

Melinda Knuth, Ph.D.



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Melinda Knuth

Education

Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

Doctor of Philosophy in Horticulture (Directed by Dr. Charles Hall) August 2020

Dissertation: Behaviors and Attitudinal Differences Among Drought and Non-Drought Consumers

Cumulative GPR: 3.55/4.00

Certificate: Applied Statistics

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska

Bachelor of Science in Horticulture

December 2015

Cumulative GPR: 3.75/4.00

Concentration: Entrepreneurship

Minors: Entrepreneurship and Insect Science

Professional Experience

2021 – Present Assistant Professor, Department of Horticulture Science, North Carolina State University

Appointment is 80% teaching and 20% research. Research program investigates horticulture consumer attitudes and behavior with regard to ornamental plants, edible crops, and related products and services. Instruction responsibilities include: (1) senior-level greenhouse management; (2) associate-level plant physiology; and (3) senior-level floriculture crop production.

2020 – 2021 Postdoctoral Research Associate, Dr. Hayk Khachatryan, Food and Resource Economics Department and Mid- Florida Research and Education Center, University of Florida

Conducted consumer and marketing research in consumer preferencing for residential landscape inputs, houseplants, and neonicotinoid consumer knowledge.

2019 – 2020 Graduate Research Assistant, Dr. Charles Hall, Department of Horticultural Sciences, Texas A&M University

Conducted supply and demand market research in floriculture and ornamental horticulture. Designed, conducted, analyzed, interpreted, and published results from seven projects. My degree was completed under the direction of Drs. Charlie Hall (Horticulture), Marco Palma (Ag. Econ.) Bridget Behe (Marketing, MSU), and Terry Starman (Horticulture).

2016 – 2019 Graduate Teaching Assistant, Dr. Charles Hall, Department of Horticulture Sciences, Texas A&M University

Teaching Experience

Floral Design Teaching Assistant	2016 –2019
Department of Horticulture - Texas A&M University	College Station, TX

- Taught 16 sections of students over 8 semesters
- Introduced and applied new plant material in 15 designs each semester
- Assessed student comprehension through grading students' homework and projects
- Ordered and processed flowers each week for 108 students to utilize in labs
- Facilitated active learning through team critiques of student designs and in-lab discussion

Floral Design Lead Teaching Assistant	2014 – 2015
Department of Horticulture - UNL	Lincoln, NE

- Related floral design to students' lives, future careers, interests in different design styles and marketability of arrangements
- Adapted teaching style to student learning abilities and adjusted leadership techniques with class dynamics to over 200 students in labs
- Utilized 50 different types of cut flowers in arrangements
- Organized and ordered lab equipment for upcoming semesters
- Designed special events' centerpieces to showcase the Horticulture Department and student involvement at departmental collegiate dinners
- Designed 64 demonstration arrangements for students to view in 75 lab sections
- Oversaw and directly guided students in two labs each week for two semesters

Publications

Publications – Refereed Journal Articles (Career Total: 15; First Author: 7)

