

# SOCIETY NEWS

[flavorchemists.com](http://flavorchemists.com)



**President's Message**  
**Scott Michaluk**  
**2025—2026**

*Dear Society Members and Friends of the Society,*

I want to begin by expressing my sincere thanks to both Justin and Bill who were two incredible Presidents whose leadership set a high bar. Truly, big shoes to fill! This year has been challenging, no need to spell it out, because we've all felt it. There's been a lot happening, and more is on the horizon. But what I really want to focus on is enduring resilience. That's the heart of a Flavorist, and the heart of our Society. We've had our ups and downs, yet we persist. We win flavors, we lose flavors, but we always learn. Today's learning and development programs talk about learning from failure as it is a new thing, but we've been doing that since the beginning! It's not just who we are, it's what we do.

We fail until we succeed, and I can't think of a more powerful trait than that. We face roadblocks that challenge how we create flavors, but we always find a way. We work with some of the most demanding customers and still manage to delight them. Creativity is in our DNA and not just in our work, but in our hobbies and passions. Aren't we a lucky bunch!

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## 2025-2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Looking ahead, I'm excited for what the coming year holds. We'll kick things off in Chicago with our Midwest friends, followed by an East Coast stop in October just before Halloween. January brings us to (hopefully sunny) California, and February introduces a new location in Atlanta! We hope to see both new and familiar faces there, and I'm confident the day's activities will be worth the trip. March will feature our joint meeting in California, April brings the always well-attended Cincinnati meeting, and we'll wrap up with our annual awards dinner in Newark.

My ask for this year is simple: Please attend meetings and consider volunteering. Volunteering not only helps the Society but also looks great on your resume. Attending meetings builds your network and gives you valuable insights from your peers. It may sound cliché, but it's true we are better together and together we'll ensure the Society remains strong for years to come. Your support, as always, is the foundation of the Society of Flavor Chemists.

Kind Regards,

**Scott Michaluk**

SFC President 2025-2026

## *Greetings and Happy Fall!*

*As the seasons turn and new flavors fill the air, we wish all our members a vibrant and inspiring autumn. May this season bring fresh ideas, shared discoveries, and moments to savor—both in and out of the lab.*

