State of the Industry observations:

"We're looking for people who thoroughly enjoy this profession. We're also spending a lot of time and money training and developing skilled people, allowing them to have career tracks so they can continue to grow into a position."

—WAYNE RICHARDS, CEO, CAGWIN & DORWARD, NOVATO, CALIF.

"If they come in here with personality and drive and initiative and they come off nicely in the first five minutes, I'll spend 20 minutes to an hour just chatting to see what I can get out of them. If I get a kid who's just quiet and sits there like a dunderhead, they're out of here. Because that's how they're going to be with my customers."

—NICK DENNIS, PRO LAWN PLUS, JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

"There's always going to be room for labor people if that's all they're interested in doing. I'd like to keep all my workers forever, but the reality is the low-end labor force is just looking for a pay check. As long as they work hard, that's fine by me."

—JEFFREY SHEEHAN, PRESIDENT, CONFIDENCE LANDSCAPING.

"There's going to be a bigger demand for well-trained mechanics than there's going to be for superintendents and assistants."

—W.P. MONTAGUE, OAKWOOD CLUB, CLEVELAND HTS., OHIO.