15. **Knuth, M.J.**, Khachatryan, H., Hall, C.R., Palma, M.A., Hodges, A.W., Torres, A.P., and R.G. Brumfield. 2021. Trade Flows within the United States Nursery Industry in 2018. *J Environ. Horticulture* 39(2): 77-90.
14. Kee, J., **Knuth, M.**, Lahey, J., and M.A. Palma. 2020. Does Eye-Tracking Have an Effect on Economic Behavior? *Plos one*, 16(8): e025486.
13. **Knuth, M.J.**, Khachatryan, H., and C.R. Hall. 2021. How Consistently Do People Know Their Preferences for Houseplants? *Behavioral Sciences* 11(5):73.
12. **Knuth, M. J.**, Behe, B. K., Huddleston, P. T., Hall, C. R., Fernandez, R. T., and H. Khachatryan. 2020. Water Conserving Message Influences Purchasing Decision of Consumers. *Water*, 12(12), 3487.
11. Behe, B. K., **Knuth, M.J.**, Huddleston, P. T., and C.R. Hall. 2020. Seeing red? The role of font color, size, and sale sign location in retail garden center displays. *Journal of Environmental Horticulture*, 38(4), 120-127.
10. **Knuth, M.**, Behe, B. K., and P.T. Huddleston. 2020. Simple or complex? Consumer response to display signs. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Signage and Wayfinding*, 4(2), 7-22.
9. Wu, X., **Knuth, M. J.**, Hall, C. R., and M.A. Palma. 2021. Increasing Profit Margins by Substituting Species in Floral Arrangements, *HortTechnology* 31(1), 19-26.
8. Hall, C.R. and **Knuth, M.** 2020. An update of the literature supporting the well-being benefits of plants: Part 4 available resources and usage of plant benefits information. *J Environ. Hort.*
7. **Knuth, M.**, Behe, B. K., Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P. T., and R.T. Fernandez. 2019. Sit Back or Dig In: The Role of Activity Level in Landscape Market Segmentation. *HortSci.* 54(10): 1818–1823. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTSCI14158-19>
6. Hall, C.R. and **Knuth, M.** 2019. An update of the literature supporting the well-being benefits of plants: Part 3 social benefits. *J Environ. Hort.* 37(4):136-142. <https://hrijournal.org/doi/pdf/10.24266/0738-2898-37.4.136>

5. Hall, C. R. and **Knuth, M.** 2019. An update of the literature supporting the well-being benefits of plants: Part 2 physiological health benefits. *J Environ. Hort.* 37(2):63-73.
<https://hrijournal.org/doi/pdf/10.24266/0738-2898-37.2.63>
4. Hall, C. and **Knuth, M.** 2019. An update of the literature supporting the well-being benefits of plants: a review of the emotional and mental health benefits of plants. *J Environ Hort.* 37(1):30-38.
<https://hrijournal.org/doi/pdf/10.24266/0738-2898-37.1.30>
3. Behe, B. K., **Knuth, M.**, Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P. T., and R.T. Fernandez. 2018. Consumer involvement with and expertise in water conservation and plants affect landscape plant purchases, importance, and enjoyment. *HortSci.* 53(8):1164-1171. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTSCI13119-18>
2. **Knuth, M.**, Behe, B. K., Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P., and R.T. Fernandez. 2018. Consumer perceptions of landscape plant production water sources and uses in the landscape during perceived and real drought. *HortTech.* 28(1):85-93. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTTECH03893-17>
1. **Knuth, M.**, Behe, B. K., Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P. T., and R.T. Fernandez. 2018. Consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchase behavior with landscape plants during real and perceived drought periods. *HortSci.* 53(1):49-54. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTSCI12482-17>

Papers in Manuscript Draft

1. Kee, J., **Knuth, M.**, M. Martinez, C., Marwah, P., and C. Eckel. Is trust a risky decision: a replication.
2. Wu, X., **Knuth, M.J.**, Hall, C.R., and M.A. Palma. Analysis of Floral Form Preference by Floral Consumers.
3. **Knuth, M.J.**, Wu, X., Hall, C.R., and M.A. Palma. Floral Art Preferences.
4. **Knuth, M.J.**, Wu, X., Hall, C.R., and M.A. Palma. Floral Consumer Purchasing Preferences: An Eye-tracking Study.
5. **Knuth, M.J.**, Wu, X., Hall, C.R., and M.A. Palma. Auction Equilibrium for Floral Products.
6. **Knuth, M.J.**, Khachatryan, H., Zhang, X., and X. Wei. Florida Homeowner Preferences for Turfgrass Features.
7. **Knuth, M.J.**, Khachatryan, H., Wei, X., and X. Zhang. Florida Homeowner Preference for Low Input Landscapes.
8. **Knuth, M.J.**, Khachatryan, H., Zhang, X., and X. Wei. Homeowner Attitudinal Influences on the

Adoption of Florida Friendly Landscapes.

9. **Knuth, M.J.**, Khachatryan, H., Zhang, X., and X. Wei. What Type of Homeowner are you? Evidence of Underlying Attitudinal Influences.

