

Professional Development - Mentoring Program Approaches its 2nd Year

by Steve Wightman, Mentoring Committee Chair

As many of you are aware by now, STMA has initiated the Mentoring Program for our professional members. The purpose of this pioneer program is threefold. First and foremost, the mentoring program is designed to formally welcome all new STMA members into this great professional organization with a personal contact from a mentor assigned to that new member. This is an important aspect of the program because it offers a certain amount of comfort and a sense of value to the members and lets them know they are appreciated.

Secondly, the mentoring program welcomes new members into the STMA network of sports turf managers who are willing to share information about the industry. Mentors also serve as peers in discussing sports related issues. This aspect of the mentoring program encourages the networking of ideas, techniques and information that makes us all better sports field managers.

Third, the mentoring program offers a tremendous resource opportunity to each new member for greater involvement in sports field management. Each mentor offers ideas on the opportunities that are available to each member by facilitating the level of involvement he or she chooses, i.e. chapter involvement; local chapter or national committee involvement; national conference participation, etc. By having more members involved at the local and/or national level the association becomes stronger, more valuable and more professional.

On behalf of STMA Headquarters, the Membership Committee, the Mentoring Program Subcommittee and all of the new and veteran members of this association, I would like to express our sincere "Thank You" to all of our first year mentors, for your commitment and dedication to this important pioneer program.

As you read this, we are in the process of selecting new mentors to begin our 2nd year with the program. We also are ready to begin Phase II - the Commercial Mentoring Program!

As STMA receives new Commercial members throughout the USA, we realize the importance to welcome these members into the Association and make them realize their value to STMA, on a local and national level.

Within the current Commercial member category, STMA allows one contact to become the "main" member of a company, V (Commercial) category, and encourages additional company members to join under the Va (Commercial additional) category. Thus, the potential for new Commercial membership is great! These important members bring a vast knowledge pertaining to products that we all use on a daily basis. Because of the great feedback from the Mentor subcommittee, we are excited to offer these new members a Commercial mentor to be there for guidance, assistance and networking in the realm of STMA.

STMA members who volunteer as a Mentor will

receive a Mentor Handbook containing information and guidelines on the mentoring process. The Handbook provides basic information to assist the Mentor in helping to make his/her role as a mentor easier, more comfortable and more effective and to more easily keep track of the ongoing contact with those being mentored.

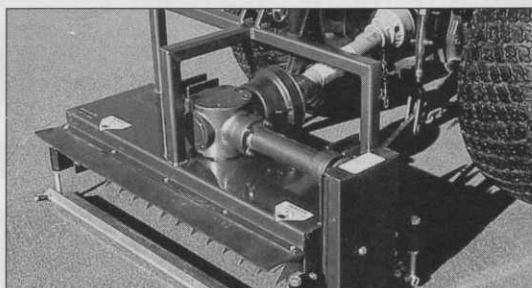
We ask the Mentor to agree to follow certain STMA expectations and guidelines throughout the mentoring process. This signed agreement is a formal document outlining the expectations and responsibilities that STMA expects from each Mentor.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in becoming a mentor, for our professional, student, or Commercial members, please contact me - Steve Wightman, Mentoring Committee Chair by e-mail at swightman@sandiego.gov - or by phone at 619/641-3106 or Suz or Steph at STMA Headquarters.

The mentoring process is one more step in moving towards the "next level" of professionalism within our membership and our Association.



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