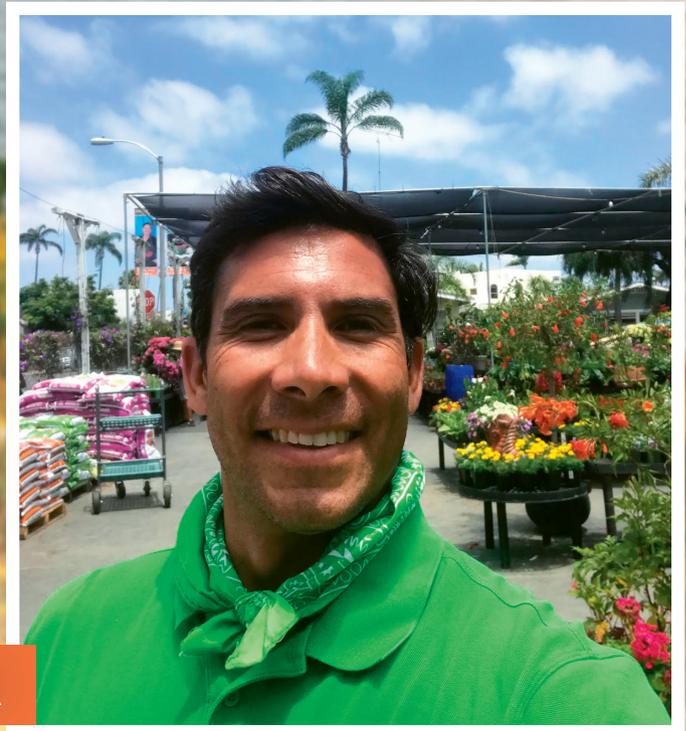


# 5 MINUTES — WITH —

## FAUSTO “TIGER” PALAFOX



Tiger Palafox is vice president of Mission Hills Nursery in San Diego, California, a host on the Garden America radio program and an alumnus of GPN Magazine’s 40 Under 40.

By Teresa McPherson

### Let’s start with the obvious — how did you get the name “Tiger”?

I wish there was a fun story but it basically is the standard nickname, like, “Hey there, tiger.” It stuck though because my dad and I have the same name, Fausto. Since we work together my nickname stuck.

### What do you love about your job?

Helping people garden. I love sharing my experience, other people’s experiences and seeing someone be successful.

### What keeps you up at night?

Being a business owner, we have 25 families we support. We have been doing this for a while, but we are also growing every year and I doubt myself sometimes if I can keep up with our growth.

### You grew up in the industry as the son of garden center owners; how do we encourage the next generation to be interested in horticulture as a career?

I think our industry is like teaching. You spend your

life gaining skills and knowledge. You won’t be financially compensated for all your hard work. People will expect all your suggestions for free. But you will be making a huge contribution to society. You will be rewarded daily with gratitude and success. At parties, everyone will want to talk to you and ask you about their own gardens.

### What advice would you give to someone just starting out in hort?

Try all aspects of the industry and do as many internships as possible. You really never know what you will like best until you start doing it.

### What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I have a 5-year-old son and 9-year-old daughter. I have no spare time.

### Favorite plant to grow? Why?

I’m doing plumerias right now. I change favorites every few years. Like what I said before, try it all so you can really say what you like. I don’t ever want to say I love roses but never tried to grow anything else. Maybe when I’m 75 years old I will have a favorite. 🌸