



Can One Man Make a Difference?

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Of course, everyone is fully capable of making a positive difference with expertise and skills uniquely and perfectly given to each individual. We know that numerous people have contributed on the decision making process in many important events in the course of human history. In fact, we are living by making those kinds of decisions right now at home, workplace, and community without knowing future consequences. Just sit down at your office and look back on the path of your life. It is quite a daunting feeling at least for me to look back on some of the most difficult and unsolvable tasks that I have struggled with over the past few years. During those moments, I did not know how to handle and solve them because they seemed to be too difficult. I simply couldn't decide which way I should go. However, look at what I have done. The difficult problems were resolved in the way that I wanted and most of all, I feel the situations were handled very well. I am positive that you also have many stories like mine. Sometimes we are not quite sure of whether we are making right decisions at the time, but I am very confident that whatever you decided is going to be all right.

One day I was catching my breath after many hours in my office and thinking of the future of the TDL (Turfgrass Diagnosis Lab). I was shocked by the number of people who have and are currently playing important roles in shaping the TDL. Drs. Doug Maxwell, Julie Meyer and Steve Millett were pioneers of breaking the ground for establishing the lab. Those people invested countless hours in discussions and suggestions for setting up and running the lab. Of course, we can't ever forget Dr. Gayle Worf's long time dedication and contribution for the Wisconsin turfgrass industries. In addition, several key superintendents and members of Wisconsin associations such as WTA, WSPA, WGCSA, and NGLGCSA were actively and unselfishly involved in the whole processes.

The history of the lab did not stay still. The lab has continued to evolve up until now. Six years ago Mr. Jeff Gregos as a TDL diagnostician and a field manager (Dept. of Plant Pathology) was hired and has made a huge impact on the process of the TDL's evolution. Indeed he made positive changes. Since Jeff has an ardent and passionate interest in running research experiments in field, he is now responsible exclusively for all of field related research plots in Plant Pathology and Horticulture at the Noer and on-site research plots. I sincerely appreciate his dedication and efforts

that he poured out to the lab during the past 6 years. Without his role, the lab couldn't be as present. It is interesting that the name of the lab also changed. It was called "Turfgrass Disease Diagnosis Lab" which strictly handled diseased samples only. With the exception of soil samples, the lab handles all turf problems (diseases, insects, and weeds).

Is this the end of the story? Not at all! As long as Wisconsin turf industries express an interest, the lab will continue to improve regardless of the current situation. Keep in mind that the University's primary mission statement is "To serve you better." What is the next step? Last winter I made an important decision to hire a person with 100% appointment to diagnose diseased samples (from golf courses, sod farms and homeowners). The decision was made through numerous discussions with departmental faculties and industry members. As a result, Mr. Steve Abler holding a Masters degree who was trained under Dr. Houston Couch's supervision at the Virginia Polytechnic was selected out of several candidates. Can Steve make a difference? Yes, he will definitely be another racer in the course of a long marathon in terms of the TDL history. ♣



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