

Wightman, Minner lead 2011 selections for "Most Influential People in the Green Industry"



Lynda Wightman

Green Media, a division of M2MEDIA360, recently named their "Most Influential People in the Green Industry" for 2011. The professionals selected for this honor exemplify commitment to the Green Industry, and have exhibited a widespread influence on their peers. From the sports turf industry, Lynda Wightman of Hunter Industries and Dr. Dave Minner of Iowa State were chosen. Dr. Minner is on sabbatical this winter so we will cover his win later.

LYNDA WIGHTMAN, Hunter Industries

Lynda Wightman, a strong proponent of education and supporter of STMA, is one of the most trusted and influential leaders in the sports turf industry.

Her nomination read, in part, "Lynda is very deserving of this distinction. She has served on numerous turf and irrigation boards. She devotes countless hours towards training and education the turf professionals of the future. For the STMA she has been the driving force behind the student challenge development and has assisted with other green industry student challenges."

SportsTurf: You were nominated by your peers as one of the most influential people in the green industry. How do you feel you that you influence other industry professionals?

Wightman: I am honored and humbled to receive this recognition. I have never really thought of myself as an "influencer," but have always strived to help others make good decisions and feel good about their failures and accomplishments. A favorite quote of mine is by Maya Angelou, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made

them feel". I try to remind myself of this on a daily basis.

ST: What do you feel has been your biggest contribution to the green industry so far? And what do you see as your role in the future of the industry?

Wightman: By working for such a fantastic company, Hunter Industries, I have been able to develop a network of friends who reach out to me for education, training, industry knowledge and reliable collaboration. Water conservation/management (irrigation) is such an important topic, and it's not going away, so we have to learn every technique, program and process occurring today and in the future in order to be stewards of this valuable resource. I hope to continue representing Hunter, and our industry, in every effort to support our entire customer base in any way possible; especially when it comes to efficient and knowledgeable irrigation practices.

ST: Who has influenced you both personally and professionally?

Wightman: My mother, of course. She taught me to believe in myself and to always

2011 Most Influential People in Green Industry

- ⊙ **Dan Ariens**, president and CEO, Ariens Company
- ⊙ **Mark Chisholm**, arborist, climbing champion, instructor and industry spokesperson, Aspen Tree Expert Co., Inc.
- ⊙ **Stephen Cieslewicz**, president and chief consultant, CN Utility Consulting
- ⊙ **Tom Delaney**, director of government affairs, Professional Landcare Network (PLANET)
- ⊙ **Bill Harley**, immediate past president and CEO, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute
- ⊙ **Kris Kiser**, president and CEO, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute
- ⊙ **David Minner**, Ph.D., professor, Department of Horticulture, Iowa State University
- ⊙ **Lynda Wightman**, industry relations manager, Hunter Industries

give to others no matter what the situation might be. Chuck Huston hired me 27 years ago, to work for Hunter and was my mentor for many years to follow. Even after he retired, he gave me advice and helped me develop my personal and professional skills. Richard Hunter has allowed me to work with great people; make mistakes and learn from them; mentor others in our company, and be a part of the most fantastic team in the world.

ST: Tell us something about yourself outside of work (hobby, sport or other personal interest) that influences your approach in your professional career.

Wightman: Ha! Anyone who knows me, would say that I don't have much of a life outside of irrigation and Hunter, but I am a very lucky woman to live in Missoula, MT (eat your heart out!) and be close to family. I love to fly fish, garden, preserve and cook the goods I grow, and share everything with everybody I can! I invite industry friends to join me in the relaxation of being on the water, tossing a line, and not talking about sprinklers, water conservation and jobs!! By

doing this, we all go away with a refreshed mind and soul, ready to tackle our daily challenges once again.

ST: What dreams do you have for the industry? What change(s) are necessary to make those dreams a reality?

Wightman: I realize that many things are changing, especially with the way we do business, but we have to remember the importance of relationships and partnerships with the people we work with. At Hunter, our Mission and Values are based upon customer satisfaction, innovation, family and citizenship (communities, sustainability, and environmental footprint)

I would like to think that other companies would look to model their own core values along these same lines; for the betterment of their employees and customers.

ST: What advice do you have for green industry professionals who want to become influential leaders themselves?

Wightman: Strive for the best in all that is tried. Don't be afraid to fail; get up and try it again until it is right! Share your fail-

ures and successes with others; maybe they are in the same shoes as you. Be happy with yourself and your job; if you're not, then find out why and try to make the appropriate changes. Another quote that I like is (anonymous), "The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything, they just make the most of everything that comes their way."

ST: If you could nominate another person as the green industry's most influential, who would that be, and why?

Wightman: Michael Andresen, CSFM. Mike is Past President of STMA and has influenced every sports turf manager I know, in some way or another. His job at ISU has given him the opportunity to implement a student working program, which has always turned into a true mentor process for these young people. He is understanding, caring, and supportive to anyone he comes in contact with. If he is not knowledgeable about something, he dives in to learn about it and comes out on top. Oh yeah, and he loves to fly fish and be in the mountains! ■

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