



Green Section Record

REGIONAL UPDATE

June 5, 2020



Opening your golf facility to university professors and students helps attract people to golf course maintenance as a career path.

ATTRACTING TALENT TO THE GOLF COURSE COMMUNITY

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Identifying, attracting and retaining talent is an ongoing challenge for any industry. Although working outside may not appeal to everyone, many indoor jobs may be slow in returning to pre-pandemic levels. Being outside in the sun and open air may become more attractive to young people looking at potential career paths than in the past. Just looking for work, many going into golf course maintenance may find a career. The challenge is in promoting golf course maintenance as career path and educating people about the benefits of working in this industry. Unfortunately, there is limited familiarity among the general public about jobs and careers in golf course operations.

One avenue for promoting careers in the golf course industry is through schools, colleges and universities. Creating awareness and developing early relationships can bear fruit down the road. Many students are not aware of the jobs, responsibilities, benefits, and overall demand for golf industry professionals if they are not in a turfgrass program, even if the university has a department of agriculture, horticulture or

agronomy. I know this from personal experience.

Here are some ways you can create awareness about the golf course maintenance industry with the downstream goal of attracting talent to your facility:

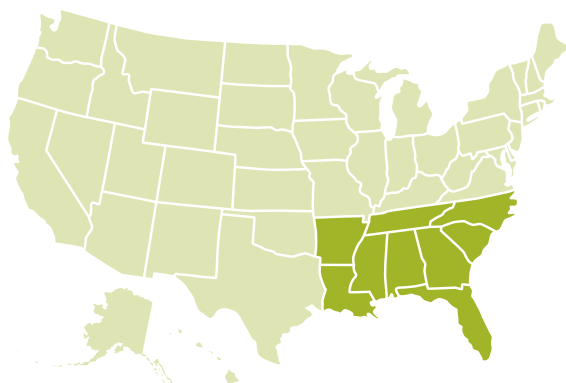
- Identify and prioritize schools aligned with the needs of your course based on criteria like geography, academic standards and the presence of a turf program. Try to build a relationship with those institutions. Most schools welcome outside speakers or are appreciative of golf courses that sponsor field trips – this builds visibility. In my experience, there is good attention among the students when a visitor comes to talk with them.
- Many turf programs and universities also have open houses where potential employers are welcome to participate. These events are a great chance for you to raise awareness about the golf industry and the employment opportunities at your course.
- Develop a scholarship or donation program from your golf course to key universities and colleges that have a good talent pool. This offer could have contingencies that allow you to be involved in selection of the recipient and affixing priorities to areas of study or an interest in golf. A school does not need to have a specific undergraduate turfgrass program to make a good candidate for such an offer.
- Work to establish a relationship with a school director or the head of a turfgrass, agronomy or horticulture program. Many students select their schools or universities based on the internship program or work-study benefits of that institution.

Raising awareness about a career in the golf industry or turfgrass science is the first step in increasing the available pool of talent. Getting people in the door, or outside on the course, and keeping them in the industry are the next steps.



For information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service Contact the Green Section Staff.

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