

1992 MGCSA Stodola Scholarship Winners

Two University of Minnesota students, one at Penn State University and another at Anoka Technical College are the 1992 recipients of Harold Stodola Memorial Scholarships, according to Mike Olson, chairman of the MGCSA's Scholarship Committee.

They are:

William Gullicks, Anoka Technical College;

Lee W. Horning, Penn State University;

Jeffrey A. Johnson, University of Minnesota;

Mark T. Simeon, University of Minnesota

The Stodola scholarship grants are awarded annually by the MGCSA to turfgrass students who have displayed high scholastic achievement and a strong desire to become golf course superintendents.

"Eleven students applied for the scholarships," Olson said. "We interviewed 10 of them, and it was difficult to make the final selections because they all had much to offer."

Each of the scholars received \$1,000 grants. The remaining six finalists were given complimentary registrations for the MGCSA's Annual Conference for taking the time to be interviewed.

Gullicks, 24, a 1986 graduate of Century High School in Bismarck, N.D., was graduated from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., in 1990, then enrolled at Anoka Technical College in September, 1991 and is pursuing a two-year program while majoring in golf and grounds management.

At Century High Gullicks won the Sportsmanship Award and was conference free throw champion with a 93% record. At Anoka he made the President's Honor Roll during his first year.

From 1986-91 he held seasonal jobs as a grounds technician at Apple Creek Country Club in Bismarck. Later he was an outside yardman for Menards, Inc. in Coon Rapids, then worked as an assistant golf course superintendent running a crew at New Prague Golf Club.

Gullicks said he became interested in turfgrass work while working at Apple Creek Country Club during his first four years of college.

"My superintendent also encouraged me to pursue a career in this profession,"

Gullicks said. "After getting a four-year degree in business and working in that field, I realized that my true interest was in turf management."

Horning, 30, a 1981 graduate of Herman (Minn.) High School and a 1986 business graduate of North Dakota State University, enrolled at Penn State in October, 1991.

In high school he was class vice-president, a member of the Honor Society and a Mr. Minnesota Teen candidate. He also was an all-conference selection in football and gained honorable mention all-conference in basketball. At Penn State he is secretary of the Penn State Turf Management Club.

Since April, 1989 he has been employed at The Minikahda Club in Minneapolis where he has been engaged in pesticide and fertilizer applications, landscaping and general golf course maintenance.

Said Doug Mahal, head superintendent at Minikahda: "Lee is a very dedicated employee with definite interest in furthering his career in golf course management. He has obtained a good taste of the business at Minikahda during the past two and one-half seasons. He is hard-working, trustworthy, detail-minded and associates well with all fellow employees."

"My interest in the game came after playing my first round of golf," Horning said. "I found the challenging aspect of golf along with the scenic quality very unique and enjoyable. I saw golf course maintenance as an opportunity to become more involved in the golf industry and a use for my agronomic experience."

Johnson, 21, was graduated from Buffalo Lake-Hector High School in 1989, then attended the University of Minnesota at Waseca before transferring to the University of Minnesota in St. Paul where he expects to graduate during the Winter of 1993 or the Spring of 1994.

He has been involved in grounds crew work at St. Cloud Country Club, Waseca Lakeside Country Club and Midland Hills Country Club.

In high school he gained a variety of honors and proficiency awards in his FFA Chapter and specialty crop production. He also lettered in football, basketball and wrestling. At the University he has

served as homecoming committee chairman Delta Theta Sigma Fraternity.

Scott Austin, superintendent at Midland Hills, ranked Johnson "truly outstanding" in all the categories of character and personality ratings and, when asked if he would be a positive influence on the profession, said: "Absolutely!"

U of M Professor Donald White said "Jeff is an honest, hard-working, personable student who is committed to becoming an educated golf course superintendent. He is filling several leadership roles in his fraternity and also is active in programs to visit children at the University Children's Hospital and in assisting the elderly in caring for their landscapes, such as mowing grass, raking leaves and shoveling snow. I believe Jeff has the potential to become a leader in the profession and an excellent superintendent."

