moving beyond the standard basket and bow to create captivating, profitable designs through thoughtful up-selling with both natural and crafted elements. Discover strategies to elevate plant offerings in your shop with natural accents, creative containers, and unique man-made additions, all designed to increase sales and delight customers.



Business Session: Building Your Dream Team: The Blueprint for Success and Scalability

Presented by: Brandee Gaar

Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. River Overlook E (Also Saturday at 10:30a.m.)

Build a Dream Team: The Key to Business Success

Learn how to:

- Identify key roles for business growth
- Attract top talent aligned with your vision
- Delegate effectively and empower your team
- Lead with clarity and foster collaboration

This session is for entrepreneurs and business leaders ready to build a high-performing team and achieve business goals.



Business Session: Building a Brand Through Customer Service.

Presented by: Derrick Myers CPA, CFP

Sponsored by: Crockett, Myers and Associates

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. River Overlook F (Also Saturday at 10:30a.m.)

Transform Your Customers into Raving Fans!

Elevate Your Customer Service: Create Raving Fans

Learn to:

- Deliver exceptional customer experiences
- Build strong customer relationships
- Handle challenges gracefully
- Foster a customer-centric culture

Join us to transform your customers into loyal advocates.



Main Stage Design Show: Merchandising and Design Techniques for Boosting Sales

Presented by: Kelsey Thompson AIFD, CFD and Doug Bates AIFD, CF, CFD, Sponsored by: Flower Shop Network

2:30pm-3:30p.m. Steelcase Ballroom A

Elevate Your Shop: Maximize Sales and Boost Profits

Discover how to:

- Create stunning displays that attract customers
- Sell more products, from fresh flowers to gifts and decor
- Stay ahead of trends and color stories
- Enhance the shopping experience and drive sales

Join us for a dynamic presentation filled with practical tips and inspiring ideas to elevate your floral shop.



Business Session: Optimizing Floral Delivery-Shop Driver vs Delivery Service Providers (Uber, Roadie, DoorDash)

Presented by: Moderator: Renato Sogueco AAF, PFCI Florist Panel

Sponsored by: BloomNet

2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. River Overlook E

In-House vs. Third-Party Delivery: A Florist's Dilemma

Join us for a discussion on the pros and cons of in-house and third-party delivery services. Learn from experienced florists who have transitioned to DSPs and discover how to:

- Balance cost, reliability, and customer satisfaction
- Streamline delivery operations
- Improve business efficiency
- Enhance customer experience

This session will provide you with valuable insights to make informed decisions about your delivery strategy.





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GLFEE SPECIAL EVENTS

FRIDAY

Friday Night Mixer

Friday, February 28 • 8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

River Overlook Foyer • Sponsored by Mayesh



Mix and mingle with fellow GLFEE attendees from 8:00pm - 10:00pm. We'll have fun and games accompanied by a playlist that will get your heart and soul pumping. They'll be chances to win a drink from the cash bar all while enjoying some delicious pizza and creating new connections!



SATURDAY

Recognition Reception and Banquet:

Saturday, March 1

6:00-6:45 p.m. Reception in Trade Show Open to all attendees, Cash Bar • Sponsored by Experience Grand Rapids



Join us for a pre-Banquet reception! Enjoy drinks, cheese, and crackers while networking with industry peers. Plus, get a complimentary professional headshot from Lyle Kearns of Superior Images. Even if you hate having your picture taken, Lyle's expertise will make the experience effortless and enjoyable.

7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Recognition Awards Banquet and Keynote • Sponsored by American Floral Endowment

Get fired up at GLFEE's "Ignite & Inspire" recognition and awards banquet dinner. Light a fire and join us for networking, industry awards, CF inductions, and a delicious dinner celebration. RSVP to be captivated by the heat all while being inspired by the beauty as the flowers take center stage. Jackie Lacey AAF, AIFD, CFD, FSM, PFCI will deliver the

keynote: **Making Sense of Sustainability: How Sustainbloom Can Help Embrace Sustainability: A Greener Future for the Floral Industry**

Discover how to:

- Implement sustainable practices in your floral business
- Leverage resources from the American Floral Endowment's Sustainbloom program
- Contribute to a more sustainable floral industry

Join us to learn how to make a positive impact on the environment and build a thriving, eco-friendly business.

Extra Fee Applies. See registration desk to reserve your table/seat.



