

## STMA Exhibitors: Plan Now to Enter Your Innovation

**IN 2010**, STMA introduced a new awards program, the Innovative Award. Three exhibitors were presented with the inaugural 2011 award during the STMA annual conference in January in Austin.

Start thinking about what your company can enter. Although the entry form just takes minutes to fill out electronically, the judging panel seeks links to videos, photos, marketing brochures, or other promotional material to help them understand the innovation.

The purpose of the award is to recognize those exhibiting commercial companies that are introducing products, equipment or services that improve the profession—either by enhancing the effectiveness of the sports turf manager or making playing surfaces safer and more playable for athletes.

In addition to being innovative, as described above, and an exhibitor at the STMA conference, the product, service or equipment being submitted must be introduced for sale between the close of the STMA show in January of this year through the close of the 2012 show in Long Beach. The winners also must agree to display the

innovation during the trade show.

When asked “What is innovative?” the Innovative Awards Task Group that developed the program came up with a list of how they would describe it. According to the Chair, Dale Getz, CSFM, CSE, “These qualities are descriptive, but the intent is to not limit an entry to just this listed.”

- Are creative
- Are cutting edge
- Have never been seen
- Make the task easier or more productive
- Improve quality
- Improve efficiency
- Protect the environment
- Save time and resources

Getz credits his task group, which includes Rene Asprion, James Graff, Chad Price, CSFM, Matt Tobin, Steve Trusty, and Vickie Wallace, with developing a program that has dual benefits. “Those companies that are presented with the Innovative Award receive excellent recognition and bragging rights, and STMA also benefits by being the award presenter and by being the venue where the innovation was introduced.”



The STMA Awards Committee judges the entries and will surprise the 2012 winners at the STMA annual trade show with an all-hall announcement and booth signage. Winners of the award may use the special STMA logo when promoting the winning innovation for as long as they wish. In addition, STMA will promote the winners through press releases, magazine coverage, and during the STMA Awards Banquet.

The application is due October 1 and is available on the STMA website, [www.STMA.org](http://www.STMA.org), Awards Program tab.

The 2011 award winners are SportsEdge for a rotating football goalpost, Barenbrug USA for RPR, regenerating perennial ryegrass, and Bush Sports Turf for the Field Rover robot. ■



**>> STEVE BUSH**, left, and Jared Aubry, right, of Bush Sports Turf pose with their Field Rover, a 2010 Innovation Award winner. The robot uses GPS and onboard sensors to autonomously drive a field and take surface elevation measurements.

## Mt. San Antonio College reinvesting Student Challenge winnings

**A VICTORY** couldn't have come at a better time for the turf program at Mt. San Antonio College, Walnut, CA. At the start of the spring 2011 semester the school broke ground for their new Agriculture Science building, just months after the team of



**>>THE NEW AGRICULTURE SCIENCE BUILDING** at Mt. San Antonio College, Walnut, CA.

Wade Anderseck, Patrick Escalera, Chaz Perea and Tom Skelton, led by professor Brian Scott, won top honors in STMA's Student Challenge's Two-Year competition.

In previous years the school has used Student Challenge prize money to acquire a dethatcher, an aerator, and a triplex mower for student to gain hands on experience. This year the Mt SAC Turf Team will come full circle and use the winning funds to populate new plots with turf and other playing surfaces. The majority of the plots will consist of several turf varieties including hybrid bermuda, paspalum, fescue, and fescue and ryegrass blends. In these plots students will have the opportunity to

test and study variables with a new fertilizer injector, soil blend bases, irrigation methods, and cultural practices.

The turf students also will be installing plots consisting of an infield playing surface, a mound, and warning track material. Here students will have the opportunity to study and practice the techniques involved in managing the soil profile, compaction issues, and moisture relationships on real playing surfaces. Finally, the tamp, rake, drag mat, and hose will take their rightful place as an integral component of the SportsTurf program.

On behalf of all the Turf and Horticulture students at Mt SAC, we would like to express our gratitude to the STMA for allowing us to compete in the Student Challenge and making us feel like part of the team.- Chaz Perea ■