For those of you who play golf each year at the Jacobsen/SAFE Golf Tournament, you may know that your golf fees go directly to the SAFE Foundation, a 501(c)3 charity. Through SAFE, its Board of Trustees oversees the funding of scholarships, education, and research. The Foundation’s mission is to support sports specific research, educational programs, and environmental concerns to promote user safety. The Foundation has been awarding scholarships to deserving men and women who are pursuing a career as a sports turf manager and to those who are graduate students in research. In addition to the generous donations from Jacobsen for the tournament, the Toro Foundation Giving Program also helps to support the SAFE scholarship program.

For those who are unable to play golf, there is an easy way to contribute to the SAFE Foundation. Simply note your donation on your Membership Renewal Form in the space provided and include the amount in your total. In addition to individual donations, several STMA chapters donate to SAFE annually.

SAFE scholarship winners
SAFE has also provided funding to the STMA Student Challenge, with platinum sponsor Hunter Industries. At the conference, SAFE awarded $4,000 to each of the two winning teams of the Student Challenge to use to develop hands-on learning laboratories at their colleges or universities. SAFE awarded $12,500 in scholarships to 10 outstanding men and women. The awardees are: Anne Beckingham, SUNY-Delhi; Amy French, Michigan State; Will Jellicorse, University of Tennessee; Jared Knoedle, Michigan State; Tyler Mittlesteadt, University of Tennessee; Chris Romo, Mt. San Antonio College; Brian Sayers, Michigan State; Ed Schmachtenberger, Mt. San Antonio College; Thomas Serenists, Penn State; and Adam Thoms, University of Tennessee.

SAFE’s future goal is to fund research on significant issues affecting sports field management. Together with STMA and the NIAAA (National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association), SAFE has funded a video on mound-building and home plate maintenance. The video is available for purchase through the STMA website and was offered for sale in the merchandise area at the annual conference.
The Virginia Chapter kicked off a new Scholarship Fund initiative, by holding a golf tournament during its Field Days 2006 at Woodberry Forest School. In addition to several athletic fields, Woodberry Forest is blessed to have a lovely 9-hole course that proved to be ideal for the event: not too long, a nice layout but not overly challenging for a bunch of sports field managers better suited to an AFC and rakes.

The 2-day event was held June 13-14, with the Field Day Committee scheduling the tournament the first afternoon, following the morning athletic field irrigation workshop. The Tailgate Reception/Q&A followed.

Tournament format was 4-person “scramble” with a shotgun start and play was completed in a brisk 2 1/2 hours. The shotgun start allowed everyone to finish up at the same time, keeping Field Days on its tight schedule.

As a special twist, one hole, a medium length par 4, was set up as the “sports turf” hole where equipment was used in lieu of golf clubs. Equipment included a wooden baseball bat for the drive (tossed and hit), lacrosse stick for the approach, and a field hockey stick for putting. Not surprisingly, this special hole was the talk of the tournament during dinner. Donated prizes were awarded for 1st place, closest-to-the-pin, and longest drive.

Best news of all, our nine foursomes netted $900 to kickoff the Scholarship Fund.

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