## Scent & Sensibility:

### Aromatic Adventures at Mexico City's MUPE

*By Miguel-Angel Escareno*

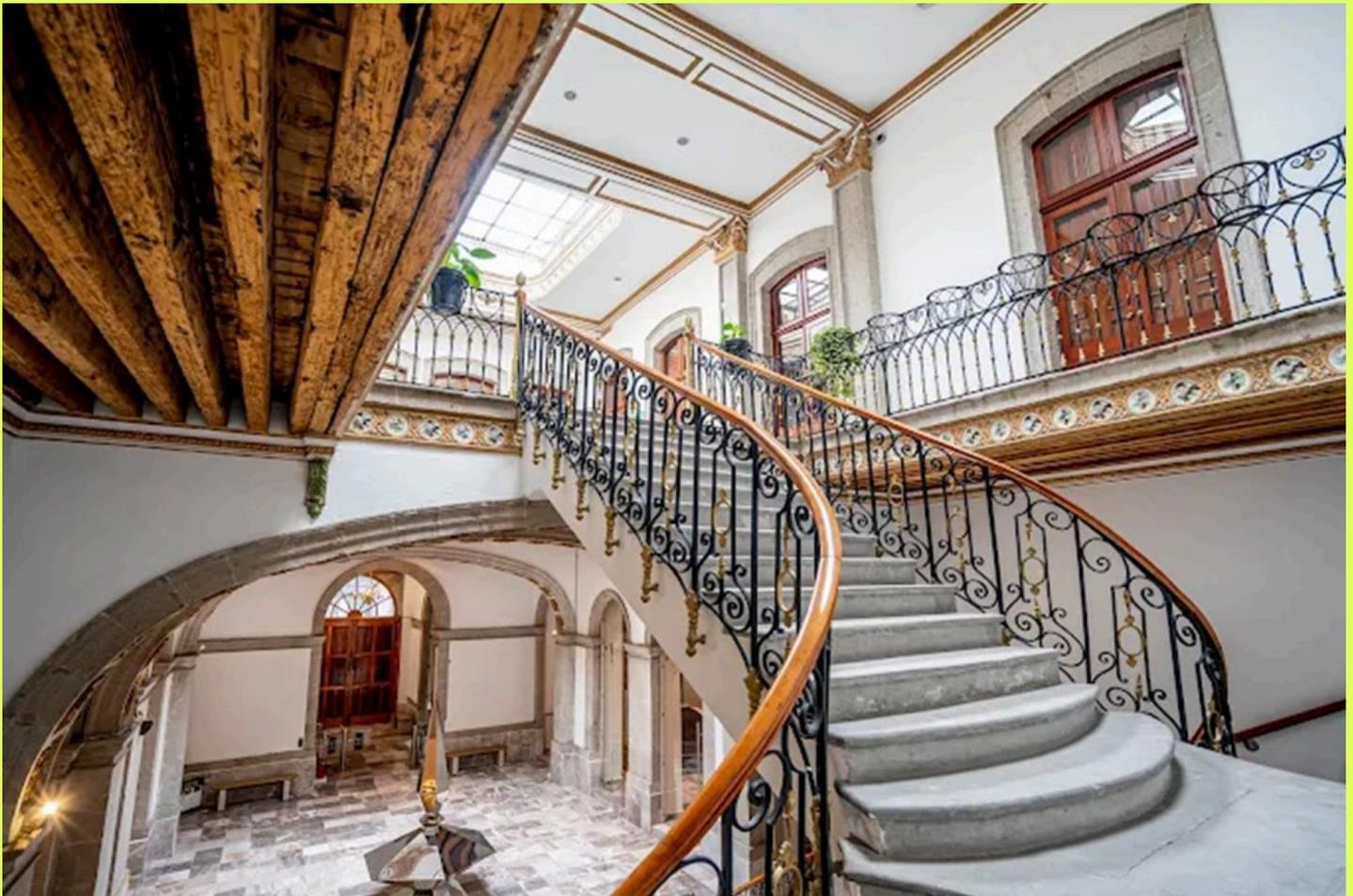


Perfume? Flavor? Cousins, perhaps?

While one delights the nose and the other the palate, a surprising synergy exists between these aromatic worlds. As Alison Freedman eloquently explored in her recent SFC symposium talk, creative crossovers between perfumers and flavor chemists can lead to novel sensations and fresh inspiration. But today, we're embarking on a journey dedicated to one half of this aromatic duo: perfume.

Mexico City, a megalopolis teeming with life, boasts an astonishing claim to fame: it's home to over 150 museums, ranking as the world's second city for museums, just behind London. Among this cultural bounty lies a hidden gem, a sensory sanctuary dedicated entirely to the art and science of fragrance: the Museo del Perfume, or MUPE.





## **A Historic Heart, A Modern Scent**

Nestled at Calle de Tacuba #12, Colonia Centro, Area 2, Cuauhtemoc (ZIP 06010), MUPE resides in the vibrant heart of Mexico City's historic center. As you approach, you're greeted by a charming colonial-style building, subtly infused with modern design elements, evoking the grandeur of an old-fashioned mansion. The main entrance, marked discreetly by the MUPE logo, could almost be missed amidst the bustling street, a street surprisingly lined with perfume vendors – many, it must be noted, dealing in counterfeit fine fragrances.

Step inside, however, and you're transported to a world where history, science, and artistry intertwine. MUPE's exclusive collection delves into the history, uses, aromatic materials, and profound significance of perfume. For an even richer experience, guided tours are highly recommended and offered at specific times.

## **A Multi-Sensory Journey**

The beautiful historic building is a labyrinth of discovery, with four expansive rooms on the first floor and another four on the second, including an extraction lab and workshop stations. Each space is meticulously designed to unveil a different facet of the perfumed world.

