



The Green Sheet

Central Pennsylvania Golf Course Superintendents Association

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November/December 2023

2023 GCSAA Chapter Delegates Meeting - Key Messages

The President's Message -

GCSAA President Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, said the future is bright for GCSAA, and everyone has worked to make it bright. During his President's Message to the delegates, Breen shared his inspirational thoughts regarding community and GCSAA. Being a part of a community, a group of people who want to come together to connect, is the main reason GCSAA exists. GCSAA is now a more than 20,000-member community. Breen reminded the delegates of Col. John Morley's message about community: "No life is or can be self-existent, we depend on each other." Breen then congratulated Brandon Razo on winning the 2023 Emerging Leader Award. He said that Razo is leading out for his community. Razo and the rest of the community are making the future bright. He reminded the delegates that by leading out they are contributing to the community and making the future bright. Breen also touched on several of 2023's key initiatives including First Green, DEI and the Delegates Meeting. He ended his presentation encouraging the delegates to continue to advocate on behalf of the profession and the industry.

Association Report -

CEO Rhett Evans opened his briefing by thanking the delegates and the membership for their work this year "leading out." His message focused on a strong membership and a robust association.

He said, "GCSAA is relentlessly focused on you, this is your association." He recognized that the efforts made when engaged while leading out make a positive impact. Evans emphasized that GCSAA is in good standing financially, strategically, and operationally, and the brand is strong. He shared and reinforced our commitment to the mission of GCSAA to serve our members, advance their profession and improve their communities through the enjoyment, growth, and vitality of the game of golf.

Evans encouraged everyone to lead out by completing BMPs; becoming a Grassroots Ambassador; hosting a First Green Field trip; completing certificates and becoming a CGCS. He pointed out the strength of these programs and the importance of the Thank a Superintendent campaign. This year, the Thank a Greenkeeper/Thank a Superintendent campaign produced 18.2 million broadcast impressions.

Evans discussed the growth of GCSAA in the last year. There are now over 20,000 members. He then briefed the delegates on the state of GCSAA with membership numbers and a financial update.

- Membership Numbers – Total membership is now over 20,000, up 3.18% from 2023, with Class A and Equipment Managers leading the way.
- Financial Update – Evans noted that the pandemic, inflation, and high interest rates have created financial challenges with all organizations and GCSAA isn't immune. However, due to the strong financial stewardship of past GCSAA Boards and prudent financial management by staff leadership, the association remains resilient.
 - * GCSAA generates revenue from the following:
 - 42% Industry
 - 26% Member Dues
 - 6% Reserve Funds
 - 17% User Fees (e.g., registration)
 - 5% Foundation and Other Sources
 - 4% Other (HQ lease, bookstore/merchandise)
 - * GCSAA puts the funds to work on the following:
 - 29% Education, Advocacy, Publications, Environmental Programs
 - 28% Conference and Trade Show
 - 16% Member and Chapter Programs
 - 9% Marketing and Branding; Outreach and Communications
 - 18% Support & Administrative, Occupancy, Depreciation

Evans said that a relentless focus has allowed GCSAA to be able to start replacing reserve funds utilized during the pandemic.

Evans concluded his presentation by reminding the delegates that leading out is ensuring a bright future.

Rounds 4 Research Update -

Steve Randall, director, chapter outreach, gave an update on Rounds 4 Research. Delegates were also asked to champion participation in Rounds 4 Research. After a record-setting year in 2023, the goals and strategies for 2024 were shared, including new ways to promote the program through state/regional golf associations and working with local PGA sections.

