

Media Relations

Pleasant View Gardens Named UNH Family Business Of The Year

May 17, 2010

From Left to Right: Ben Huntington, Jeff Huntington, Eleanor Huntington, Jonathan Huntington, Sharon Huntington, Henry Huntington, Barbara Draper, UNH Center for Family Business, and Jack Sanders, chairman of the UNH Center for Family Business board of advisors.

DURHAM, N.H. – Pleasant View Gardens in Loudon has been named the 2010 Family Business of the Year by the University of New Hampshire Center for Family Business.

"The life, history, and achievements of the Huntington family tell a remarkable story of how hard work, dedication, and family unity can establish a thriving business," said Barbara Draper, director of the UNH Center for Family Business.

Owned by the Huntington family, Pleasant View Gardens is largest wholesale grower in New Hampshire, and one of the largest in New England.

In 1976, Jonathan and Eleanor Huntington, and sons Jeff and Henry, moved from Connecticut to Loudon to purchase Pleasant View Gardens, a wholesale greenhouse company. At that time, the facility consisted of three greenhouses and 10 employees. The customer base focused on local florists and provided only walk-in trade.

Today, Pleasant View has two facilities in the state with 13 acres of greenhouses, 15 acres of outdoor growing space, and \$21 million in sales. Pleasant View Gardens is a founding partner of Proven Winners, a marketing company that has created the top brand in gardening. They are also a partner in Ticoplant, an offshore stock facility in Costa Rica, and a partner in Plant 21, a breeder of new plant genetics.

In the Granite State, the company employs 120 full-time people and grows to more than 250 in the peak-growing season. Pleasant View ships Proven Winners young plants to growers throughout the United States. In 2008, Proven Winners was chosen by The Home Depot to fill the "best brand" category in all stores nationwide.

Pleasant View continues to be a successful family business despite a devastating fire in January 2010 that destroyed more than 30,000 square feet of its greenhouse. Because of the efforts of employees, suppliers, and other community members, the company rebuilt and had almost 60,000 square feet of new greenhouses in production by April 1.


Today Pleasant View is owned and operated by sons Jeff and Henry Huntington, and a third generation (Jeff and Henry's five sons) has begun to fill the ranks of the Huntington family business.


All three generations of Huntingtons are graduates of the UNH Thompson School —Jonathan in 1950, Jeff in 1976, Henry in 1980 and Jeff's son Andrew in 2008. In addition, the family has substantially supported UNH for many years. The Huntington family was one of the founding members of the UNH Center for Family Business and has been active in its programs for many years. Henry Huntington is on the advisory boards for the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture and the Thompson School's Horticultural Technology program. Jeff Huntington is a member of the Thompson School's Leadership Council.


In 2009, the family established a scholarship fund for students in the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture and the Thompson School of Applied Science who are studying plant science, horticulture and related subjects, or applied business management.

"We wanted to give back to the university, but we're also preparing for the future. We need to be able to find good people for our team and for our industry in general. We hope to see some shining stars coming out of UNH," Jeff Huntington said.

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The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling more than 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

PHOTO

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<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/2010FBofYear.jpg>

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