## Room 1: The Alchemist's Den – Extraction Methods

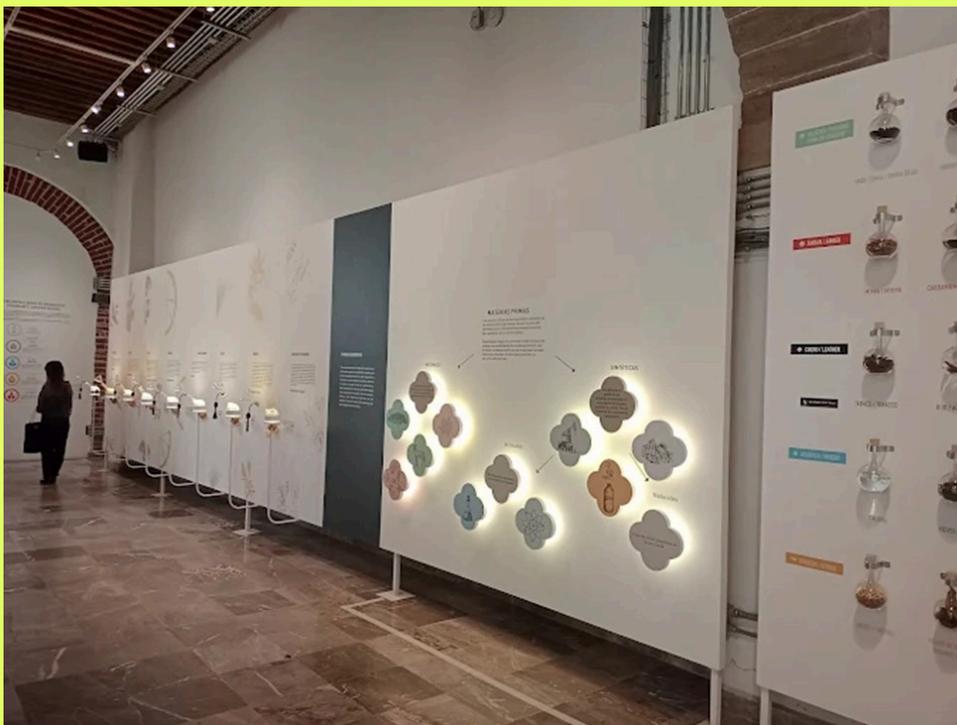
Your journey begins in the room dedicated to Extraction Methods. Here, ancient equipment and traditional techniques are showcased, illustrating the fascinating processes that transform botanical materials into the raw ingredients of fragrance. A guided tour will illuminate methods like distillation, solvent extraction, cold press, and the delicate art of enfleurage.



You'll also gain a profound appreciation for the perfumer's "organ" – their highly trained nose – a skill still invaluable in our increasingly digital age.

## Room 2: Decoding the Scent – Perfume Perception

The second room delves into the intricate world of Perfume Perception. Here, the magic of our olfactory sense is demystified. Discover how the nose decodes complex odors and the profound influence of



memories, learning experiences, and emotional responses on our perception of scent. You'll also learn to identify the origins of raw materials – whether natural or artificial – and explore various aromatic families.

This sensory space offers a truly unique opportunity: to smell individual isolated materials and compounds that form the building blocks of fragrances. For the uninitiated, this is a rare privilege, offering an unparalleled insight into the raw es-

sence of scent. What's more, MUPE continuously rotates these compounds, ensuring that each subsequent visit offers a fresh olfactory adventure.

### Room 3: The Immersive Symphony

Prepare to be captivated in the Immersive Room. Through stunning video mapping projections, visitors are enveloped in an audiovisual spectacle while simultaneously experiencing a curated selection of scents. This harmonious blend of sight and smell creates an unparalleled environment for aroma perception, truly engaging all your senses.



### Room 4: A Scented History – From Ancient Rites to Modern Icons

The final room on the first floor is a testament to the rich tapestry of Perfume History. From its ancient origins to its contemporary evolution, this space chronicles the journey of fragrance, highlighting the creators, brands, and innovations that have shaped this creative -olfactive world. A compelling timeline showcases iconic contemporary perfumery brands, while a global map displays the aromas of the world, once again offering visitors the chance to smell diverse raw materials and trace their geographical roots.

### Beyond the Exhibit: Hands-On Creation & Souvenirs

Ascending to the second floor, you'll discover a fully equipped chemical laboratory. For the creatively inclined, MUPE offers engaging workshops, the most popular being the hands-on elaboration of colognes using materials provided by the museum. Additional workshops may be available depending on the museum's schedule. Another fascinating room showcases an extraction and encapsulation prototype utilizing spherifi-

cation– a unique method of gelatin encapsulation from liquid extraction. Finally, the last room proudly displays examples of the most notorious fine fragrances, complete with their original, often exquisite, containers.

Before you depart, a visit to the souvenir store is a must. Here, you can immerse yourself in the museum's signature perfumes, inspired by rich Mexican culture, with captivating scents like "Cempazuchitl Mexica," "Copal Mexica," "Lima Mexica," and "Chocolate Mexica." Beyond fragrances, you'll also find typical merchandise such as T-shirts, mugs, and notebooks, perfect mementos of your aromatic adventure.



