

2009 GCSAA compensation and benefits survey . . .

The Results are In

I recently sat in on a webcast for Chapter Executives led by Eric Neuteboom and Lyne Tumlinson, staffers at the GCSAA. Together they covered the results of the 2009 GCSAA Compensation and Benefits Survey. The most impressive part of the survey was the actual response rate which hit an all time high this year at 51.7%. The last time the survey was compiled was 2007 and the response rate was approximately 39%:

A few interesting facts that were shared:

- Average age of all golf course superintendents: 44
- Average experience of all golf course superintendents: 13.5 years
- Average tenure at present course/club: 8.5 years (10.8 for CGCS)
- Average #employees supervised: 24 (up from 21 in 2007)
- Average salary trend for a golf course superintendent has increased by 6.9% since 2007

There are a few new items you will see in the 2009 report. Salaries are now presented not only by average and median but also by 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th and 90th percentile rank. For example, if the salary was \$56,000 at the 25th percentile, and there were 100 respondents, 25 of them would be below the salary of \$56,000 and the 75 would be above the salary of \$56,000. This statistic really helps you see how many people fall into a certain salary range.

Also new in 2009:

- Results are listed by region for areas of the country that don't have many respondents
- Results for golf course superintendents that oversee multiple facilities
- Data collected on health insurance benefits
- All respondents will have electronic access through the GCSAA website to the report for free, hard copies of the results are available for all respondents for \$15
- Non participating members may have access to the results online for \$125 or \$140 for a hard copy
- Non members may purchase the results for \$500

GCSAA feels it is important to continue this survey, even during our current economic times. Much work has gone into making certain the survey is accurate and reflects the current trends. One way this is accomplished is to use a statistical practice called a matched sample. GCSAA follows those who fill out the survey for consecutive years (2,546 golf course superintendents filled out the survey in 2007 and again in 2009) to "match" respondents for

trends to be identified. I filled out a survey when I completed my undergraduate degree in 1992. Since then, the US Department of Education (USDE) has sent me the same survey every four years to see where I am compared to the previous survey. This is the practice of using a matched sample to find trends over the course of time.

Using the Results

GCSAA Members will use the results of the survey as another tool to:

- Justify their budgets
- Justify their salary
- Seek increases for themselves or for their staff
- Negotiate a starting salary, either for themselves or for their staff
- To see where they are within the market
- To see how their benefits compare to others

GCSAA uses the results of the survey to:

- Provide personalized salary reports for members
- Help determine whether jobs posted on the job board are viable
- Offer career counseling to those interested in a career in golf course management (high schools and other secondary education)
- Help reinforce the professional status of golf course superintendents

One thing I didn't know...

GCSAA can create a personal report for you based on aggregate data from your specific region and position. It may help, when you need to justify your salary, to look at other methods of compensation (benefits, vacation, vehicle allowance, etc.). All data is kept in the strictest of confidence and anonymity is protected as stated within the survey results. For more information or a personalized report, you may contact Eric Neuteboom, Employer Programs Manager or Lyne Tumlinson, Director of Career Services at GCSAA. **-OC**