Extension and Industry Publications

1. Characteristics of Texas' Nursery and Greenhouse Industries. AgriLife Extension. May 2021.
2. Characteristics of Florida's Nursery and Greenhouse Industries. IFAS EDIS. December 2020.
3. Florida Nursery and Landscape Industry Economic Impact Report. IFAS EDIS. December 2020.
4. TNLA Green. Water Conservation Student Research. Nov/Dec 2017. Pg. 19.

Reviewer

HortScience (2021 – 4; 2020 – 3; 2019 – 1), HortTechnology (2021—3; 2020 – 1)

Conference Presentations (Poster or Oral)

21. Knuth, M. Khachatryan, H., Zhang, X., Wei, X., Yue, C., and A. Hodges. 2021. Latent class analysis of Florida household turfgrass inputs. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Denver, CO.
20. Knuth, M., Khachatryan, H., and C. Hall. 2021. How Consistently Do Plant Purchasers Know Their Preferences for Houseplants? American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Denver, CO.
19. Knuth, M. 2020. Water conservation messaging in the horticulture industry: communicating through the supply chain. North Texas Regional Water Conservation Symposium (11th), virtual.
18. Knuth, M. 2020. Signage and Music. Certificate in Applied Behavioral Economics Program, Human Behavior Lab, Texas A&M University, virtual.
17. Knuth, M., Behe, B.K., and Huddleston, P.T. 2020. Top-Down analysis of varied sign complexities. Oral Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, virtual.
16. Knuth, M. and C.R. Hall. 2020. The health and wellbeing benefits of plants. Poster Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, virtual.

15. Knuth, M. 2020. Floriculture's Rising Stars: Research Updates from Graduate Students: Simple or complex? Consumer response to display signs. AmericanHort, Cultivate '20, virtual.
14. Knuth, M. 2020. What research tells us about consumer behavior! Oral Presentation. Texas Nursery Landscape Association Region III Meeting, virtual.
13. Knuth, M. and C.R. Hall. 2019. Driving forces of change. Wholesale Florists & Florist Supplier Association Floral Distribution Conference, Miami, FL.
12. Knuth, M., Wu, X., Hall, C.R., and M. Palma. 2019. Categorizing floral consumers by taste preferences: clustering. Poster Presentation. Horticultural Sciences Departmental Poster Symposium, College Station, TX.
11. Knuth, M., Wu, X., Hall, C.R., and M. Palma. 2019. What consumers REALLY want. Oral Presentation. Society of American Florists Annual Conference, Amelia Island, FL.
10. Knuth, M., Behe, B.K., Hall, C.R., Huddleston, P. T., and Fernandez, R. T. 2019. Water conservation + research + industry = changes to your business! Oral Presentation. Texas Nursery and Landscape Association Annual Meeting, Austin, TX.
9. Knuth, M., Wu, X., Hall, C. R., and Palma, M. A. 2019. Categorizing floral consumers by taste preferences: logit regression. Poster Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.
8. Knuth, M., Kee, J., Martinez, C., Marwah, P., and Eckel, C. 2019. Is Trust a Risky Decision: A Replication. Poster Presentation. TExAS Symposium, Waco, TX.
7. Knuth, M., Behe, B.K., Huddleston, P. T., and Hall, C. R. 2019. The dirt is in the details: sign complexity of garden retailer signage. Oral Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV.
6. Knuth, M., Behe, B.K., Hall, C.R., Huddleston, P. T., and Fernandez, R. T. 2018. Actively interested and passively disinterested in water conservation cluster segments on horticulture product spending in 2016. Oral Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Washington D.C.
5. Knuth, M., Behe, B. K., Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P. T., and Fernandez, R. T. 2018. Landscape importance components related to consumer active interest and passive disinterest in water conservation. Poster Presentation. Horticultural Sciences Departmental Poster Symposium,

College Station, TX.