## Plan Your Aromatic Escape

If your travels take you to Mexico City, a visit to MUPE is an absolute must for anyone with an appreciation for scent, history, or simply a unique cultural experience.

### *A Few Tips for Your Trip:*

**Safety First:** As with any large city, remain aware of your surroundings, especially when navigating streets and public transportation. Be cautious of scammers and unsolicited offers of help or services.

**Getting Around:** Uber or certified taxis are highly recommended for transportation. For the intrepid, the Metro (subway) is an option, though be mindful that it lacks air conditioning and can be chaotic during peak hours.

**Best Time to Visit:** Spring and autumn offer the most pleasant weather for exploring Mexico City.

Until next time, may your days be filled with delightful aromas!

*Miguel-Angel Escareno is a certified member since 2020. He currently works for Glanbia based in California.*





# '25 ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

MAY 5-7, 2025

THE VINOY RESORT

ST PETERSBURG, FL



SFC Members in attendance L to R—Dana Gasiorowski (IFF), Dolf DeRovira (Flavor Dynamics), Debra Merritt (ADM), Melissa Barbercheck (ADM), Marie Wright (ADM), Lauren Wachenfeld (ADM), Ari Gastman (Firmenich), Justin Kozlowski (Bell).

# Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner

## 474th Business Meeting

May 8, 2025

Marriott Hotel, Newark, NJ

*The meeting met quorum of over 30 Certified members in person and online attendance via Zoom.*

*President Justin Kozlowski called the meeting to order.*

*The Membership Committee Chair, Jacqueline Finner, presented the new members and upgrades for voting.*

*John Wright, Karen Alexander, Fred Triolo, Dana Gasiorowski, Ron Steiner, David Madrid, and Bill Aslanides were among those who spoke on behalf of the candidates.*



*Candidates voted in for membership: left to right— Connor White (apprentice, Givaudan). Kevin Kleist (apprentice, Givaudan), Daniel Kinsella (apprentice, Dohler), Kelly Purohit (upgrade to certified, IFF), Giuseppe Bongiorno (upgrade to certified, Pepsico).*

*Justin's last business meeting as President. Great attendance both in person and on Zoom.*





*SFC Chairperson, Bill Aslanides, congratulated Justin Kozlowski for a job well-done during his term as President. Justin went on to present his year-in-review. He spoke largely about his objective to get the Society's finances in order and reported that the Society is solvent, well-funded, and is set up for sustainability. Thank you Justin. Well done!*



*Passing the gavel. Outgoing President, Justin Kozlowski passed the gavel to incoming President, Scott Michaluk.*

*Meet the new SFC Treasurer, Terry Miesle. Terry is a certified member since 2001. He currently works for Sensient.*



2025-2026

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson: Justin Kozlowski

President: Scott Michaluk

Vice Pres: Marissa Piazza

Secretary: Jennifer Tartaglia

Treasurer: Terry Miesle





# Annual Awards Dinner





## 2025 Jogue Scholarship Award



Vici Thahir



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Vici Thahir is currently a graduate student in Food Science at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Food Science from the University of California, Davis, where she researched the characterization of olive oil quality. After obtaining her Bachelor's degree, Vici worked at alternative protein startups in the San Francisco Bay Area. She worked as a food formulation scientist at Air Protein, where she developed benchtop prototypes of dairy and meat alternatives using novel microbial protein. She also worked as a production technician at SIMULATE, where she was involved in the pilot-scale production of plant-based whole muscle chicken breast using fiber-spinning technologies.

Vici's current research focuses on flavor retention in high-protein dairy systems. Her research leverages lipid, analytical, and flavor chemistry to develop processing strategies that retain the intrinsic milk flavor and minimize off-flavors in high-protein dairy systems. With the growing demand for high-protein products, her research aims to lay the foundation for developing high-quality dairy ingredients that are both nutritious and aligned with consumer flavor preferences.

With her passion for flavor and analytical chemistry, Vici hopes to become a flavor chemist who combines scientific rigor and creativity to address real-world challenges in flavor innovation and ingredient development. She is passionate about elevating food experiences that put consumer enjoyment at the forefront. ❖❖❖





# Member Awards

This year we had 9 recipients of the 25-yr award, 3 recipients of the 50-yr award, and a Golden Blotter award recipient.

Not in attendance for their 25-yr pin were Susan Kidwell, Mark Lee, Jonathan Martin, Tony Moore, and Yukihiro Nishimoto. Not in attendance for their 50-yr award were Harvey Farber and Gerard Mosciano.