SATURDAY

The Grill Lunch

Saturday, March 1

10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Cash & Carry Lunch Option

The Grille offers choices of freshly grilled all beef hot dogs, Johnsonville brat, basil pesto chicken sandwich, Cajun chicken sandwich, side options of chips, fruit and beverages.

SUNDAY

Sunday Luncheon and Annual Meeting

Sunday, March 2 • 12:00 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Sponsored by Crockett Myers



This is a time for all of us to come together as an industry and share a meal. There is no charge for the luncheon as it is included in your registration to attend the Expo. During lunch you'll hear from Association and Foundation leadership about what's going on. Followed by an inspirational keynote, State of the Industry: Where do we go from here! presented by Derrick Myers. After taking a brief look at the last two years, Derrick will share his projections for 2025 and the industry outlook. *Lunch is included in your registration.*



Please check box on registration form if you plan to attend.

ALL WEEKEND

Trade Show

The GLFEE trade expo is the largest and best in regional floral conventions. Discover new and returning exhibitors, meet suppliers, get exclusive deals, and explore the latest in fresh flowers, hard goods, and services. Meet face to face with the owners and managers of your existing suppliers. Discover new vendors and new varieties, products, and services. Enjoy special offers and discounts only available on the show floor.

Silent Auction

It's an experience! Gift baskets with delicious items, win a Prom or Mother's Day Survival Kit filled with everything a florist needs to get through the hardest days of year. The Silent Auction is for larger and big-ticket items like wine and dine your dinner guests, to concert and sporting events tickets. Bid on a Designer for a Day. Imagine having your own presentation by a professional floral consultant or designer in your shop for the day. The Silent Auction Committee is now taking donations. Please visit www.glfee.com to download a donation form or call the GLFA office at (517) 575-0110.

AIFD® Awareness:

AIFD members will showcase their talents with blooming displays located in the Welsh Lobby of DeVos Place. Vote for your favorite display once daily all weekend long.



GLFEE PRESENTERS AND TRADE SHOW

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Design Presenters:



ALICE WATEROUS AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI



AMANDA ROSENCRANTZ CF



AMBER KIRKLAND AIFD, CF, CFD



CINDY HALL AIFD, CF, CFD



DONDI RICHARDSON CF



DOUG BATES AIFD, CF, CFD



EDWARD SMITH



GINA THRESHER AIFD, CFD, EMC, IMF



GRACE MORROW CF



HELEN MILLER AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI



JEDIDIAH DADOW CF



JEROME RASKA AAF, AIFD, CF, CFD, PFCI



KELLY SHORE



KELSEY THOMPSON AIFD, CFD



KYMBRA TUCKER CF



LAURIE WILLIAMS



NEVILLE MCKAY



SAMANTHA BATES, AIFD, CF, CFD



STEFANIE RUTHERFORD CF, CFD



STEVE CHASE

Business Presenters:



BRANDEE GAAR



DERRICK MYERS CPA, CFP



ERIC BLACK



FAYEZ RADWAN



JACKIE LACEY AAF, AIFD, CFD, FSMD, PFCI



JEN LINEHAN AIFD, CF, CFD



RENATO SOGUECO AAF, PFCI



DESIGN PRESENTERS



BUSINESS PRESENTERS

Read full bios at www.glfec.com or scan QR codes

GLFEE Trade Show: Where connections are made and relationships blossom!

The GLFEE Trade Show is the largest and best regional floral expo, connecting you with top vendors and fostering valuable relationships.

Discover new companies and the latest in fresh varieties, hard goods, and services. Reconnect with existing suppliers, provide feedback, and explore innovative solutions.

Enjoy exclusive show floor discounts and special offers to maximize your budget. Participate in the exciting passport contest and giveaways for a chance to win incredible prizes.

Don't miss this unparalleled opportunity to elevate your floral business! Register to Exhibit now at: www.glfec.com.





Ignite Your Creativity at the 105th Annual Great Lakes Floral Association Design Contest!

SPONSORED BY:



Calling all floral artists! Prepare to be inspired and rekindle your passion for design at "Ignite & Inspire... Rekindle Your Floral Flame" the 2025 Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo (GLFEE) in Grand Rapids, Michigan!

This prestigious competition, kicking off on Friday, February 28th, 2025, offers a unique opportunity to:

- Showcase your talent: Push your design boundaries and compete for top honors amongst your peers.
- Learn and grow: Gain valuable insights and inspiration from fellow floral designers.
- Network and connect: Forge new connections and celebrate the artistry of floral design with a passionate community.