Government Affairs Update -

Chava McKeel, director, government affairs, gave an update on GCSAA advocacy efforts on the key issues impacting the golf industry, including recent proposed changes to pesticide regulation in relation to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). She also discussed the importance of the Grassroots Ambassador Program and presented awards to the chapters who helped raise funds for the GCSAAPAC Chapter Challenge. McKeel recognized grassroots ambassadors who were in attendance and their recent engagement with members of Congress. Key points of her presentation:

- The U.S. EPA is trying to come into compliance with its obligations under the Endangered Species Act. In doing so, they have proposed an ESA Workplan and several pilots that could significantly affect the way superintendents are allowed to use pesticides in the future. It is very important GCSAA members watch the ESA 101 webinar in the GCSAA Learning Hub to learn more - GCSAA ([interactyx.com](https://www.gcsaa.org))
- GCSAA members can stay on top of the association's government affairs efforts (and get education points) by watching the Government Affairs Quarterly Briefings. The next one is scheduled for December 12.
- The Government Affairs team is looking for GCSAA members to serve as Grassroots Ambassadors. There are more Congressional districts open that need an Ambassador because the country just went through redistricting (the process by which state legislatures redraw political boundaries every 10 years following the decennial U.S. Census). Please reach out to Michael Lee at mlee@gcsaa.org to learn more about the program.
- Thank you to the 36 GCSAA chapters who helped raise \$4,515 for GCSAAPAC. The Metropolitan GCSA brought in the most dollars and the Indiana GCSA brought in the most dollars per member. The Chapter Challenge will be back next year. To learn more about how GCSAAPAC dollars are used, please visit: <https://www.gcsaa.org/advocacy/get-involved/gcsaapac>

2024 GCSAA Conference and Trade Show Update

Chief Marketing Officer Ed Several briefed the delegates on the GCSAA Conference and Trade Show (CTS). The 2024 CTS has been transformed into an interactive experience attendees won't find anywhere else. Several walked the delegates through the new CTS schedule as well as the GCSAA Golf Championships and highlighted a few key events and daily themes. Register before December 3, 2023 to take advantage of advanced pricing.

The golf championships will also feature a women's division, which continues to grow. A chapter team competition will continue to be held. Register your chapter team in advance.

Visit www.gcsaaconference.com to get more information, including an interactive map to learn more about Phoenix, restaurants, transportation, and entertainment options.

Each day will be themed with plenty of opportunities to link together

- Monday: **Igniting Transformation** gives attendees the opportunity to awaken their potential with hands-on education seminars and Power Hours and Interactive Facility Tours.
- Tuesday: **Expanding Horizons** helps attendees innovate the future, dive into knowledge and for relationships with through education related to the biggest challenges golf operations face.
- Wednesday: **Exploring What's New** starts with the GCSAA Sunrise Celebration, presented in partnership with Syngenta, and focuses on discovering more ways to be effective and efficient. The trade show will offer the latest innovation in products and services.
- Thursday: **The Ultimate Celebration of You** is a celebration of achievements and friendships that will springboard your success for the upcoming year.

BMPs and Golf Course Environmental Profile Update –

Mark Johnson, director, environmental programs provided an update on BMPs. He emphasized that GCSAA is here to help members, the professional and the industry succeed. BMPs are not just about science, but also operations. They can be tied to your budgets, capital improvements, outreach/education and more. GCSAA's BMP efforts are crucial and are being recognized by the EPA and others. Consider

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the Endangered Species Act restriction and mitigation information as well as pending product registration using BMP mitigation. Now, BMP implementation on the course, customizing facility BMP manuals, setting goals, keeping records and reporting are all a must. The professional commitment toward continuous improvement must be demonstrated. Superintendents can start with small steps, and they will make a difference individually on the course and in aggregate across the industry. Johnson stressed that superintendents should lead out and be part of the solution and follow through and demonstrate that they are using these practices. Lastly, reach out to GCSAA for assistance.

First Green and Career Development -

Leann Cooper, senior manager, First Green and workforce development, gave an update. She focused on the need to bring new people into the profession, provide professional development opportunities to upskill existing staff and career resources to assist members in achieving their goals.

- Providing avenues into the profession. GCSAA is focused on both long-range and short-range strategies to bring new people into the workforce. Long-range strategies include youth outreach avenues such as First Green, FFA and Jobs for America's Graduates. The Short-range strategies have to do with providing training and resources for current crew members to help them advance up the ranks. GCSAA has job descriptions, tips on hiring and the job board for those that need immediate assistance.
- Career Assistance. GCSAA is focused on the career success of its members through a variety of programs and services including career development certificates and career guidance services.