Charlie Iker receiving his 25-yr membership pin



David Madrid receiving his 25-yr membership pin



Ketan Shah receiving his 25-yr membership pin



Stacey Michaelidou receiving her 25-yr membership pin



Gary Slangan receiving his 50-yr membership award





# 25-year Membership Pin Award



**Charlie Iker**  
*Kerry*



**Susan Kidwell**  
*ZoomEssence*



**Mark Kuo-Chung Lee**  
*P&G - retired*



**David Madrid**  
*Givaudan*

**Jonathan Martin**  
*ADM*



**Stacey Michaelidou**  
*Takasago*



**Tony Moore**  
*Moore Flavor Labs*



**Yukihiro Nishimoto**  
*T.Hasegawa*



**Ketan Shah**  
*Esha Flavor Solutions*

# 50-year Membership Award



**Harvey Farber**  
*Emeritus*

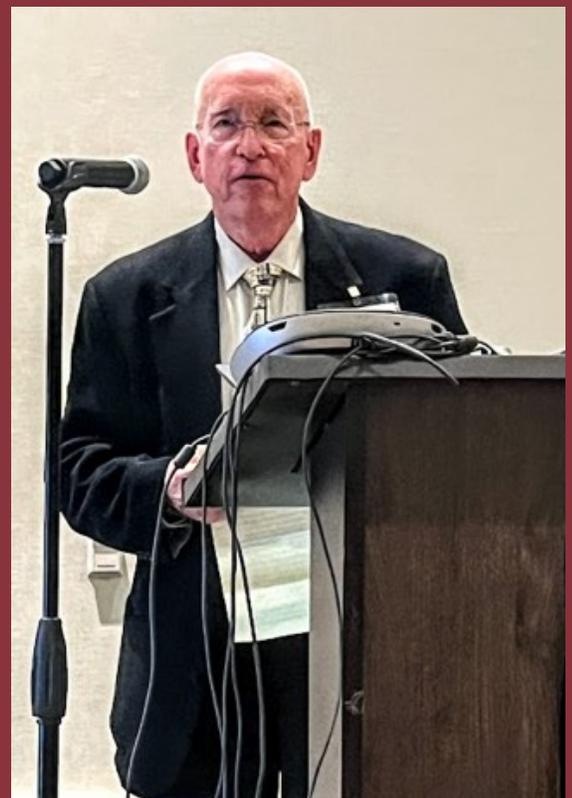
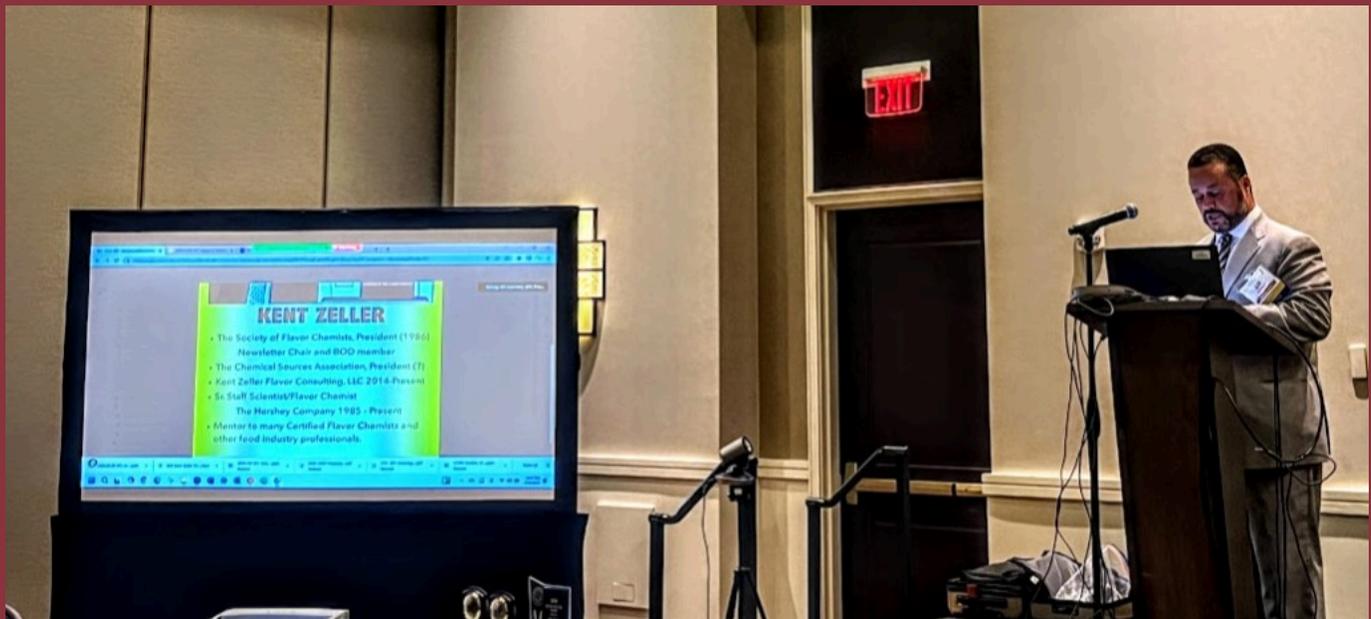


