

President's Message

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STMA members should be leaders

I recently was fortunate to attend leadership training through the Navy Week Leaders to Sea Program and witnessed true leadership in action. The aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis hosted us, and as you can imagine, nothing was left to chance. Every person on that carrier knew what was expected of him or her and flawlessly executed their job. As a team, they contributed to the mission of safe, accident-free landings and take-offs, and it was obvious that they all took ownership of that mission. With jet speeds of more than 1,360 miles per hour, there is no room for error.

STMA passionately believes in its mission: *To be the recognized leader in strengthening the sports turf industry and enhancing members' competence and acknowledgement of their professionalism.* The educational tools and resources that STMA has developed, and those that are planned for this year, are created specifically to help members do their jobs better. Like the military, sports turf managers are continually training to remain at the top of their game—planning, managing and executing effectively. It is that passion for being the best that brings recognition and respect for your work.

While on the USS John C. Stennis, I saw first-hand the importance of leadership. With strong leadership, sailors are prepared to support any mission without fail. Communicating what needs to be done is essential not only for the military, but for the success of any business.

As leaders at our facilities, we know that we must communicate our goals clearly and passionately to our crew. Through training, we ensure that our staff has the knowledge and skills to do good work. It is also our responsibility to motivate and empower them so that they personally succeed, and as a result our sports facilities succeed. As leaders, we have another responsibility: to communicate with our employers. We must have open communication with our employer. This dialogue helps to develop trust, which is most essential in building respectful and long-lasting employee-employer relationships.

As the leader in this profession, STMA needs to elevate its role in the environment. The vision that we share as a Board is for our profession to be recognized by the sports world, and ultimately the public at large, for our environmental stewardship. We are stewards of the environment, and now is the time to take a leadership role and make our commitment more visible. Like open communication with our employers, gaining recognition for our management practices that protect the environment will create greater trust in us. That trust will help us when communities are considering regulations that may impact our ability to provide safe and playable sports surfaces.

My experience aboard the USS John C. Stennis made me realize even more the unselfish contributions of our men and women in the military. To those members who have served our country, thank you, and to those members who have family members serving, thank you for your sacrifice. I know I place my trust in them.