Cooper finished her session by encouraging the delegates to reach out to her with questions or ideas for future initiatives to help meet their labor needs.

GCSAA Centennial Update –

Darren J. Davis, CGCS, chairman of the GCSAA Centennial Committee with Mark F. Jordan, CGCS vice chairman gave an update on of the committee's progress.

- Mission statement: Honor the past 100 years ... and inspire continued greatness into the next century.
- Committee members: Jennifer Bryan - Florida GCSA; Bruce Burger, CGCS - Central Texas GCSA; Robert Farren Jr., CGCS - Carolinas GCSA; Mike Hurdzan, Ph.D, ASGCA; Mitch Savage, CGCS - Rocky Mountain GCSA; Jason Tharp, CGCS - Palm Beach GCSA; Pat Finlen, CGCS - Sierra Nevada GCSA; Bruce Williams, CGCS - Midwest Association of GCS
- Objectives:
 1. Promote golf course superintendents as Essential to Golf's Success.
 2. Demonstrate the value of membership to members and non-members.
 3. Recognize and enhance partnership and collaboration among industry, government agencies, chapters, and other golf organizations.
 4. Set the stage for the future of the association.
 5. Assist the GCSAA Foundation in achieving its mission.
 6. Increase awareness of the art and science of greenkeeping.
 7. Members will have stronger relationships with other members, the association, and golfers/non-golfers.
 8. Engage and increase chapter connections to the association.
 9. Educate the public about opportunities in the golf course management profession (include continued focus on under-represented groups).
 10. Engage our members in the celebration of the association.
- Buffalo Groupe has been selected to serve as the public relations agency and has experience working for major golf brands. The Buffalo Groupe is currently working on a Centennial logo.
- Timeline: Late 2025 – public relations campaign will begin; CTS 2026 - official member kick off; Sept. 13, 2026 – Col. John Morley statue unveiled at GCSAA HQ; CTS 2027 – official close

Small Group Discussion - The chapter delegates broke into small groups to share feedback on the sessions covered during the meeting and on several challenges facing members and the golf industry. Topics covered were the CPI dues increase, BMPs, GCSAA Centennial, Rounds 4 Research and Career Development Certificates.

Townhall Session - The GCSAA Board of Directors and delegates participated in an interactive town hall session. The session was facilitated by GCSAA Vice President Jeff L. White, CGCS along with the board of directors and included questions and comments surrounding the Centennial, Rounds 4 Research, reserve funds, GCSAA website, EPA and job posting assistance.

Candidate Presentations - The delegates had the opportunity to meet and question the candidates running for the 2024 GCSAA Board of Directors. The candidates are:

Officer positions

- For President: Jeff L. White, CGCS
- For Vice President: T.A. Barker, CGCS

For Secretary/Treasurer:

- Paul L. Carter, CGCS
- Douglas D. Dykstra, CGCS

Director positions - Four members are on the slate to fill two open director positions:

- Gregory B. Jones, CGCS, MG
- Ryan Kraushofer, CGCS
- Christopher A. Reverie
- Marc E. Weston, CGCS

There are two open director positions for two-year terms. The terms of Dykstra and Weston are expiring. If Dykstra is not elected to the Secretary/Treasurer position, he will need to run from the floor for an open director position to remain on the board. If Carter is elected to the Secretary/Treasurer position, then a third person will need to be elected to fulfill the one remaining year on his term.

Kevin P. Breen, CGCS, will serve on the board for one year as immediate past president. Mark F. Jordan, CGCS, retires from the board after service the last year as immediate past president.

Thanks to Central Penn GCSAA Board Member Corey Barnes for representing our chapter at the delegates meeting.

