

Leo Goertz wins Harry C. Gill Founders Award

STMA'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS, the Founders Awards, were presented to four members who have followed in the footsteps of those who created the association. The four were surprised with the honor during STMA's annual awards banquet.

The **Harry C. Gill Award**, STMA's highest honor, was presented to Texas A&M University's manager of athletic fields **Leo Goertz**. This award was established to honor an individual for their hard work in the sports turf industry and to acknowledge their dedication to STMA. Goertz was honored for his commitment in hosting community events, presenting at his local chapter programs and at STMA, and broadly sharing his knowledge with his peers. He has a solid legacy with those who he has mentored and helped along the way during his 30+ years in the business. In his nomination, he was cited for exemplifying all the traits that Harry Gill brought to the profession[—hope, determination, passion and dedica-

tion. Goertz has been an active member of STMA since 1988 and is past president of the STMA Texas Chapter. He also serves as Vice President of the SAFE Foundation Board of Trustees.

Mike Trigg, CSFM received the **Dick Ericson Award** for his contributions to the industry. Trigg is Superintendent of Parks for Waukegan Parks District, IL. He was cited for his organization, leadership and impact on STMA through several governance initiatives and strategic planning while he led the association as its 15th president. The Ericson award is issued to someone who plans and executes the sports turf management of their facility, team leadership, and has a positive influence on the industry.

Dr. John Sorochan, associate professor of turfgrass science and management for the University of Tennessee, received the **Dr. William H. Daniel Award**, which is given to an individual who has made significant contributions to the sports turf indus-

try through his or her research, teaching or extension outreach. Dr. Sorochan's research has had a profound effect on the work of sports turf managers and will continue to do so through a new sports turf research center at UT. He has also developed a top undergraduate turf program.

Retired sports turf manager **Mel Lanford** (University of Texas) received the **George Toma Golden Rake Award** for his high standards of quality field management, but even more so for his mentorship of young people who have gone on to notable careers of their own. He is known as an educator to hundreds of sports turf managers and held the unofficial title "Doctor of Dirt." The Toma award recognizes a member for a dedicated and enthusiastic attitude to achieve their highest goals. The award acknowledges a strong spirit of commitment to the industry. ■



LEO GOERTZ, Texas A&M Athletics, right, receives the Harry C. Gill Memorial Award from last year's recipient, Tom Burns of Diamond Pro/TXI.



MIKE TRIGG, CSFM, Waukegan (IL) Park District, right, was named winner of the Dick Ericson Award. Here he poses with last year's recipient, Dave Rulli, Jeffco Stadium (CO).



JOHN SOROCHAN, PhD, University of Tennessee, left, was awarded the Dr. William H. Daniel Award by last year's winner, Tony Koski, PhD, Colorado State University.



MEL LANFORD, aka "Doctor of Dirt," right, was awarded the George Toma "Golden Rake" Award by last year's winner, Craig Potts of Texas A&M.