

DiVito to oversee Twins' new field construction



Larry DiVito, left, and Bill Deacon, New York Mets manager of field operations, at a panel discussion on infield maintenance during the STMA Conference.

STMA Board Member Larry DiVito has been announced as the new Head Groundskeeper for the Minnesota Twins and their new ballpark in downtown Minneapolis, Target Field, which is slated to be ready for Opening Day 2010. According to MLB.com, DiVito is only the second Head Groundskeeper in the history of the Twins. The other was STMA Founder Dick Ericson, hired in 1961 to oversee Metropolitan

Stadium. The Twins have played on a synthetic surface in the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome since 1982.

The Twins received more than 150 applications for the job before narrowing the search down to 10 finalists, and then finally selecting DiVito. "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to build another field at the MLB level. Opening Target Field and bringing big league baseball back outside in Minnesota for the 2010 season is going to be exciting for all of the fans in Minnesota Twins' territory," DiVito said.

DiVito, entering his 15th year in professional baseball, comes to the Twins from the Washington Nationals, where he spent the past 3 years as Head Groundskeeper for the team. After two seasons at RFK Stadium sharing the surface with D.C. United of Major League Soccer, DiVito was instrumental in the planning and construction of the field at Nationals Park.

Before taking the job with the Nationals in 2006, he worked as the grounds crew supervisor for the Los Angeles Dodgers for four seasons. He began his career in professional baseball in 1995, when he took over as head groundskeeper for the Triple-A Pawtucket Red Sox in Rhode Island.

Originally from California, DiVito is a 1993 graduate of San Francisco State University with a B.A. in Sociology/ Urban Studies. He currently serves as the STMA Director who represents facilities used by professional athletes. He chairs the Scholarship Committee and co-chairs the Conference Off-Site Workshop and Tours subcommittees.

DiVito says, "I appreciate the impact that STMA has had in helping me to grow my career opportunities. Our association is in a position to educate people at all levels of our specialized industry and improve playing conditions across the country." ■

STMA aligns with Global Sports Alliance-USA

The STMA is pleased to announce that it has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Global Sports Alliance-USA (GSA-USA) to "promote the principles of environmental stewardship in the world of sports," and "environmentally responsible sports related activities."

The document, signed by STMA President Abby McNeal, CSFM at the spring 2009 Board Meeting, and Jane Poynter, President of GSA-USA, indicates the two organizations' shared commitment to promoting environmental stewardship among sports enthusiasts and to demonstrate leadership. STMA CEO Kim Heck reports that the Board of Directors is strongly supportive of the collaboration. "Our Board is excited to share information and work with GSA-USA on initiatives that preserve

and protect our environment." This GSA / STMA cooperative agreement opens the door to future opportunities to work together in promoting environmental leadership in the world of sports. It establishes an avenue for STMA and GSA-USA to communicate freely and to work together on issues of common interest. Additionally, the agreement invites, supports and encourages these organizations to jointly plan and carry out projects that are mutually beneficial and of environmental significance.

STMA and the GSA-USA will share information and will identify opportunities to work cooperatively to promote the principles of environmental stewardship in the world of sports: the area where the organizations' missions and objectives overlap. ■