Presidents Message

My wife asked me the other day what I wanted for Christmas. I said a Red Ryder BB gun. She said you'll shoot your eye out. How about a Yamaha R1 motorcycle? She said you'll get arrested and be someone else's Christmas present in prison. I know, for the Steelers to make the playoffs! She said that ship sailed last Thursday night. I got it! Eight inches of snow on December 23rd and the golf course to be closed until March. She said Gunga Galunga! So I got that goin' for me.

Hopefully it happens and you can take some time off with family and relax after the longest golf season ever. It's crazy there is still this much play but these are good problems to have I guess. Think about how different things could be this time next year. Hopefully people still use golf as a way to escape it all. We are fortunate we can! Enjoy some time off.

Merry Christmas and God Bless.

Pete Ramsey
Central Penn President

USGA NORTHEAST REGIONAL UPDATE

When a Water View Isn't Good

December 15, 2023

Elliott L. Dowling, regional director, East Region

Standing water in winter is concerning. The water will likely linger and could potentially freeze, leading to larger problems.

Standing water can cause turf decline at any time of the year. In summer, standing water can heat up and essentially boil or suffocate plants. In winter, rather than scalding



grass, water can freeze over the grass. Large areas of standing water can freeze quickly and stay that way for long periods of time during winter. If the turf stays covered by ice for too long, winter injury is possible.

There are several factors that lead to winter injury, it is a complex issue and its causes can sometimes be perplexing. However, we know that ice encasement is one way to bring on winter injury. If you have standing water on the course during winter, especially on putting greens or fairways, improving surface drainage will help reduce the risk of turf damage.

Rain at this time of year is going to sit longer on the surface for several reasons. There could be a slight frost layer just below the surface, which will impede water infiltration. Grass also doesn't have the same water requirements in winter as in the summer, so absorption by the plant is slow, if it occurs at all. Shorter days and cooler temperatures also mean slower evaporation.

Internal drain lines are helpful, but when the ground freezes water can't get to the drainage. In this scenario, good surface drainage is the only way to move water off of the playing surfaces and into the rough or other areas where damage is less likely to occur and will have less effect on playability.

If standing water plagues your course and is often an area of frustration, winter is a good time to work on some of the pockets to get a jump-start on the next season. Focus on high-profile areas like greens and fairways first and move out from there.

Northeast Region Agronomists

Darin Bevard, senior director, Championship Agronomy –

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[Information on the USGA's Course Consulting Service](#)

[When a Water View Isn't Good \(usga.org\)](#)

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Membership News

If you know of anyone who is interested in membership into the association, please have them contact Wanda at 717-279-0368 or cpgcsa@hotmail.com.

Membership information is also available on the Central Penn website at:

www.cpgcsa.org

GCSAA
Conference and Trade Show

RISE TO SHINE!
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PHR

PHOENIX

JANUARY 27 – FEBRUARY 1, 2024

A Champion Gives Back

In Gee Chun established a scholarship for Lancaster CC employees after winning the U.S. Women's Open there in 2015. She and the Open are returning next year — and a former scholarship winner is now an assistant superintendent.

[RICK WOELFEL](#) | DECEMBER 06, 2023

As 2023 enters its final month, the countdown is underway for the 79th playing of the U.S. Women's Open, set for May 30-June 2, 2024, at Lancaster Country Club in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

This marks the second time the club will host a Women's Open. The first was in 2015 when **In Gee Chun**, then a month shy of her 21st birthday, played in her first event in the United States and was virtually unknown outside her native Republic of Korea, and emerged victorious.

Nathan Schnell is eagerly anticipating the 79th edition of the championship. Schnell is the club's senior assistant superintendent, working under director of grounds **Josh Saunders** and superintendent **Matt Wolfe**.

Schnell's ties to the club run deep. He didn't join the crew until 2017 but Chun's victory in 2015 profoundly impacted his life — then and since.

A Penn State graduate, Schnell was a recipient of a scholarship from the Lancaster Country Club Educational Foundation that helped finance his education. The foundation was founded by Chun in the wake of her Women's Open win for the purpose of supporting the educational efforts of club employees and caddies, and their dependents.