Sharpen your shears and prepare for an electrifying experience that will ignite your creative spirit!

STUDENT DIVISION

High School Level

Theme: Song of Inspiration

What song sparks your inner fire? Choose a song that has the word "flame/fire" in the title and create a design that best represents the song in a vase of your choosing. You may use your choice of fresh flowers, foliage and design enhancing decor (wire, ribbons, beads, etc.) only to create your design.

College/Professional Novice

Theme: Some like it Hot!

Create a floral finger ring and then a coordinating handtied bouquet featuring the technique armature to be worn/carried for a formal event intitled "Some Like it Hot!" using fresh flowers, foliage and your choice of design enhancing product such as wire, beads, feathers

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

Theme 1: Fire and Ice

Create a floral necklace with fresh flowers, foliage manipulation and bling to be worn for a "Fire and Ice" themed event.

Theme 2: Eternal Flame

Create a sympathy design suitable for a memorial using LED candle(s) within the design and featuring the design technique of sheltering. You may use any combo of fresh flowers, foliage and dried product of your choice.

Theme 3: The Heat Is On-Inspired by the flame

Create a floral design that harmonizes with this photo of a flame that would be suitable for an entryway table in the middle of the room where both the photo and design will be on display in perfect harmony.



Theme 4: Surprise Package!

If you have entered all three professional categories, you may enter this category. An on the spot design competition. All materials will be provided for contestants.

THE ACADEMY DIVISION: Let your Light Shine!

Create a memorial centerpiece, ignite your flame in making this table design. You must use technique of grouping in this design. You will have an 8' x 30" skirted in black and black linen on top table to display your centerpiece. You must provide and use an assortment of LED candles on your table display. On each table provided will be a frame with a flame on it with the saying "May your light burn brightly for Eternity".



2025 DESIGN CONTEST PRIZE MONIES

Prizes for Student & Professional Divisions

- First Place: \$125.00, Certificate & Ribbon
- Second Place: \$75.00, Certificate & Ribbon
- Third Place: \$50.00, Certificate & Ribbon

Prizes for Academy Division

- \$300 plus a \$1000 stipend to help offset the cost to attend and represent the GLFA at the Society of American Florist (SAF) Sylvia Cup design contest.
- A winner's plaque with their name inscribed on a traveling honorary award.
- The winner is a featured "Design Spotlight" in six issues of *The Professional Florist* magazine

Register Online & Download the Official GLFA Design Contest Entry Packet at glfee.com (Design Contest tab)



For full descriptions download the design contest packet!

GLFEE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

COLOR KEY:

Business Sessions (Green)
Hands-On Classes (Blue)

Main Stage Design Shows (Pink)

Trade Show – (Purple)

***Additional Fee Applies**

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2025

8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open	Secchia Foyer
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	*Interactive Hands-On Workshop/ Business Session: Buying and Merchandising for Profitable Flower Shops w/Doug Bates and Kelsey Thompson Sponsored by Flower Shop Network	River Overlook A/B
3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	Design Contest Registration In partnership with FloraCraft & CalFlowers	Secchia Foyer
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	* Hands-On "The Art of the Whimsical Wedding" w/Stefanie Rutherford, Sponsored by: DWF	River Overlook A
6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	* Hands-On "Inspire to Be a Certified Florist" w/Jedidiah Daddow, and Cindy Hall, Sponsored by: GLFF	River Overlook B
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	*Hands-On FFA Student Prep: "Inspiring Unique Mask Decorating" w/Steve Chase and Laurie Williams, Sponsored by: DWF	River Overlook C
8:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Mix and Mingle Sponsored by: Mayesh	River Overlook Foyer

SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 2025

7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open	Secchia Foyer
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	*Hands-On Workshops (choose one)	
	*Hands On: "Inspired Sustainable Wedding Bouquets" w/Gina Thresher, Sponsored by: BloomNet	River Overlook A
	*Hands On: So Fetch (Floral Accessories Workshop) w/Grace Morrow & Kymbra Tucker, Sponsored by: Mayesh	River Overlook B
	*Hands On: Serpentine Serenity: A Celebration of Life Workshop w/Dondi Richardson Sponsored by: FloraCraft	River Overlook C
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Cracking the Code of Floral Certifications w/Jerome Raska, Amber Kirkland, Amanda Rosencrantz Sponsored by: GLFF	Steelcase Ballroom A
9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Certified Florist (CF) Tips and Tricks Panel show w/Jerome Raska, Alice Waterous, Amber Kirkland Sponsored by: GLFF	Steelcase Ballroom A
10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.	Silent Auction	Steelcase Ballroom A
10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Trade Show Open	Steelcase Ballroom B
10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	
10:15 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Designer of the Year Run Off w/Jerome Raska, Sponsored by: FloraCraft & CalFlowers	Steelcase Ballroom A
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Business Session: Building Your Dream Team (The Blueprint for Success and Scalability) w/Brandee Gaar Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation	River Overlook E
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Business Session: Building a Brand Through Customer Service w/Derrick Myers, Sponsored by: Crockett Myers	River Overlook F
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Triple Play Container Twist "One Vase Three Visions" w/Helen Miller, Sponsored by: Teleflora	Steelcase Ballroom A
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Elevating Sympathy Expressions w/ Neville McKay, Sponsored by: Smithers Oasis	Steelcase Ballroom A
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Business Session: FMF Eco-Engagement: Leveraging Sustainability to Drive Floral Sales w/Renato Sogueco & Eric Black, Sponsored by: BloomNet & Syndicate Sales	River Overlook E
2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Destination Weddings w/Edward Smith, Sponsored by: FloristWare	Steelcase Ballroom A
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Business Session: How to Make a Lasting Impression w/Fayez Radwan, Sponsored by: Great Lakes Floral Foundation	River Overlook E
3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Business Session: Assume the Sale: Perfecting Consultations That Close Every Time w/Brandee Gaar, Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation	River Overlook E
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Wedding Event with Sustainability W/Kelly Shore, Sponsored by: Syndicate Sales	Steelcase Ballroom A
6:00 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.	President's Reception	Steelcase Ballroom B
7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.	*Recognition and Awards Banquet Keynote: Making Sense of Sustainability: How Sustainablebloom can help w/Jackie Lacey, Sponsored by American Floral Endowment	Steelcase Ballroom A

SUNDAY MARCH 2, 2025

7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Registration Desk Open	Secchia Foyer
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	*Hands-On Workshops (choose one)	
	*Hands On: Attainable, Sustainable Floral Design w/Kelly Shore, Sponsored by: Syndicate Sales	River Overlook A
	*Hands On: Embracing Memories, Crafting Memorial Designs w/Neville McKay, Sponsored by: Smithers Oasis	River Overlook B
	*Hands On: Destination Wedding Bouquets w/Edward Smith, Sponsored by: FloristWare	River Overlook C
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Business Session: Assume the Sale: Perfecting Consultations That Close Every Time w/Brandee Gaar Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation	River Overlook E
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Business Session: Cash-in on Collaborative Classes w/Jen Linehan, Sponsored by: Beautiful Blooms by Jen	River Overlook F
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Inspiring Sustainability in Wedding Designs w/Gina Thresher, Sponsored by: BloomNet	Steelcase Ballroom A
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
12:00 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.	GLFA Annual Meeting and Luncheon: Keynote: State of the Industry w/Derrick Myers, Sponsored by Crockett Myers	Steelcase Ballroom A
12:45 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Profitable Plants: Beyond the Basket and Bow w/Samantha Bates, Sponsored by: FTD	Steelcase Ballroom A
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Business Session: Building Your Dream Team: (The Blueprint for Success and Scalability) w/Brandee Gaar Sponsored by: Details Flowers Software & Great Lakes Floral Foundation	River Overlook E
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Business Session: Building a Brand Through Customer Service w/Derrick Myers, Sponsored by: Crockett Myers	River Overlook F
2:00 p.m.	Silent Auction Closes	Steelcase Ballroom A
2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Visit Trade Show Vendors	Steelcase Ballroom B
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Main Stage Design Show: Merchandising and Design Techniques for Boosting Sales /Doug Bates and Kelsey Thompson, Sponsored by: Flower Shop Network	Steelcase Ballroom A
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Business Session: Optimizing Floral Delivery-Shop Driver vs Delivery Service Providers (Uber, Roadie, DoorDash) w/Renato Sogueco, Sponsored by: BloomNet	River Overlook E
3:45 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Tear Down/Move Out	



REGISTER ONLINE at www.glfee.com

Call (517) 575-0110 with any questions.