**Gerard Mosciano**  
*Emeritus*  
*Past President*  
*1987-1988*



**Gary Slangan**  
*Emeritus*





*Chairperson, Bill Aslanides, selected Kent Zeller for the 2025 Golden Blotter Award. He spoke very highly of Kent, and showed a slide presentation of Kent's vast involvement in the SFC. Jennifer Ritschard and Cyndie Lipka (on video) spoke about Kent and how he has impacted their careers.*

# Golden Blotter Award



## KENT ZELLER

- The Society of Flavor Chemists, President (1986)  
Newsletter Chair and BOD Member
- The Chemical Sources Association, President
- Kent Zeller Flavor Consulting, LLC (2014-Present)
- Sr. Staff Scientist / Flavor Chemist  
The Hershey Company 1985-Present
- Mentor to many Certified Flavor Chemists and other flavor industry professionals







## A Newfound Excite-MINT For a Familiar Ingredient

*By Jennifer Meehan*



I recently had the incredible opportunity to join the Chemical Sources Association on a field trip to the Pacific Northwest. The field trip was well attended, with a mix of flavorists, ingredient suppliers, and other industry professionals. Idaho, Washington, and Oregon lead the United States in mint production, and we had the great fortune to visit several farms during peak harvest time in late August. The unique soil composition and temperate climate in this region yield some of the highest quality peppermint and spearmint oils in the world.



We met with growers from JSH Farms (Hermiston, OR) and Sealock Farms (Toppenish, WA) to get a firsthand look at the mint fields and distillation process. Mint cultivation is highly mechanized, with a strong focus on sustainability, and growers use multiple agricultural practices, such as crop rotation, to ensure the highest quality and most efficient production anywhere in the world. It was also evident that the grower community is deeply established, with many multi-generational farmers who take great pride in their craft. They remain committed to the future of mint cultivation, continuing to invest in advanced farming practices and modern distillation equipment.





The field trip continued at Norwest Ingredients, a family-owned and operated essential oil company. Norwest maintains close relationships with growers, which allows them to anticipate supply chain issues and keep a steady inventory. They also actively collaborate with customers to develop mint products that fit specific needs through blending, fractionation, and sensory analysis.

We concluded our mint tour at Essex Laboratories in Chehalis, WA. In addition to fulfilling the mission of a mint oil dealer, Essex invests in further improving the industry by developing mint varieties for the next generation. Their innovation program focuses on resource conservation, disease resistance, and creating unique organoleptic signatures to serve the needs of the growers and the consumers. In 2016, dsm-firmenich partnered with Essex Laboratories. This collaboration brought dsm-firmenich's expertise in flavor and fragrance to Essex, while further enriching dsm-firmenich's natural mint portfolio.

I left the mint fields with a deeper appreciation for the complexity and versatility of mint. There is a delicate balance of freshness, brightness, and subtle sweetness in mint, and I look forward to weaving those notes into my flavor creations. ❖❖❖

*Jennifer Meehan is a certified member since 2021. She currently works for dsm-firmenich based in New Jersey.*