After 54 holes of that 2015 Women's Open, Chun was in third place, four shots off the lead. But she had a sense Saturday evening that championship Sunday would be a day to remember.

"We had dinner at a restaurant," she says. "On the way back to (where I was staying) I saw a lot of fireflies. When I saw the fireflies, I thought about a lot of things from my past. I wanted to be that person who gives back."

The next day, with the support of local golf fans, Chun fired a 4-under 66 to score a one-shot victory. The win was a life-changing experience and fueled her resolve to give back.

"The Lancaster community gave me a lot of energy," she says. "So, after I won the Open, I wanted to give back to the Lancaster community. That's why I started the foundation here."

Schnell received a scholarship for the first time in 2019 after going through an interview process that included submitting an essay and being interviewed by members of the foundation's board of directors, all of whom are Lancaster Country Club members.

"That was during the infancy of the program," he says. "That was Year 1 of when it came to be, and I was fortunate enough to get that money and just see how (the club) was banding together to host the (2024) Women's Open and create a community within itself.

"It's been really intriguing to see over the last couple years how In Gee has continuously impacted Lancaster along with the members, reinvesting resources into the internal growth of the employees and the community in general."

Schnell graduated from Penn State in the fall of 2021 with a degree in turfgrass science. His academic roadmap included a stint as an intern at Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland. Since his graduation, he's been part of the team at Lancaster Country Club, where Saunders has been a mentor to him.

"He kind of led me in a way that influenced me," Schnell says. "It was very eye-opening at a young age, looking to be in this industry because he said to me, 'There going to be good times. There are also going to be times when you just have to keep your head down and persevere.'"

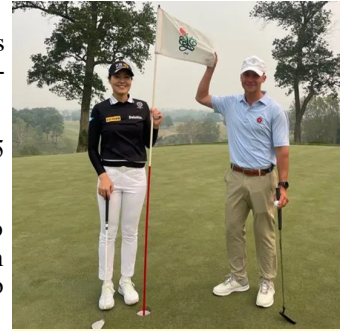
Chun takes a hands-on approach to her foundation. She returns to Lancaster Country Club regularly to meet with members and recipients of her foundation's scholarships, including Schnell. She is committed to supporting those recipients as they pursue their dreams, as others supported her in her quest to become one of the finest golfers in the world.

When the Women's Open returns to Lancaster Country Club next June, the native of Gunsan, Republic of Korea, will be the hometown favorite.

For his part, Schnell appreciates being able to use his education and professional skills at the club that supported his ambitions.

"I'm very prideful that I'm able to reinvest my experiences through past internships," he says. "And also contribute back to the community that gave me a lot of financial support and just the confidence that I'm doing the right thing through my career path and education."

Rick Woelfel is a Philadelphia-based writer, senior Golf Course Industry contributor and host of the Wonderful Women of Golf podcast.



Courtesy of Nathan Schnell

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New Year's Eve Drops and Celebrations

Pennsylvania has several amazing locales to herald in the New Year. Get ready to sing a hearty rendition of Auld Lang Syne at these fun, festive, and sometimes a bit quirky PA New Year's Eve drops, rated among the best in the nation! You don't have to take just our word. After all, two PA drops are ranked among the top 10 by *USA Today's* coveted Readers Choice awards for the 10 Best New Year's Eve drops in the country!

