



CourseCo Creates Partnership With Oakland Youth

While engaged in writing a proposal for the re-construction of Oakland's former Lew Galbraith Golf Course, Ray Davies, CGCS had a vision of developing a unique partnership between Oakland's education community and his employer CourseCo. The goal was to expose Oakland's inner city youth to careers in the green industry. Oakland has a need for job training for their youth and Golf has a need to bring more minorities and women into the game.

The original concept was to create a relationship between local high schools and the Future Farmers of America using the new golf course as a living laboratory for field trips, experiments, and on-site work experience. The FFA was then in the process of developing a new curriculum to teach turf and golf course management in collaboration with the GCSAA. According to Davies, the program would develop leadership skills while exposing students to potential careers in the green industry as well the game of golf.

During the planning phase, Davies found the interest so strong in Oakland that the program was expanded to include an educational path, which now includes a two-year high school program, followed by two years in a new turf certificate program at Merritt College, and finally two years at Cal Poly SLO. Each student will follow his or her individual interests. Some will choose a career goal that leads to a two-year certificate, while others will continue on to Cal Poly SLO for a full four-year degree. The unique aspect of the program is that some of the high school

work will transfer to the college program at Merritt. Also, the work at Merritt will transfer to Cal Poly SLO.

Davies sees a role in the educational process for NorCal Superintendents as well. "Were hopeful that we can rely on the chapter to supply internships, speakers for classroom and field trip instruction, post job openings and provide access to member courses for learning opportunities. Were even looking for someone who might be interested in teaching a class at the community college level".

According to GCSANC President, Bob Costa the program has the full support of the Board of Directors. "What a

great opportunity to give something back to the community said Costa. I think most superintendents really enjoy the opportunity to teach others about the profession and would find the experience highly rewarding. I encourage anyone who has an interest in participating to contact either Ray or myself".

The program currently underway, has also received support from the GCSAA and the USGA. In addition, UC Extension Specialist Dr. Ali Harivandi, and GCSANC past president Gary Carls, CGCS, are serving in advisory roles.

In late June, teachers in California will be informed of this new curriculum. Those who

choose to utilize the new curriculum will be looking to partner with local superintendents to create educational opportunities on local golf courses. If you receive a call, get involved. Better yet, call your local high school FFA advisor and suggest the school teach the students about turf using this program. Exposing California students to the golf course management profession will enhance the role of the golf course superintendent in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, It will also benefit superintendents who, in the future, will be hiring from a pool of applicants who have been exposed to turf in high school. What a great idea. /

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Rancho Cañada Golf Club
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Thursday, June 21, 2001

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