The Sports Turf Manager’s Association’s main goal and purpose is to educate its members and to develop the future of the industry by supporting the educational endeavors of its future leaders. In 1987 STMA established a scholarship program to assist students who are seriously pursuing a career in the field of sports turf management. The two awards that were established are named in the honor of two outstanding individuals who represent STMA and the industry. The Harry Gill Award honors the founder of STMA and its first president who currently is the Superintendent of Grounds at Milwaukee County Stadium. No other person has done as much as Harry to educate and train young people in the sports turf profession. The second award is named in honor of Jeff Wishard who sustained a serious injury several years ago in a football accident. Although Jeff is confined to a wheelchair, he is active in his community with responsibilities on the Village board, park commission and as a Boy Scout leader.

Eric Carl Hansen

J. Eric Chapman

The STMA presented two $500 scholarship awards to two students at their conference in Houston, Texas.

THE HARRY GILL AWARD

The recipient of the Harry Gill Scholarship is Eric Carl Hansen who is working towards his degree in Turf Management at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. Eric received his first degree at the University of Alaska while serving in the Air Force. He currently serves as Head Baseball Coach at Leander High School where he also teaches Science. He plans to resign this year to complete his education on a full time basis.

THE JEFF WISHEARD AWARD

J. Eric Chapman is the recipient of the Jeff Wishard Award and is a junior studying Turfgrass Management at Washington State University in Pullman, Washington. Eric has worked with sports turf for quite some time as his father, James Chapman, has been involved in the industry for many years and his mother has been on the grounds crew of the Broadmoor Country Club in Seattle. Eric has worked for STMA member Gene Howe who owns and operates Sports-turf Northwest in Redmond, Washington. According to Howe, “my dues are well spent if any student of Eric’s caliber receives our assistance.” Eric most recently worked on the practice facility where the Seattle Seahawks train.

The Northwest Turfgrass Association provided funds to send Eric to Houston to receive the award. He was accompanied by the Seattle Seahawk’s field supervisor, John Monson.