- Highmark First Night Pittsburgh**
[Highmark First Night Pittsburgh](#) raises the Future of Pittsburgh Ball in the culmination of the six-hour celebration throughout the downtown's renowned 14-block Cultural District—inside theaters, galleries and unique spaces, and along city streets with four outdoor performance stages. Acclaimed national artists and Pittsburgh's vibrant arts community ring in the New Year with live music, dance, theater, visual arts, comedy, magic, kids' activities, and a signature parade along with Pyrotechnico Fireworks displays at 6 p.m. and midnight. The event is free and open to everyone! indoor galleries and select performance venues will require free tickets for entry.
- First Night® Bethlehem** Rated among the best New Year's Eve drops in the nation by *USA Today* Readers Choice awards, [First Night® Bethlehem](#) "peeps" with pride. Held at the iconic SteelStacks, the celebration features a wide variety of music and art before the signature 400-pound, illuminated Marshmallow PEEPS® Chick travels down toward the excited crowd to ring in the New Year at 5:35 p.m. on both Dec. 30 and 31 followed by a stunning display of fireworks. Note: Tickets, which are required and cost \$5 per person, can be purchased online.
- Lebanon's Annual New Year's Eve Bologna Drop** It wouldn't be New Year's Eve in southcentral Pennsylvania without the famous Pennsylvania Dutch bologna descending from the sky in its namesake county. At 7:00 p.m., join the excitement in Lebanon with the crowds count down the seconds with the famous 16-foot [Lebanon Bologna Drop](#) coming to a stop at the stroke of midnight.
- Crayola's Jazzberry Jammin' New Year's Eve**
[Crayola Experience](#) in Easton has the perfect way for little ones to join in the New Year's celebration by ringing in the New Year with lots of fun family activities all throughout the day! There will be a streamer launch complete with a count-down to ring in the New Year at noon and 2:00 p.m., and, of course, loads of colorful activities throughout the day! Star in your own New Year's coloring page, and then craft your own 2024 New Year's crown. Closing at 6:00 p.m., adults will have plenty of time to get the little ones home and tucked in bed before their own celebrations begin to ring in the New Year at midnight!
- Kennett Square's Annual Midnight in the Square**
 Ring in the New Year at the "Mushroom Capital of the World," Kennett Square. Watch as a glowing 700-pound stainless steel mushroom is lowered to count down the New Year as a nod to the town's acres of fungus fields. Rated by *USA Today* as one of the 10 best New Year's Eve drops in the nation, the annual [Midnight in the Square](#) event features music, food, and entertainment culminating with the midnight mushroom drop!
- Hershey's Annual Hershey's Kiss Raise**
 Begin the New Year at the "Sweetest Place on Earth!®" with [Hershey's Kiss Raise](#). Named by *USA Today Travel* as one of the great places for a family-friendly New Year's Eve, the well-known chocolate town pulls out all the stops for its New Year's Eve celebration with live bands, great food and drinks, and loads of family-friendly activities. Starting at 7:30, enjoy bubble wrap stomps and a dance party at the community hour in ChocolateTown Square. Then, at 11:59 p.m., the Hershey's Kiss is raised above the sweet-toothed crowd with downtown revelers enjoying an immersive laser and pyrotechnics display that everyone can see – even if it's foggy!
- Pottsville's Yuengling© Beer Bottle**
 New Year's Eve in Pottsville is marked by the raising of the Yuengling© beer bottle to the top of the flagpole at Garfield Square. Ring in the New Year with a toast to the oldest brewery in America.
- Harrisburg's Annual Strawberry Drop**
 Returning to North 2nd Street, Harrisburg's the New Year's Eve festivities and signature [Strawberry Drop](#) kicks off at 9 p.m. with the Kid's Glow Party inside City Hall featuring a 1,000 balloon drop, face painting, balloon animals, crafts, and free snacks for the kids with all the activities illuminated with blacklights, followed by the Strawberry Drop and fireworks outside at midnight. Be sure to check [explorehbg.com/NYE](#) for a list of New Year's Eve dining specials, parties, and more happening throughout the City.
- Shippensburg's Drop the Anchor New Year's Celebration**
 Welcome 2024 in style at Shippensburg's [Drop the Anchor](#) New Year's Celebration. Festivities begin 8 p.m. with bounce houses, food trucks, New Year's Eve favors, Maxie's Brew House serving up cold brews to those age 21 or older, and a live disc jockey keeping you entertained spinning the classics to the latest hits. At midnight, you can watch the Times Square ball drop on the jumbotron as you welcome your first moments of 2024 at this free and fun family event.
- Lower Allen Township Pants Drop**
 We bet you haven't heard of a pants drop before! As the clock strikes midnight, the town's signature, five-foot-tall [yellow trousers](#) – a shout-out to nearby Yellow Breeches Creek – are dropped to ring in the new year. Baby Breeches, the chil-

dren’s countdown and drop, will be at 10 p.m. for the whole family to enjoy.

