

## President's Message

# We make a difference

**T**he sound of wooden and metal bats contacting baseballs has returned for a long summer. A tip of the STMA hat goes to baseball sports turf managers for helping create shrines out of humble diamonds. I will lump college, park and recreation and high school sports turf managers into the obvious professional group.

Lillian Davis is quoted as saying, "All we can ask in our lives is that perhaps we can make a little difference in someone else's." As we start the summer season and a return to the daily grind of non-stop events on our fields, regardless of the sport, it's important to remind ourselves why we continue to love this profession. We make a difference! Most importantly we have a direct impact on the level of play and the level of safety for athletes that compete on our fields. Poorly maintained or under-budgeted fields rarely produce memorable or difference-making games. Players and coaches love to compete on fields they trust and that exceed their level of talent. STMA members all over the world produce these types of fields, with or without adequate funding, and it's remarkable!

Besides playability, the difference we make with fans that pour through the turnstiles is equally dramatic. Administrators recognize the difference we make in providing freight-paying fans the "wow" factor. Is anything better than entering hallowed ground? Dreams and fantasies are shaped in big league ballparks and on our fields.

You and your crew are as important to your facility as the well-dressed crew you saw detailing the professional park is to theirs. Each of us makes a difference. We make a difference to every kid that ever laced up spikes or cleats or tennis shoes and threw on an ill-fitting glove or cap. We provide trust and make a difference to the parents and grandparents of that little kid whom, when he sleeps at night, dreams of playing on an MLB, an NFL, or an MLS field.

I attended the MLB/NFL/MLS Workshop on Saturday of the Annual Conference in San Antonio. Besides the very valuable information on the "nuts and bolts" of managing playing surfaces, I walked away most impressed by the level of passion on display by each presenter. I want to sincerely thank Seattle Mariner Head Groundskeeper, Bob Christofferson, and the loyal sports turf managers from all three major sports leagues that "gave back" to our members that day. Through the commitment of several very talented and passionate professional sports turf managers, Bob has turned the session into a very special offering for our conference attendees. These men and women made themselves available and gave back that day. They made a difference to every person in attendance – just like you do every day on your fields.



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