Said Johnson: "When I first enrolled in college at Waseca, I planned on going into the nursery and landscape business. When I found out that there was a turf program that emphasized golf course management, I really became interested and felt that this was the business that I wanted to pursue as a career."

Simeon, 26, was graduated from Benilde-St. Margaret's High School in St. Louis Park in 1984, studied at Mankato State University for two years, then transferred to the University of Minnesota where he anticipates graduating in 1994.

In high school he participated in the Minnesota State Soccer Tournament and also was an all-conference selection in hockey. He also was selected as the Edina Jaycees' student athlete, was a homecoming court representative and was active in a peer ministry program.

At Edina Country Club he has been a turf technician since January, 1989.

Edina Superintendent Bill Johnson noted that "Mark started working here as a seasonal employee in 1982 and has been a full-time employee since April, 1988. Around that time he decided he wanted to pursue a career as a golf course superintendent. He has been taking evening as well as some afternoon classes while continuing to work at Edina full-time. I highly recommend Mark

(Continued on Page 18)

Three R's of Hiring The Right Employee: Recruitment, Review and References

Good equipment and chemicals are important tools for golf course maintenance, but the most valuable assets to a superintendent are good employees.

Some superintendents may not spend much time considering potential crew members, but filling vacant positions is one of their most important jobs. Training new employees is expensive so hiring-and keeping-good people is imperative.

According to Ed Walsh, Superintendent at Ridgewood Country Club in Dararnus, N.J., the secret to success is finding the right people and providing an environment that encourages them to stay.

"When I hire someone, it's because I have high expectations for them," says Walsh. "If that person does a good job, I want them to be a long-term member of our team."

Start by recruiting

Finding good employees starts with the search for candidates. Walsh says su-

perintendents often overlook the best recruitment tools: existing staff members.

"When I plan to hire a person, I'll often post the job listing in the shop," says Walsh. "The people who work here know the type of employee we're looking for, and they won't recommend someone who doesn't meet our standards."

In addition to internal postings, advertising in local newspapers may provide leads. To ensure that you attract qualified applicants, include an accurate job description.

Review applicants

The purpose of an interview is to evaluate potential employees. You want to determine—in a short time—whether applicants can handle the job responsibilities and if they will fit in with current employees.

"I ask them about their experience and expectations," says Walsh. "It's important to find out their potential."

Walsh recommends asking questions that require more than a yes or no answer. For example:

- With what type of management style do you work best?
- What is your strongest attribute?
- Do you prefer working in a group or by yourself?

- How will working here challenge your abilities?

In addition to getting to know the candidates, an interview should give the applicant a chance to learn more about the job. Walsh says candidates who ask meaningful questions show that they are genuinely interested in the position.

References help ensure a good hire

Together with an interview, references provide a good picture of the potential employee's work habits. Talking to previous employers can give you valuable insight about the candidate's attendance record, experience and skills.

While questions to former employers can't be too specific or personal, you do have the right to ask work-related questions. If possible, check references after the interview. This allows you to target specific issues concerning that person.

An experienced and well-trained maintenance crew keeps a golf course in top condition. But the value of a skilled maintenance team doesn't necessarily show up on the bottom line. It does, however, show up on the course.

Credit: Ed Walsh, Ridgewood Country Club as seen in The Ballmark, Winter 1991.




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1992 Scholarships

(Continued from Page 6)

be awarded a scholarship."

U of M Professor White described Mark "as a mature student who is solidly focused on becoming a golf course superintendent. He works hard and is supporting himself through school. I am confident that he will be a positive contributor to the golf profession.

Said Simeon: "I have grown up on a golf course. I started caddying at age 10 and then proceeded to grounds maintenance. I find this profession very rewarding and beneficial. I expect a college education to give me a scientific background to the cultural practices done on a golf course."