

Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development,
with an update on education issues



Last month saw me packing my bags and making the trip to Orlando, for the Golf Industry Show, in the company of our Chairman, Andrew Mellon. With a packed schedule of events and meetings, as well as the trade show, it proved to be a busy week leaving both Andrew and myself wanting some new feet!

Golf Industry Show

Relationships were cemented with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA) and the Australian Golf Course Superintendents Association (AGCSA).

It was most interesting to discover, that no matter the size of each of our Associations, we are all facing the same challenges.

The strength of our relationships with these Associations can only help to make us all stronger by using each other's knowledge and expertise.

We were able to spend a few hours in the company of the GCSAA education team, bringing them up to date on our Continuing Professional Development and Master Greenkeeper reviews, showing them how their certification portfolio would be integrated into our systems.

Discussions surrounding the submission and recording of information were also on the agenda.

We also had a very productive meeting with representatives of the GCSAA's Board of Directors, their

new CEO, Rhett Evans, and Senior Director of Member Programs, Carrie Riordan.

We also got the opportunity to sit down with the Ken Cousineau, CEO of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association (CGSA), to discuss similar issues about their education and membership database that proved very interesting.

Many suggestions and ideas were given to us by some of the companies with which we were able to meet.

These have been brought back to the Board of Directors and the staff to develop for the future.

The BIGGA delegation, sponsored by Bernhard & Co, saw 10 BIGGA members making the trip.

They had a packed schedule of events and each time we saw them we got a trip update.

I'm sure I speak on behalf of all of them in saying that they had a great time.

It never fails to amaze me how many people I know after 18 years working for BIGGA.

I met up with many friends, old and new, on the trip allowing me to have a good mix of business and pleasure.

This truly is an 'Awesome' industry to work in, I am very fortunate.

Continue to Learn at Harrogate Week

Feedback on this year's Continue to Learn education programme has been phenomenal.

We have received a record number of phone calls and emails

The funding provided by Gold and Silver Key Sponsors is used to produce training and career aids, DVDs, CD Roms, field guides and provide refunds for training fees and subsidised learning and development courses. The funding also helps support seminars, workshops, courses, the lending library, careers advice, posters and manuals.

Many young greenkeepers owe their career progression to the assistance they've had from the Learning and Development Fund. An equal number of established greenkeepers have also been able to access the fund to continue their professional development thanks to the donations of the Gold and Silver Key Sponsors.

congratulating us on our efforts to deliver a high standard of education for our members.

The challenge is now in place to produce an equally good programme for 2012.

I have many ideas, but I am, as ever, open to suggestions on how to improve the programme, topics you would like to see covered and names of speakers who have impressed you.

If you have any suggestions, please email me: sami@bigga.co.uk

Planning for Continue to Learn 2012 is one of a number of projects that are on the agenda for the rest of the year.

However, my main focus will be on the development of the improved CPD scheme, the introduction of Accreditation and the Master Greenkeeper review.

Watch this space for more information on these projects.



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