



Fresh Produce
& Floral Council

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FPFC preparing future leaders

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Michelle Allen- Ziegler

The [Fresh Produce & Floral Council](#)'s apprentice task force and the board of directors selected 12 individuals to participate in the 2023 FPFC Apprentice Program. The 2023 class is the 10th apprentice class, marking the 10-year Anniversary of the FPFC Apprentice Program.

Participants are:

- Dan Addiego, FreshSource
- Shane Aldrich, D. Gardikas Produce
- Morgan Bahri
- Jake Beggin, Local Bounti
- Noah Lines, Westlake Produce Co.
- Courtney Ludford, Wonderful Citrus
- Abby McPherson, Frieda's
- Jackie Nakashian, Trinity Fruit
- Nick Schiavo, Allen Lund Co.
- Elyse Seiler, Monterey Mushrooms
- Alexis Storm, JLZ Produce
- Fernando Tellez, Veg-Fresh Farms

“As a board member and co-chair of the apprentice taskforce, I was very pleased to see that this year the FPFC had the most applicants ever to this program. Our apprentice taskforce had a lot of hard decisions to make,” said Michelle Allen- Ziegler, FPFC Apprentice Program co-chair. “I am very excited to watch the class of 2023 learn and grow together and share their successes as they continue throughout this year.”

The Apprentice Program is sponsored by Dennis and Susie Gertmenian, founder and retired CEO of Ready Pac and Bounduelle Fresh Americas, and Grimmway Farms.



Don Gann

The FPFC Apprentice Program prepares participants for leadership roles in their companies and in the industry. The program consists of education sessions, facility and field tours, and group and team-building projects. Each apprentice is also paired with an industry mentor to act as a guide and to facilitate introductions at networking events.

“This class will mark the 10th anniversary of the Apprentice Program, with 100 graduates that have completed this program, we are excited to have had the largest number of applicants this year to date,” said Don Gann, FPFC president. “The applicants are chosen from a wide range of companies and positions in the produce industry to participate in this elite nine-month program; candidates, viewed by their employers as having great leadership potential, are screened through a competitive selection process. Participation in this program adds tremendous value to the produce industry through programming designed to provide a holistic view of the industry and instill leadership skills in each Apprentice. Each year, I have the pleasure of calling these individuals to let them know they are accepted in to this program and I am thrilled with their enthusiasm to learn and grow into the leaders of tomorrow.”

The 2023 FPFC Apprentice Program began at the 2023 FPFC Expo in conjunction with the IFPA Career Pathways Program.

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