



From the GCSAA President

Dear GCSAA Member:

In the July issue of *Golf Course Management* magazine, I wrote in my president's message about "Ensuring Our Legacy" through support of scholarship and research programs. At the end of the column, I stated something I feel strongly about:

"Support for these activities needs to become a part of the cost of doing business, a line item in a facility's annual budget, an assumed cost."

Today, I am writing to request that you put this philosophy into practice and make a GCSAA Scholarship & Research donation part of your annual budget. Why should you and your club make this type of commitment? Well, beyond the general importance of all of GCSAA S&R's programs, there is a new research project that we **must** fund.

Nothing could hurt the game more than if players believed that golf might be dangerous to their health. Through science, we can demonstrate to the public that golf courses are safe and healthy places. The golf industry must be prepared to answer questions about health with solid scientific evidence.

That's why GCSAA S&R is planning to sponsor a major study of the health effects of long-term exposure to golf course pesticides. The study will examine causes of death among GCSAA members over the past several years. An independent team of scientific investigators will study those records and compare the illnesses among superintendents with national averages and possibly with "control groups" of people who have not been exposed to turf pesticides.

The study will cost in excess of \$250,000. It is the most expensive single project ever undertaken by GCSAA S&R. That makes it absolutely **critical** that we have wide financial support. We believe that industry will help to fund some of this project. However, I think you'll agree that superintendents and clubs should and must be the primary supporters of the study. It is the only way to ensure that the study is perceived as a credible, independent research project. It's also simply the right thing to do.

How can you help? I urge you to do four things.

1. Talk about this study with your club officials or owners. Explain to them that a one-time donation of \$1,000 is an **investment** that will help the golf business remain strong.
2. Make an annual donation of \$500 or \$1,000 part of your facility's regular budget. GCSAA S&R **has** to have this type of regular support to accomplish its goals.
3. At a minimum, join the Golden Tee Club with an individual donation of \$100 a year. The club is GCSAA S&R's "**grassroots**" support organization. If you're not already a member, you should be.
4. Make other superintendents **aware** of the need for S&R support. If we all join together, we can make our profession the best it can be.

I sincerely hope that you will respond to this important request. It's urgent that we get this study underway, so I hope you will respond quickly. If you'd like more information about the study or about GCSAA S&R, please feel free to contact any member of the GCSAA board of directors or call Pat Jones, director of development, at the headquarters in Lawrence.

Sincerely,

William R. Roberts, CGCS
President