Benefits of certification verified

Editor’s note: This is another installment on how becoming a Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) can benefit turf managers professionally as well as improve their facilities.

How did you prepare for the CSFM Exam?
Collins: I prepared for the CSFM exam by attending a couple of the “preparing for the exam” sessions at the national conference. Those gave me valuable insight on what kinds of information the testing would be on. I also took the practice exam online. I then studied the parts of the exam I felt weakest on.

How did you approach your employer to support your certification, both financially and in the time needed to prepare for the exam?
Collins: My employer has supported my membership in the STMA for many years and we, together, thought it was a good idea to gain certification. He felt it would be well received across campus and the diversity of the knowledge needed to perform well on the exam and my boss was impressed with the extent of the information processed every day by sports turf managers, he had no idea. It also helped to show that only a select group of professionals have achieved certification and adding our university to the list would gain us some measure of national prestige.

Why did you decide to pursue certification?
Collins: I decided to pursue certification to add to my value as an employee. I think of myself as a professional and this validates my credentials to a certain extent. I also like the aspect of being one of a few in the world who have achieved this status.

How has certification helped your career?
Collins: Certification came for me at a critical time in my career where there were changes in upper management and roles within the university were being evaluated. There had also been a time where I as an employee and my bosses had settled into a routine verging on complacency. Becoming a certified professional reaffirmed my commitment to my profession, to me, and to my employer. It also made a positive statement to our working community of my dedication to continue to learn and evolve as a professional. I was promoted to a larger role a year later.