

## Moving up to the next level

Like most former presidents of the Florida GCSA, I've tried to stay active in our industry's affairs but have narrowed my focus to a couple of key issues. As cochairman of FTGA's UF/IFAS Advisory Committee, I've set my sights on doing all I can to help move the University of Florida's turf program forward until it achieves the distinction of being the premier program in the country.

The fact that I graduated from the University of Florida and have pride in my school has nothing to do with it — I well understand that people in our industry come from all over the country and have no loyalty to UF.

The golf and turf industry, as proven by our recent survey, is the largest agribusiness in the state, and it deserves the support for education and research commensurate with its economic contributions. It makes more sense to direct our efforts toward getting our fair share from the legislature and the University of Florida than it does to reinvent the wheel somewhere else.

If, however, our message falls on deaf ears, I'd be the first to recommend sending our contributions elsewhere.

Walking a daily tightrope of job security, superintendents can't even understand the concept of tenure and

have little patience for what often seems a snail's pace of progress.

There has been much progress in recent years, but it is my contention that the rate must be accelerated considerably for the program to produce what this industry expects and deserves given its size and scope.

This is not a criticism of those currently within UF/IFAS's turf programs but, rather, a call for all of us to readjust our thinking and set our sights on higher goals. We are cheating ourselves, our industry and the people of the great state of Florida if we don't.

We always thought our industry was large and diverse, and since the survey was taken, we now have the statistics to prove it. Let's use this information to secure the proper funding and support of the program that supports Florida's largest agribusiness, and let's all start to think in terms of establishing the best turf program in the United States.

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### Mark My Words



*Mark Jarrell*

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