**SFC members:**

**Jennifer Meehan (dsm-firmenich)**

**Karen Alexander (IFF)**

**Elsa Howerth (Kerry)**

**Lee Bussinger (Pepsico)**

**Linda Gleason (Synergy)**

**Stacy Thompson (MANE)**

**Lauren Hammerschmidt (Flavorchem)**

**Robert Pan (Sweegen)**

# New Members & Upgrades

## *Welcome & Congratulations!*



### **GIUSEPPE BONGIORNO**

Bell Flavors & Fragrances  
Upgrade to Certified  
May 8, 2025

My name is Giuseppe Bongiorno. Ever since I was young, I always had a curiosity about aromas surrounding me, whether it was a freshly opened pack of cards or the natural environment. I grew up in a huge Italian family, my parents both born in southern Italy. I really grew an appreciation for my Sicilian heritage and the kaleidoscopic culture of food, beverages, architecture, sounds and colors in the marketplace. As I grew older, I became more intrigued by the natural sciences and the chemical makeup of materials—this led me to attaining degrees in biology, biochemistry and polymer engineering. In my spare time, I enjoy reading and playing video games, both of which serve as a wellspring for my imagination. Ultimately, I never knew that these life experiences and simple joys would lead me to such a unique career as a flavor chemist. I have great passion in flavor creation, blending science and artistry. The industry and training allow my inspiration to organically evolve from experiences in life. The beauty of creating flavors is that it connects me closer to nature while nourishing my creative space. It is the dream job I never knew existed before 8 years ago, and it is the most fulfilling profession anyone could ever ask for. This career found me and I'm forever grateful.

While attending Rutgers I never imagined I would join the flavor industry, however, the best parts of my day are figuring out complex problems and coming up with interesting blends of flavors. My passion for strategy and adventure is not limited to flavor creation. As an avid chess player, I find solace in problem-solving, often spending hours honing my skills and exploring new tactics. I also enjoy spending time in the great outdoors. Whether fishing or snowboarding, I embrace the challenges and joys of nature. My journey is marked by a continuous pursuit of challenges that enrich my appreciation for the world around me and being a flavorist ties that all together for me.

**DANIEL KINSELLA**

Doehler  
Apprentice  
May 8, 2025



Hello, my name is Kevin Kleist! I have been working for Givaudan for 10 years now. I started as a temp working in Savory Meat Applications as my co-op requirement for Culinary School at Cincinnati State. I enjoyed the work so much that when a position opened up here at Givaudan I applied and was hired as a Technologist in Savory Meat Application. Then, while working full time I went back to school part-time to get my bachelors in Chemistry from the University of Cincinnati. During that stint at the University of Cincinnati I switched roles to become a Flavor Assistant. From there, I applied and became a Flavorist Associate. Outside of work, I love hiking, food and I am an avid video gamer.

**KEVIN KLEIST**

Givaudan  
Apprentice  
May 8, 2025

I was drawn to being a Flavorist because I liked the idea of being challenged on a daily basis to create unique flavor profiles that can make it to the market for consumers to enjoy. I am currently working on flavors for beverage applications, where I love being able to blend science and art in order to create something new. Outside of work, my hobbies include traveling, hiking, baking, and reading.

**KELLY PUROHIT**

IFF

Upgrade to Certified

May 8, 2025



I graduated from OSU in 2016 with a degree in Food Science and Technology. Briefly after graduation, I considered careers in both the beer and wine industry, before starting a QC Technician role at the Hamilton, OH location of Synergy Flavors. After roughly 2 years in this role, I heard of flavorist trainee positions opening up at the Wauconda, IL location, applied and got the job. Worked there for 3.5 years through the pandemic and all, until pressing family issues brought me back to Cincinnati. I then started as a Flavor Assistant III here at Givaudan nearly two years ago, and that brings us to the present day. Outside of the field, I enjoy developing cocktails, running a D&D game for my friends, and designing/sewing patchwork jackets, though new hobbies are always on the horizon.

**CONNOR WHITE**

Givaudan

Apprentice

May 8, 2025

# History Committee

*As you know we are working on building a family tree of the flavor industry. This was an idea from Dolf DeRovira and Mike Bloom coming to fruition. If you have information regarding manufacturers, mergers, and acquisitions of flavor companies, please add them and dates to the spreadsheet. You can also add new flavor companies that have been created with their dates and owners.*

*Here is the link to the spreadsheet [Flavor MMA History Progress File](#).*

*Please email your updates directly to Dolf at [dolfd@flavordynamics.com](mailto:dolfd@flavordynamics.com).*

*The Flavor Industry Family Tree spreadsheet isn't just a record - it's a living history of the flavor industry and how it has changed over time. Once it is completed, it will be a valuable resource for not just SFC members but for anyone interested in the legacy and evolution of our industry.*

*Thank you for helping in this endeavor.*

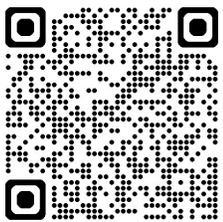
*Sharon Tortola  
SFC History Committee Chair  
[history@flavorchemist.org](mailto:history@flavorchemist.org)*

# Membership Committee

At the April 10, 2025 business meeting, the membership committee co-chairs presented the Board-approved update to the testing protocol which appears on the Syllabus under SFC Candidate for Membership Interview Process, item #5.a. See this section below.

