



# Chuck Carr

*Business development manager, commercial maintenance  
Pierre Landscape, Simi Valley, Calif.*



**Who's your mentor?** The first guy I worked for in the landscape industry, Mark Jordan. That was 21 years ago when I started with Jordan Landscape in North Hills, Calif. From him I learned basically everything about the business. I went in doing sales and marketing, but I learned the ins and the outs of the landscape maintenance business and about all about the plants in Southern California.

**How did you make your way to the landscape industry?** My background was sales and marketing; I was director of marketing for the franchisor PIP Printing. We went through a leveraged buyout, and I changed careers. Somebody had told me Mark Jordan was looking for somebody to do sales. After a year I became general manager, and then I became president and CEO. I was there for five years.

Then I went to Environmental Care (now ValleyCrest Landscape Cos.). I was there for two years, and then I left to start my own business, Carr Landscape Management. I did that for 11 years and went back to ValleyCrest for two and a quarter years. I just started this month with Pierre Landscape.

**You're president of the California Landscape Contractors Association (CLCA). How long have you been involved there?** Back when I was at Jordan Landscape, Mark Jordan sent me up to Lake Tahoe to pick up a state Trophy Award for maintenance. I liked the guys I met there because I was still new to the industry and they were willing to sit down with them and tell me what they knew. The next year I got involved. Then when I started my own business the first two checks I wrote were for my CLCA membership and my workers' comp insurance. In those days, a lot of people used to join just for the insurance. Once you get in you realize the value of networking and referrals.

**What are the pressing issues on the West Coast?** Water is the primary thing. The new normal in landscaping here isn't big green lawns. It's native plants and sustainability. Gov. Jerry Brown announced recently he wants to take watering down to two days a week from three. For some plants, that's not a problem. For turfgrass, it is. Once you turn off the water, you'll have the unintended consequences of losing major shade trees—that brings fire hazards. And once those are gone, we'll have the heat island effect.

Immigration reform is important for us, being a border state. CLCA efforts are concentrated in the state because the federal level is such an expensive stage to play on. For example, in California they decided giving driver's licenses to illegal immigrants is OK. You can't discriminate against someone who has a driver's license that says he's an illegal immigrant. But it's against federal law to hire him. That's the position business owners are being put in here, and CLCA is working to try to get some type of safe harbor through in Sacramento.



## OFF THE CLOCK

### TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

I have two daughters. My 22-year-old daughter is a dancer/choreographer and my 19-year daughter is a freshman at American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA) in Hollywood. She's also a dance major. A big part of my social life is going to their shows.

### WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

I was born in Minnesota. My mom was a retail nursery manager when I was a little kid. They're intense gardeners up there. My father worked for Hilton Hotels. When I was 14 we transferred to Indianapolis, and I went to high school there. Then I went to Ball State University. After college I moved out to California, the land of opportunity.

### NOW THAT YOU'RE A CALIFORNIA GUY, MOUNTAINS OR OCEAN?

I love the mountains the best. The beach is so congested and crowded in Southern California.

### HOW ABOUT FAVORITE TV SHOWS?

I love the comedies "How I Met Your Mother" and "The Big Bang Theory." And "Criminal Minds." Those are the only shows I watch.

