

# HOW TO BE A WINNER

**Follow in American and Richmond Universities' footsteps and you might win a Green Star Professional Grounds Management award, too**

**Y**ou want to enter the Green Star Professional Grounds Management Awards this year, and more than that, you want to win. What can you do? Forget enlisting the help of magic lawn fairies to turn all your turf emerald green and make all your annuals and perennials stand at attention — they don't exist. It's best to heed the advice of two reigning Grand award winners, Mark Feist of American University and Stephen Glass of the University of Richmond.

## **A picture's worth...**

Feist, assistant director of grounds and vehicle maintenance at American University, says it seems all he and his crew members ever do is pick up those annoying nightclub flyers out of the school's 60,000 sq. ft. of seasonal flower beds and 400,000 sq. ft. of planting beds. You can bet none of those flyers made it into the photos he took of the campus for last year's PGMS contest. He took the photos himself because he had a good eye for good landscape shots. Whether you take the photos yourself, he recommends you think before you shoot.

"Make sure the photos accurately reflect the aesthetics

**Contest winning tips**

- Provide quality photographs
- Summarize your job responsibilities well
- Follow application directions closely

of what you're trying to do," Feist says. "If the quality of the landscape isn't there to begin with, however, you're in trouble."

Details like how his crew mulches 50% of the planting beds twice a year or how they've had to work around an on-going irrigation installation would've been lost had Feist not remembered to mention them as part of his list of special maintenance challenges.

"Do a good job of telling a story and summarizing what it is you do on the job," Feist says.

## **Start early**

Stephen Glass knows a thing or two about winning awards. As assistant director of University Facilities, Landscape Services for the University of Richmond, he's seen the campus take an Honor award in '94, a Grand award for its sta-

dium in '97 and another Grand in 2000. Part of his success, he says, is participation.

"I attend the PGMS conference, watch the awards ceremony closely and network with other professionals," Glass says.

He also starts preparing for the contest about a year ahead of time. To get the right photos, he says, start thinking about what you want ahead of time.

"You have to start at least a year early to capture all four seasons," he says. "I carried a camera with me all the time and was mindful of the contest's photo categories."

It also pays to make the written part clear and concise. "I get anyone willing to proof-read the script to do so," Glass adds.