**5. The SFCMC shall determine if the candidate should be recommended for the level of membership to which the candidate had applied.**

- a. For the written test:
  - i. Apprentice candidates shall be allowed no more than 20% incorrect or incomplete responses
  - ii. Certified candidates shall be allowed no more than 10% incorrect or incomplete responses
  - iii. If the number of incorrect responses exceeds the allowed percentage, the SFCMC reserves the right to not proceed to the verbal interview. Candidates who fail to pass the written exam will be notified by the Membership Chair of the “no pass” result.
- b. Candidates recommended for membership shall be presented to the SFC membership for a vote at the first possible business meeting following the candidate’s interview
- c. If the SFCMC recommends a “no pass”, the options shall be privately discussed with the candidate. The candidate’s name shall remain confidential
  - i. Should the candidate have already earned Apprentice membership, and is in good standing with the by-laws, they will retain the level of Apprentice until they either time out or upgrade successfully.



The Membership Committee is always looking to add new questions to the written tests and we appreciate suggestions from our members. Scan the QR code to submit a question of your own. You must be a Certified or Emeritus member to submit.

# Committee News

## Volunteer Opportunities!

The Symposium Committee has an open Chairperson position. If interested, please contact the Board Chairperson, Justin Kozlowski.

[chair@flavorchemist.org](mailto:chair@flavorchemist.org)

We're looking to open a new committee called the IT Committee. For more information, contact

[Secretary@flavorchemist.org](mailto:Secretary@flavorchemist.org)

If interested in joining any of the committees, please contact the committee Chair listed. 

## COMMITTEES

### 2025-2026

#### ARRANGEMENTS

CHAIR: [Chris Williams](#)

#### AUDIT

CHAIR: [Paul Ricciardi](#)

#### BY-LAWS

CHAIR: [Mariano Gascon](#)

#### HISTORY

CHAIR: [Sharon Tortola](#)

#### LIBRARY

CHAIR: [Sam Tharpe](#)

#### MEDIA

CHAIR: [Alison Freedman](#)

#### MEMBERSHIP

CO-CHAIRS: [Aparna Oak](#)

[Ashley Rizzo](#)

[Jacqueline Finner](#)

#### PROGRAM-CHICAGO

CO-CHAIRS: [Greq Griffin &](#)

[Lauren Hammerschmidt](#)

#### PROGRAM-MIDWEST

CHAIR: [Katie Crowley](#)

#### PROGRAM-EAST COAST

CO-CHAIRS: [Kim Bendickson &](#)

[Tara Strober](#)

#### PROGRAM-WEST COAST

CHAIR: [Alex Scott](#)

#### NOMINATION

CHAIR: [Justin Kozlowski](#)

#### RECOGNITION

CHAIR: [Mary Robertson](#)

#### SCHOLARSHIP

CHAIR: [Katie Beaver](#)

#### SPONSORSHIP

CHAIR: [Alpa Roman](#)

#### SYMPOSIUM

CHAIR: OPEN

#### WEBSITE

CHAIR: [Elsa Howerth](#)



# Calendar

The following are the 2025-2026 SFC Meetings planned. Please be sure to book your hotel reservations and register for the meetings before the cut-off dates. See [SFC website calendar](#) for details and updates.

**September 25, 2025— Chicago Meeting in Schaumburg, IL**

**October 16, 2025— East Coast Meeting in Newark, NJ**

**November 4, 2025— CSA Chicago Roundtable in Chicago, IL**

**January 20, 2026— West Coast Meeting in Anaheim, CA**

**February 12, 2026 – East Coast Meeting in Atlanta, GA**

**March 3, 2026— SFC/CSA/NAFFS West Coast Roundtable in Anaheim, CA**

**April 16, 2026— Midwest Meeting in Loveland, OH**

**May 7, 2026— CSA Roundtable and SFC Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner in Newark, NJ**



*Editor's Note* If you would like to share an article, announcement, and /or message relevant to our members, and any questions, suggestions, or feedback, please contact Elsa Howerth at [elsa.howerth@kerry.com](mailto:elsa.howerth@kerry.com)