4. Knuth, M., Behe, B. K., Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P. T., and Fernandez, R. T. 2018. Landscape importance components related to consumer active interest and passive disinterest in water conservation. Poster Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
3. Knuth, M., Behe, B.K., Hall, C.R., Huddleston, P. T., and Fernandez, R. T. 2017. Demographic characteristics of interested and disinterested water conservers. Oral Presentation. American Society of Horticultural Sciences Annual Conference, Waikiki, HI.
2. Knuth, M. 2017. Benefits of Plants. Oral Presentation. Cultivate Annual Conference, Columbus, OH.
1. Knuth, M., Behe, B. K., Hall, C. R., Huddleston, P. T., and Fernandez, R. T. 2017. Factors affecting water conservation attitudes. Poster Presentation. Horticultural Sciences Departmental Poster Symposium, College Station, TX.

Grant Experience

Funding Source	Subject	P.I.	My Role	Amount	Year/status
1. USDA SCRI Clean Water4	Water Conservation in retail messaging	Sarah White	Wrote marketing group proposal and methodologies	\$35,000	2021 (Denied)
2. American Flower Endowment	Houseplant Purchasing during COVID and post- COVID	Hayk Khachatryan	Generate research idea and wrote proposal, generated survey, analysis, and wrote final report	\$45,000	2021 (Funded)
3. Floral Summit (partners: WFFSA, AFE, AFIF, Asocolflores,	Structure, Conduct, and Performance of the U.S. Floral Supply Chain	Charles Hall	Generating methodology, conducting interviews, analyzed	\$90,000	2019 (Funded)

CalFlowers,
CCFC,
Expoflores,
Ellison Chair of
International
Floriculture,
FMRF, SAF)

survey data,
wrote final
report,
presented
research at
funder annual
meeting

4.	American Floral Endowment/Floral Market Research Fund	Determining Consumer Preferences for Floral Design Elements	Charles Hall, Marco Palma (co), Melinda Knuth (co)	Wrote proposal, generated methodology, conducted experiments, analyzed data	\$35,000	2019 (Funded)
5.	Aggie Green Fund	Hydration Station for the Horticulture & Forest Science Building, TAMU	Melinda Knuth	Wrote proposal and final report	\$1,500	2019 (Funded)
6.	USDA SCRI Clean Water3	Water Conservation in landscapes	Sarah White		\$90,189	2016 (Funded)

Total Funding Received \$216,000

- White, S.A., J.S. Owen, B. Behe, B. Cregg, R.T. Fernandez, P. Fisher, C.R. Hall, D. Haver, D. Hitchcock, D.L. Ingram, S. Kumar, A. Lamm, J. Lea-Cox, L.R. Oki, J.L. Parke, A. Ristvey, D. Sample, L.S. Warner. (2021 Pending). Clean Water4 - Reduce, Remediate, Recycle: Informed Decision-Making to Facilitate Use of Alternative Water Resources and Promote Sustainable Specialty Crop Production. USDA-NIFA-SCRI. \$8,734,103 over 5 years Proposed funding 08/2022 – 8/2027. (\$35,000).
- Khachatryan, H., Hall, C., Knuth, M. 2020. Houseplant Purchasing During COVID-19 and Post-COVID-19. American Floral Endowment. Funded 01/2021 -08/2021 (45,000).
- Hall, C., Knuth, M., Palma, A. 2019. Structure, Conduct, and Performance of the U.S. Floral Supply Chain. Wholesale Florist & Florist Supplier Association (WFFSA), American Floral Endowment (AFE), Association of Floral Importers of Florida (AFIF), Asocolflores, CalFlowers, California Cut Flower Association (CCFC), Expoflores, Ellison Chair of International Floriculture, Floral Market

- Research Fund (FMRF), and Society of American Florists (SAF). Funded 08/2018 – 11/2019. (\$90,000).
4. Hall, C., Knuth, M., Palma, A. 2018. Determining Consumer Preferences for Floral Design Elements. American Floral Endowment and Floral Market Research Fund. Funded 09/2018 – 07/2019. (\$35,000).
 5. Knuth, M., Brinkley, S. 2019. Hydration Station for the Horticulture & Forest Science Building, Texas A&M University Aggie Green Fund. \$1,500 over 6 months. Funded 03/2019 – 09/2019. (\$1,500).
 6. White, S.A., J.S. Owen, B. Behe, B. Cregg, R.T. Fernandez, P. Fisher, C.R. Hall, D. Haver, D. Hitchcock, D.L. Ingram, S. Kumar, A. Lamm, J. Lea-Cox, L.R. Oki, J.L. Parke, A. Ristvey, D. Sample, L.S. Warner. 2016. Clean Water3 - Reduce, Remediate, Recycle: Informed Decision-Making to Facilitate Use of Alternative Water Resources and Promote Sustainable Specialty Crop Production. USDA-NIFA-SCRI. \$8,734,103 over 4 years Funded 9/2016 – 8/2019. (\$90,189).