- **York’s Annual White Rose Drop**
Attendees of York’s [New Year’s Eve celebration](#) are sure to have a blast ringing in 2024 . Join the crowd enjoying live music until midnight when a white rose descends from the sky in Continental Square, symbolic of the War of the Roses between Lancaster and York, followed by a colorful fireworks display.
- **Mechanicsburg’s Wrench Drop**
The town celebrates the New Year from 9 p.m. to 12:20 a.m. with the annual dropping of a [wrench](#) on Main Street. The tradition commemorates the borough’s founders — mechanics who settled in the area to make and repair wagons in the early 19th century. There will be live music, lots of fun, and even glass-blowing glasses starting at 9:00 p.m.

Happy New Year to you and your family!

[New Year's Eve Drops and Celebrations | visitPA](#)

CPGCSA Mystery Members - Can You Identify?

The Power of Self-Empowerment

Reflecting on your choices and actions provides an in-depth look at your responses to personal and professional situations.
October 2023 | Phil Helmn, MG

It's widely recognized that superintendents who continue to develop themselves professionally reap significant beneficial rewards. Let's not forget, however, the power of personal development and the empowerment it can have on our well-being and life outside of the workplace, too. In this article, we'll explore the benefits of both and how it's possible to achieve that lofty goal.

Professional development centers solely on direct work-based improvements. It ensures we continue to be competent in our profession and is something we should continue throughout our careers. Tracking and documenting our skills, knowledge and experience will help us stay relevant and updated. Professional development is achieved by attending conferences and workshops, maintaining academic credentials, taking part in activities put on by professional organizations and informally networking with other superintendents across our industry.



The benefits of professional development are many. It improves our knowledge, credibility and trustworthiness; enhances our skills, value and worth; improves our job satisfaction; and increases our motivation and productivity. Similarly, personal development is highly beneficial on many levels and should be a lifelong process that, through analyzing and assessing our character and qualities, helps us consider our goals in life. By creating a tailor-made plan, we can achieve positive and effective outcomes in our life. Ultimately, as we achieve greater self-awareness and self-knowledge, our empowerment and effectiveness grow. Personal development helps us prioritize the right things in life, deliver results that matter most, build resilience that can help us deal with life's stresses and strains, and improves our relationships and well being.

One way to develop ourselves, both professionally and personally, is through reflective practice, the action of thinking about or reflecting on our experiences. It's the ability to look closely at a past situation, evaluate what happened and decide what we would

An advertisement for Turf Equipment and Supply Company. The top half features a photograph of a person in a red jacket operating a red and white Ventrac tractor on a golf course. The Turf Equipment and Supply Company logo is in the top left, and the Ventrac logo is in the top right. The bottom half of the ad is a dark blue banner with white text.

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do differently next time to achieve a more positive outcome. Superintendents who reflect are not just reliving past events; they're taking an in-depth look at their emotions, feelings, actions and responses to specific situations. In theory, this can then help us in future similar situations to maneuver ourselves and influence others to gain better, more positive outcomes.

The use of reflective practice in professional development is vital to better serve not only ourselves but the organizations we work for, too. Reflecting on situations and interactions with colleagues helps us achieve more successful outcomes through greater emotional intelligence. The ability to learn from past experiences, modify behavior and adapt new strategies not only increases our potential for success but builds self-confidence and that of the people around us.

Before we can begin, though, it's important to create the right environment. We need to build some reflection time into our day, become open to our experiences, and appreciate the value of learning, talking and listening to others. If we can sustain an open mind and generate healthy communication in our workplace, we will experience increased productivity and effectiveness as a result.

This can be achieved through departmental meetings, 360-degree feedback surveys — don't be frightened of what you might discover! — one on one appraisals, annual performance

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reviews and S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) goal setting.

