Collaboration advances STMA’s strategic goals

The Sports Turf Managers Association’s strategic plan for 2012 through 2014 has a recurring theme: collaboration. Each of its four distinct platforms: membership growth and retention, taking a leadership role in education, garnering recognition and respect for members and the profession, and creating value for our commercial partners, have relationship building identified as a means to achieve these platforms. STMA is pleased to announce three new partnerships that align with its strategic plan and helps to advance the association’s goals.

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG), a 75-year-old association that serves the grounds care industry in the United Kingdom, and STMA signed a Memorandum of Cooperation. STMA President James Michael Goatley, Jr., PhD and IOG Director of Professional Services Ian Lacy, who stood in for IOG’s Chief Executive Geoff Webb, signed this memorandum while at the STMA Annual Conference in Long Beach in January. The memorandum outlines a mutual commitment to be leaders in advancing the profession of sports field management by sharing information and working together on issues and opportunities of common interest.

Goatley sees similarity in the two organizations’ visions. He says, “We both seek to be leaders in the profession and gain recognition for the excellent work of our respective memberships. As partners, we can be even stronger advocates and make a greater impact on the industry.”

The IOG has also officially become STMA’s second International Affiliate Organization (IAO). To be recognized as such the IAO must be a business entity in its own country and operate under bylaws and with a board of directors/office. The primary purpose of an IAO is to share information and education. STMA and the IOG will offer its education to the other’s membership at member prices. STMA also includes its certification program at member prices in this opportunity. Goatley believes that sharing information between the two countries on the different practices in field management will help advance the profession. “STMA members who attended our annual conference had the opportunity to hear Ian present some innovative drainage techniques that are being used in the UK. Our members can take this information, apply it to their practices, and really improve the playing surfaces,” Goatley says.

STMA’s first IAO is the Sports Turf Association in Canada. Supporting STMA’s focus on education is its new partnership with the Plant Management Network (PMN). PMN is a nonprofit publisher of applied, online plant science resources for researchers and practitioners, including turf professionals. Key resources now available to STMA members through PMN include Applied Turfgrass Science, Plant Disease Management Reports, Arthropod Management Tests, the PMN Image Database, PMN’s Plant Science Database, and PMN’s Partner Extension Search. STMA members receive access to PMN as a benefit of belonging to the association, and there is no additional cost for this subscription. STMA Academic Director Jeff Fowler sees PMN as an exceptional tool for STMA members. “The quality of information available through PMN is excellent. It’s applied and peer-reviewed information will really help our members in the practical aspects of sports field management.”

Sports turf managers have been using sound environmental practices long before protecting the environment moved to the forefront of human consciousness. However, this stewardship goes largely unnoticed, and many outside of the profession believe just the opposite. Rather than seeing sports turf managers as protectors of the environment, they see their work as poisoning the environment. The STMA Environmental Committee is working to shift that perception. In addition to developing the environmental mission, vision, goals and guiding principles for STMA that were recently adopted by the STMA Board of Directors, it is recommending specific partnerships that support STMA’s environmental stewardship philosophy.

Green Sports Alliance

One of those partnerships is with the Green Sports Alliance. STMA has become a Community Partner with the Green Sports Alliance (GSA), a non-profit organization with a mission to help sports teams, venues and the leagues enhance their environmental performance. As a Community Partner, STMA will participate in GSA’s annual Green Sports Summit that will be in Seattle on September 5-7. This 3-day summit is designed for leaders from the sports community. Attendees will be introduced to best practices around sustainability that also produce bottom line benefits. STMA members receive $50 off of registration fees by using the discount code: STMA. For more information, go to GSA summit website at http://www.greensportsalliance.org.

2012 Regional Conference set for Cincinnati June 26-27

The 2012 Regional Conference, June 26-27 in Cincinnati, OH hosted by STMA with the support of several chapters including the host, Ohio, and Illinois, KAFMO (Pennsylvania), Kentucky, Michigan, Tennessee Valley, and Virginia chapters, is a must attend educational event for anyone who deals with athletic turf. While focusing on sports turf managers, STMA encourages attendance by crew, coaches, parks and recreation professionals, athletic directors, school business officials, and others, and will be providing education for all levels of sports turf experience.

Attendees will be treated to more than ten hours of education presented by nationally recognized sports turf researchers and academics, as well as professional, college and high school sports turf managers from the region and across the country. They will lend their expertise to presentations and panel discussions on natural turfgrass, irrigation, small-engine repair, synthetics, weather, safety, pesticide management and managing bermudagrass. There will also be behind-the-scenes tours of Great American Ballpark and Paul Brown Stadium, home to the Reds and Bengals, respectively. There will be an exhibition held at the Paul Brown Stadium on June 27 as well.

Registration will include all education, entrance to the exhibition and most meals. The group will also be taking in a night at the ballpark, watching the Reds take on the Milwau-