Research Projects

Dates	Project Title
2020 – Present	Consumer Houseplant Purchasing
2020 – 2021	Florida Friendly Landscapes
2020	S1065 Green Industry Update
2019 – 2020	Structure, Conduct, and Performance of the U.S. Floral Supply Chain
2019 – 2020	Mixed Hanging Baskets: A Replication
2018 – 2020	The Hawthorne Effect of Eye-Tracking Technology in Economic Games
2018 – 2019	Determining Consumer Preferences for Floral Design Elements
2018 – 2019	Michigan Garden and Retail Center Signs
2018 – 2019	Benefits of Plants: A Review
2016 – 2020	USDA SCRI Clean Water3: Reduce, Remediate, Recycle
2016	FloraLife Value Chain Analysis
2015	Essential Oil Extraction in Basil (Undergraduate Project)
2012 – 2014	Wheat Breeding: Weevil Resistance

Relevant Industry Experience

Golden Oak Horticulture Intern	2016
Golden Oak Resort, Orlando, Florida	Walt Disney Company
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managed crop schedule for over 85 varieties of edible plants including annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees• Increased the value of the garden by 20% per month by introducing specialty crops and management of resources• Planned and carried out garden expansion increasing garden an additional 600 square feet for annual crop production and seven fruit trees to existing grove• Handled all care for two beehives including treatment for varroa mite, re-queening an unproductive queen and adding ‘bee pasture’ for pollen additive during traditional dry periods in Florida• Kept insect populations below Economic Injury Levels using Integrated Pest Management	

strategies

- Plant Science Intern 2015
The Land - Epcot, Orlando, Florida Walt Disney Company
- Maintained 150 food crops from across the globe in 10 hydroponic systems
 - Sustained high-quality esthetics of vegetables and edible flowers through pruning, harvesting, transplanting, stringing techniques and irrigating a wide variety of production plants
 - Gave over 100 educational agro-tours to greenhouse guests about environmental responsibility, the growing methods of production and fun facts about exotic plants
- College Ambassador/Hostess 2014 – 2015
UNL College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Lincoln, NE
- Informed and promoted UNL’s qualities to potential students during five promotional events for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
 - Gave tours of University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s East Campus to prospective students to help students discover their niche at UNL
 - Guided “Red Letter Day” tours to over 50 guests each Friday during the semester
- Floral Processor, Cutts Floral 2014 – 2014
Lincoln, NE
- Unpacked, checked and processed all the freshly arrived flowers
 - Prepared customer orders based on delivery date
 - Counted inventory to make sure all bunches were present and in marketable condition
 - Inventoried over 150 cut flowers present in warehouse cooler for warehouse inventory
- Seasonal Florist, North American Wholesale Florist 2011 – 2012
Sioux Fall, SD
- Checked and processed flowers coming into bouquet department
 - Put together 12 recipes of consumer bouquets for major floral holidays

- Quality checked packaged bouquets for transportation to local supermarkets, florists and stores
- Designed 20 different round and one-sided floral arrangements based off containers and recipes

Student Recruiter, Walt Disney Company Agricultural Sciences 2016

Orlando, Florida

- Representative of the Agricultural Sciences division at the University of Florida Career Fair to promote Disney’s internship programs to potential interns
- Assessed if students had Disney Company character and how applicable their skill set was to the internship qualifications