Many people find that they learn best from experience. However, if they don't reflect on their experience and don't consciously think about how they could do better next time, it's hard for them to learn anything at all.

All of these tips can help us create alternative strategies, open opportunities of influence and learn so we can deliver success for ourselves in the future. Self-empowerment intentionally helps us choose to be in control of our destiny.

When learning and development become a priority in our life, we feel more confident and focused about the things we hope to achieve. If we can achieve this, we won't need to worry about obstacles or inconveniences because we'll trust that we have what it takes to overcome them. We'll understand our strengths and weaknesses and use that information to pursue success on the terms that are right for us.

Phil Helmn, MG, is a four-year GCSAA member with more than 35 years of experience in the golf course management industry. He is a regular speaker on leadership and the author of "The Power of People," which offers tips to manage the modern-day team.

How You Can Lead By Example

James Nelson

Despite the changing landscape of real estate investments and other industries, which have experienced the effects of the pandemic and now a post-pandemic world, there are fundamental leadership styles that stand the test of time. In my experience in the brokerage world, I've learned and adopted the philosophy of leading by example. The strategy can inspire others to jump in and take part too, as it emphasizes to them that you're ready and willing to roll up your sleeves and do the hard work.

Follow these guidelines to lead by example and create a productive, high-achieving team.

1. Develop an Ownership Mentality

Having an ownership mentality refers to having a sense of responsibility about a business outcome, and wanting to carry out steps to make it happen. If your team sees that you're willing to step in and put in the hours to reach a goal, they may be motivated to do the same. Creating an ownership mentality for a team can drive results and enable everyone to celebrate the wins together.

2. Make the First Effort

During Covid, work-from-home became the norm for many segments, including real estate. For a time, it was essential to prioritize health and carry out Zoom meetings and online interactions. In New York, my team and I shifted our workplaces to home offices as well and carried on.

Once conditions were set to make returning to the office possible and safe, workers across the nation and globe had grown accustomed to the different conditions. Many offices struggled (and some are still in the process of transitioning) to encourage employees to meet face-to-face again.

In my case, I knew that stating to team members that it was time to return to the office, and then staying home myself, would cause conflicting messages. With that in mind, I took the lead and headed into the office myself. It sent the message to others that showing up at work, even if it took extra effort, was valuable and essential for our success. In time, others followed and returned as well. Now our team meets regularly to have in-person meetings, and these gatherings facilitate communication and cooperation.

3. Be Accessible to Others

Early on in my career I worked in a setting with an open floor plan. In this type of environment, I was able to listen to those around me and absorb what they were doing. While some office arrangements have changed and you may find yourself in an office, as I am, the idea of letting others know you're available is important. You'll be able to answer questions, provide feedback to ideas, and encourage others to pursue their initiatives. It also shows that you're willing to address matters that need attention and work with others toward solutions.

4. Acknowledge Missteps Openly

As I mentioned in my article about learning from mistakes, it's inevitable that errors will occur. In an environment where people feel like they need to cover up their missteps or make excuses, it can be difficult to have real learning take place. As a leader, you can show that when you make mistakes, you admit them and address them head on.


5. Give Others a Chance to Grow

It may seem natural to direct meetings as a leader, and have others listen to your agenda. However, I've found that letting those with junior positions participate as well can be helpful for their own growth. It lets them see that you value their insight, and it also gives them a chance to research and have front line experience.

6. Keep a Team Mentality

When you're overseeing a group, it's important to keep the focus on the team and not yourself. During meetings and projects, you can make an effort to give credit where it is due. I also like to speak in terms of "we" as opposed to "I" during group discussions.

While it may be easy to think about leading by example, it's not always simple to carry out. If you're in a leadership position, you might start by reflecting on your own style. Then look for actions you can take that set the tone for the team. When looking to move into a leadership role, a good starting place is often to jump in and carry out tasks that will help the team or company move toward an objective. You might also ask what else you can do. There could be mistakes along the way, but as long as you learn from them, you can grow both individually and as a team. By keeping a collective mindset, the accomplishments can be credited to your entire team.



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