



## The 2012 BIGGA Delegation

Sallie Taylor talked to the 2012 Delegates to find out how the trip impacted them at the time, and what lessons they have carried with them a year down the line

**The US visit is hugely important not just as a fabulous shared experience, an opportunity to build new friendships and make new business contacts, but most importantly as a tool for learning, educating, training and growing, as last years delegates are keen to testify.**

**Stuart Yarwood, Course Manager at Lymm Golf Club said:**

"For me the trip dispelled lots of myths. I realised that in the US education comes from the top down alongside their practical knowledge.

"I have been trying to apply this back home - to think like the person I want to be perceived as. In the UK we tend to start at the bottom and work up, learning on the way, so that for many people, when they find themselves in a managerial position they don't have any of the basic skills to do that job. If you put lads in a horrible tin shed with the wind howling through it they will apply those standards on the golf course."

**Neil Ballingall, Course Manager at Fairmont St Andrews, said:**

"I found some of the seminars at GIS really useful.

"We had a long session on growth-retardant which was great, very in depth.

"I knew it stopped the grass growing, but I didn't know how or why. We learned that if you don't reapply at the correct time it can have the opposite effect.

"Such a small thing that had such a big effect, and I've had a really successful year because I am using it properly."

**David Gray, First Assistant Greenkeeper at Ladybank Golf Club, agrees:**

"The trip gave me a greater drive for education. I loved the seminars and bouncing off the other guys.

"The trip will always benefit me. I was one of the youngest and most of the others were Head Greenkeepers, three were Master Greenkeepers and they taught me so much - getting their views on things and learning from their vast amount of knowledge was amazing.

"I actually learned new things and new ways to work. It was invaluable.

"To give you an example, just last month I had an engineering problem with something. I just couldn't find an answer.

"In the end I called Stuart Hall, who was also on the trip, and he solved the problem in a few minutes.

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"Then you realise the importance of friends and shared experiences.

"The moment I was selected I knew I was always going to make the most of it, but it has changed my career big time and I will always refer back to it.

"The trip spurred my education and encouraged me to pass on knowledge to fellow colleagues and discuss things with my boss."