Skills

Instrumentation: Proficient with Tobii X2-60, Tobii Pro Spectrum, and Tobii Pro Glasses 2, Shimmer 3 (Galvanic Skin Response), Neuroelectric Enobio 8 (electroencephalogram), Salivary Bioscience, and Single Kernel Characteristic System (SKCS)

Software: Proficient in iMotions and Tobii Pro Lab, STATA, SAS, SPSS, and JMP Microsoft Excel; Familiar with Adobe Photoshop, LaTeX, R Studio, and Mplus

Statistical Analyses: Proficient in advanced ANOVAS, multivariate and regression analysis, structural equation modeling, and conjoint

Certificates: CITI Certified for Human Test Subjects, Certified Floral Designer, Nebraska Pesticide Applicator’s License Category 4 Certification (State of Nebraska, 2014-2016), Academy of Future Faculty (Texas A&M University)

Honors and Awards

1. 40 under 40 Recipient 2021, Greenhouse Product News
2. Louise B. Belsterling Foundation 2019, Dallas Garden Club
3. Student Spotlight, Produce Growers Magazine. Student Spotlight. April 2019.
<http://magazine.producegrower.com/article/april-2019/melinda-knuth-student-spotlight.aspx>
4. Student Spotlight, Lawn and Landscape Magazine. Student Spotlight. February 2019.

<https://www.lawnandlandscape.com/article/melinda-knuth/>

5. Student Spotlight, American Flower Endowment Young Professionals Council Takeover. May 2019. AFE Social Media (Facebook and Instagram).
6. James and Helen Phillip Scholarship Recipient 2019, American Floral Endowment
7. Mugget Scholarship Recipient 2018, Horticulture Research Institute
8. Texas A&M University Scholarship Recipient 2018, American Floral Endowment
9. ASHS Student Travel Grant 2017, American Society of Horticultural Sciences
10. AmericanHort Scholar 2017, AmericanHort
11. AmericanHort Scholar Coordinator 2018, AmericanHort
12. Student Spotlight, Greenhouse Growers. HortScholars Student Spotlight. July 2017.
13. Corliss Knapp Engle Scholarship Recipient 2017, Garden Clubs of America
14. Dave Dowling Scholarship Recipient 2017, Specialty Cut Flower Growers Association
15. Jim Johnson Scholarship Recipient 2017, Texas A&M Horticulture Department Endowment
16. Certified Student Leader 2015, Sigma Alpha Lambda
17. Franco's List of Character Recipient Fall 2015, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
18. CASNR Spirit Recipient Class of Fall 2015, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Professional Affiliations

NIFA S1087: Multi-State Project	2020 – Present
American Economic Association	2019 – Present
American Institute of Floral Designs – Certified Floral Designer	2019 – Present
Society of American Florists	2019 – Present
Texas Nursery and Landscape Association	2019 – 2020
Women in Ag Sciences	2019 – 2020
American Society of Horticultural Sciences	2016 – Present
American Specialty Cut Flower Association	2018 – Present
America Floral Endowment -- Young Professionals Council	2016 – Present

AmericanHort	2017 – Present
Pi Alpha Xi	2014 – Present

Service

AmericanHort GenNext Committee, <i>Community Connector</i>	2019 – Present
American Society of Horticultural Sciences, <i>Outstanding Graduate Educator Award committee member</i>	2020 – Present
<i>Secretary of Graduate Student Professional Interest Group</i>	2019 – 2020
American Flower Endowment, <i>Strategic Planning Committee Member</i>	2020 – Present
Women in Ag Sciences, <i>Co-founder and Chair</i>	2019 – 2020
TNLA Women in Horticulture, <i>Member</i>	2019 – 2020
Horticulture Graduate Council, <i>Treasurer 2019, President 2018</i>	2017 – Present
Student American Institute of Floral Designers (SAIFD), <i>Member</i>	2017 – Present
Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC), <i>Horticulture Department Representative, Research Committee</i>	2017 – 2018
Aggie Graduate and Professional Council Club (AGPCC), <i>Member, Undergraduate Mentor</i>	2016 – Present
Pi Alpha Xi Horticulture Honor Fraternity, <i>Member</i>	2014 – Present