

STMA in action

STMA expands to Singapore, England and Canada

In the span of 4 weeks, STMA's outreach efforts culminated in official relationships in Singapore, England and Canada.

In a formal presentation in front of nearly 200 conference attendees, STMA President Abby McNeal, CSFM, officially installed the Singapore Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association October 30, in Singapore. This is STMA's first international chapter.

McNeal was invited to speak at the International Turfgrass Seminar, sponsored by the Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE). CUGE is managed by the National Parks Board of Singapore and is the leading national training and research institution for the Singapore landscape industry. Her presentation, "Environmental Practices on US Sports Fields," was well-received and complimented the focus of the seminar, which was sustainable management of turf grasses in parks, gardens and community.



STMA President Abby McNeal, CSFM officially installs the association's Singapore Chapter last October 30 in Singapore.

Before her presentation, McNeal presented a chapter gavel to Dr. Leong Chee Chiew, Chief Operating Officer & Commissioner of Parks & Recreation, officially recognizing the Singapore Chapter of the STMA. All attendees at the conference received automatic membership in the new chapter. In addition to presenting and installing the Singapore chapter, McNeal shared the STMA mission and key programs with the audience. Outreach efforts will continue in Singapore, with a commitment by STMA and CUGE to share ideas and resources with similarly focused organizations in Australia, which were also in attendance.

STMA is also very pleased to announce that it is recognizing its first International Affiliate Organization, The Sports Turf Association (STA). Headquartered in Guelph, ON, Canada, the STA was formed in 1987 to promote better, safer sports turf through innovation, education and professional programs. STA and STMA will collaborate and share information and educational resources. To be an International Affiliate, the organization must be recognized as a business entity in their country and provide proof to STMA annually; develop bylaws or other governing documents; and have a governing Board of Directors. The STA meets these requirements and officially accepted STMA's offer to be an affiliate organization November 5. In addition to sharing information and resources, STMA will list the STA on our website as an International Affiliate Organization, provide one membership to the President of the STA, Mr. Gord Dol, and will offer to the membership of the STA conference registration and education and training resources at STMA member rates.

After months of work, the STMA Membership Committee recommended to the STMA Board of Directors that it create the designation of International Affiliate Organization. The Board approved the recommendation at its summer board meeting. ■

Heck presents at London conference

CEO Kim Heck attended and presented at the Institute of Groundsmanship's (IOG) 75th Anniversary conference and celebration October 15, in London. She spoke about the STMA's outreach efforts and image enhancement programs, areas that the IOG is focused on further developing for its membership. Established in 1934, the IOG's purpose is to provide information and support to all grounds manager in the United Kingdom, to raise the profile of the profession, and to give a voice to the membership on important industry issues.

The conference was held at Emirates Stadium, home to the Arsenal FC. In addition to seeing Emirates, Heck had the privilege of meeting and touring the facilities of Darren Baldwin, groundskeeper at Tottenham Stadium, home to the Tottenham Hotspur, and Eddie Seward, head grounds manager at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Wimbledon. Representatives from the IOG will be attending the STMA annual conference in January to continue dialogue and seek areas of collaboration.

These three efforts support an Objective in the STMA strategic plan: To develop relationships internationally that will benefit the STMA membership and the Action Item in the plan, which states: To reach out to international allied organizations that currently exist and develop mutually beneficial relationships.

STMA has a small, but very loyal, number of international members. It is a goal of the association to help these members reach out to other sports turf managers in their country and create International Affiliate Organizations. A group in Israel is pursuing this affiliation. ■

Support Student Challenge competitors

Send a Student Challenge Team to the annual Conference to compete. The STMA Student Challenge, which is supported by Gold Level Sponsor Hunter Industries and The SAFE Foundation, continues to mature. The number of competitors has grown from 60 the first year to its record high of 108 students, representing 22 colleges, universities and technical schools that competed in 2009. Get your chapter, local commercial suppliers, and your peers to consider helping these teams defray their travel expenses to the conference.

STMA provides each competitor complimentary registration, but hotel and airfare are expensive. STMA encourages these teams to seek sponsorship locally, so look for possible requests this fall from nearby schools. If you do not have a college or university close by, and would like to help these students, contact STMA, STMAinfo@STMA.org. The SAFE Foundation, STMA's charity, awards \$4,000 to two winning teams, one from a 4-year and one from a 2-year school, to develop a hands-on learning lab at their institutions. At the Orlando conference, the 2009 winners, Penn State University Blue Team 009 (4-year) and Mt. San Antonio College Team 102 (2-year) will have poster displays explaining how they used their funds. ■