Great Lakes Floral & Event Expo

DEVOS PLACE & THE AMWAY GRAND PLAZA HOTEL
 Devos Place • 303 Monroe Ave NW • Grand Rapids, MI 49503
 Amway Grand Plaza • 187 Monroe Ave NW • Grand Rapids, MI 49503

February 28 - March 2, 2025

Limited seating is available for Design Workshops, and Saturday Evening Banquet. You will be contacted **ONLY** if the class or event is filled to capacity. **NO Confirmations will be sent.** To participate in the Design Workshops and other activities you **MUST** purchase a Flower Event Pass (four types available).

Save by registering your entire staff with the WEEKEND SHOP FLOWER EVENT PASS where all your employees can attend for one low price. (members only)!

Company Name: _____ Company Contact: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Web Site: _____
 E-mail: _____ Tax ID#: _____

*(Does not include any optional events)



Student Weekend Ignite & Inspire Event Pass* Entrance to Exhibits, Main Stage, Business Sessions, Design Contest, both days, Annual Luncheon	Saturday Only* Entrance to Exhibits, Main Stage, Business Sessions, Design Contest	Sunday Only* Entrance to Exhibits, Main Stage, Business Sessions, Design Contest, both days, Annual Luncheon	Weekend Only Ignite & Inspire Event Pass* Entrance to Exhibits, Main Stage, Business Sessions, Design Contest, both days, Annual Luncheon	Weekend Value Ignite & Inspire Event Pass* Entrance to Exhibits, Main Stage, Business Sessions, Design Contest, both days, Annual Luncheon and Saturday Banquet	Weekend Shop Ignite & Inspire Event Pass* Weekend pass for as many employees as your shop wishes to bring. Entrance to Exhibits, Main Stage, Business Sessions, Design Contest, both days
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OPTIONAL EVENTS												
Friday				Saturday				Sunday				
All Day Interactive Hands-On Workshop Business Session Buying & Merchandising for Profitable Flower Shops				Hands-On Workshop: The Art of Whimsical Wedding				Hands-On Session: Inspired Sustainable Wedding Bouquet				
				Hands-On Session: FFA Student Certification: Inspiring Unique Mask Decorating				Hands-On Session: So Fetch (Floral Accessories Workshop)				
				Hands-On Workshop: Inspire to be a Certified Florist				President's Reception, Banquet, and Awards Ceremony				
								Hands-On Session: Serpentine Serenity: A Celebration of Life Workshop				
								Hands-On Session: Attainable, Sustainable Floral Design				
								Hands-On Session: Embracing Memories, Crafting Memorial Designs				
								Hands-On Session: Destination Wedding Bouquet				
								Sunday Annual Luncheon: Check below by name if you plan to attend				
												TOTAL EVENTS

Member before 1/31/25	\$75	\$150	\$175	\$220	\$270	\$850
Member 1/31/25 and after	\$85	\$170	\$195	\$245	\$300	\$950
Non-Member before 1/31/25	\$90	\$225	\$275	\$355	\$430	N/A
Non-Member 1/31/25 and after	\$100	\$250	\$305	\$395	\$480	N/A
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						

Attach an extra sheet if more room is needed

ALL FEES ARE STRICTLY NON-REFUNDABLE.

REGISTRATION TOTAL ↓

Use your Credit Card (circle one)



Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Security Code: _____
 Name on Card: _____ Signature: _____
 Address: _____ City/State/ZIP: _____

Business Card and Tax ID required for registration. Please enclose or attach to form AND be prepared to present at the door. After Monday, February 24, 2025, bring registration and payment to the Expo for onsite registration or register online at www.glfee.com

REGISTRATION FEES ARE NOT REFUNDABLE!
 12 & younger or 65 and older receive free Weekend Pass. Send proof of age with registration and note on form. (Optional Events not included)

Mail to: Great Lakes Floral Association, P.O. Box 67, Haslett, MI 48840 or call 517-575-0110 for Faxing instructions.

REGISTER ONLINE at GLFEE.COM

Stay the Weekend!
 HOTEL RESERVATIONS: Reserve rooms online at www.glfee.com. Special guaranteed rate of \$164.00++ per night, single/double. Mention that you are with the Great Lakes Floral Association group block. Reservations must be made prior to 1/31/25.