



RHODE ISLAND SURF 'n' TURF

GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

2018 RIGCSA Scholarship Recipients



Scholarship recipients Erin Tvenstrup, Adam Kroian and Megan Lucia pictured with S&R Committee Chairman Mark Richard, CGCS



Hans Bengtson Erika Bengtson



Christopher Bresnahan

The Rhode Island Golf Course Superintendents Association awarded \$20,000 in scholarships for the year 2018 to the following students. Each student received a scholarship of \$2,000.00.

RIGCSA Scholarship Recipients:

Erika Bengtson	Johnson & Wales University
Hans Bengtson	Johnson & Wales University
Christopher Bresnahan	University of Vermont
Elizabeth Coty	Eastern Connecticut State University
Adam Kroian	University of Rhode Island
Megan Lucia	Roger Williams University
Jack Santoro	Fairfield University
Erin Tvenstrup	Community College of Rhode Island
Elizabeth Varkonyi	University of Rhode Island



Erica Chase



Elizabeth Coty

Ryan Reynolds Legacy Scholarship

Erica Chase UMass Dartmouth

The C. Richard Skogley Memorial Scholarship will be awarded later in the year to a student at the University of Rhode Island.

Save the date for the 36th Annual Scholarship and Research Tournament on October 1, 2018 at Warwick Country Club with Patrick Meehan as our host.



Jack Santoro



Elizabeth Varkonyi

RIGCSA

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President's Message

I hope everyone is enjoying the winter and spending time with the people most important to them. That being said, the mild weather we had earlier was a good opportunity to get a jump on some projects around the course and get the clubs out of the closet. Unfortunately, that weather did not last and winter seems to be here for a while longer. A wise man once said "never belittle a ball in the middle."

I am honored to be president of the RIGCSA and look forward to working with the members and the board of directors. I also want to thank the three presidents that were in office during my time on the board, Drew Cummins, Bill Coulter and Mike Whitehead. Their leadership, advice and friendship means a lot to me.

I would like to thank Jim Ritorto and the staff at The Lake of Isles Golf Club for hosting the annual meeting. This was a great venue and the food was fantastic.

The board of directors has decided not to have a business meeting in the month of April. We did want to compete with the Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation golf tournament being hosted by Mike Dachowski at Shelter Harbor Golf Club on Monday April 23rd. I encourage all of our members to support this very important event at an incredible venue. Note to you: If you have not played here yet, this is a not to miss event.

Chris Coen

RIGCSA President

Annual Meeting – January 16, 2018 – Lake of Isles



Annual Meeting – January 16, 2018 – Lake of Isles



Catching Up With Don Silven By Michelle Maltais



“Retirement is fun, but growing old is not,” those are the words uttered by Don Silven this week when I called him in Florida to see how life was treating him. “Retirement is not what you think, it’s tough for an individual to leave what they’ve been doing all their life. I struggled with it at first, I couldn’t sit still and I’m up at 4:30am everyday.”

Don told me that slowly he has learned to embrace retirement and enjoys doing what he wants to do when he wants to do it. “The best feeling is knowing you have no one to answer to, and you can spend your time doing whatever it is that you like doing.”

Don assured me that he is no couch potato and in fact sometimes he feels busier now than he ever was. The majority of his year is spent in Melbourne, Florida where he purchased a 4 bedroom villa in 2010. His days consist of golfing, going to the beach, tanning, calling all his friends who are shoveling snow up north and boasting about the Florida sunshine, and 80 degree weather. He fills the remainder of his social calendar by going to dinner with friends (old and new) who have become snowbirds on the Florida scene. During the summer months (and Christmas Holidays) you can find him in North Kingston, RI. He’s in a golf league at Fenner Hill Golf Club, and he and his wife Carol of 57 years are also members of Galilee Beach Club. They enjoy Rhode Island immensely because they get to spend time with family while they are here. Don told me his wife Carol is an excellent cook. Gatherings at their family home consist of big Italian meals where she lovingly prepares dinner for their 4 children, 6 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren. “We love spending time with the kids and their families while we are here. We miss them while we are down south, I urge everyone to spend time with their family and enjoy them, it’s one of life’s greatest treasures.”

A Cranston native, Don lived in Warwick for 27 years and moved to North Kingston in 1995. “I didn’t originally start out in the golf industry,” he told me, “I started in excavating, and even had my own company for a short while.” Don went on to explain, “Breaking into the construction scene in RI in the 1960’s was difficult. The state was building I 95 during that time and they needed people to run equipment and excavators. The only problem was everyone and everything was unionized and if you weren’t part of the union it was hard to get a job. I wasn’t in the union and being married I needed to take any job I could. In 1969 I agreed to build and do a grow-in of a golf course in Pennsylvania.” Two years and 27 holes later Don moved back to RI and landed a job installing an irrigation system for his

brother Bruce who was superintendent of Warwick CC at the time. After that, excavating jobs were scarce and Don interviewed for a position at Wannamoisett CC. “They were looking for a superintendent, Malcolm Wendell (Neil Wendell’s father) was leaving and the job came open.” The rest as they say is history. After working a little more than a decade at Wannamoisett CC, Don went on to become the superintendent at Warwick CC from 1983 and hold that title until his retirement in January of 2000. Don said the highlight of his career at Warwick was the extensive restoration of the entire course back to the original Donald Ross design. “It was great to utilize my passions for excavating and golf and use them simultaneously.”

In his early retirement he worked part time at Allens Seed Store helping organize the parts department and also did some consulting as a headhunter looking to fill vacancies for new golf courses in the industry. Don has served on the RIGCSA board and was president of the RIGCSA in 1975. He is also one of the original members of the S&R Committee. Don said the challenges that our organization faces today are the same ones they struggled with when he was president. “Poor attendance has always been an issue,” he said, “we tried everything to improve turnout. Over the years I’ve noticed that less people want to get involved.” He attributes his longevity and his success in the industry to surrounding himself with good people. “Make sure your workers want to be there, and take care of them like you would take care of a family member.”

I asked Don if he could share any words of wisdom from all his years in the industry. He said, “Pay attention to your health, it’s the one thing we all take for granted and we pay the price for neglecting it later in life.” For the most part Don told me he’s been healthy. Last May he underwent a shoulder replacement for a nagging injury he’s has most of his life and he was also hospitalized for 8 weeks in 2016 for a spinal infection. Don said his focus these days is taking care of himself and his health so he can enjoy living a full life surrounded by family and friends.



In case you missed the information coming out of GIS in San Antonio, below are some excerpts from GCSAA communications detailing some of the highlights. You will find that many of those highlights have a Northeast region spin!

Your 2018 GCSAA Board of Directors:

Darren J. Davis, the golf course superintendent at Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, Fla., has been elected to a one-year term as president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) at the association's annual meeting Feb. 8, held in conjunction with the Golf Industry Show in San Antonio.

Davis, a certified golf course superintendent (CGCS), served as vice president of the association in 2017 and has been a member of the association's board of directors since 2012. A 28-year member of GCSAA, Davis is a past president of the Everglades GCSA and a past president of the Florida GCSA and Florida Turfgrass Association. He is currently a director with the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation. In 2004, the FGCSA honored him with its Distinguished Service Award, and in 2011 the FTGA presented Davis with the Wreath of Grass - the association's highest award.

Other elected officers were Rafael Barajas, CGCS and director of golf course operations at Boca Grove Plantation in Boca Raton, Fla., as vice president, and John R. Fulling Jr., CGCS and grounds and facilities manager at Kalamazoo (Mich.) Country Club, as secretary/treasurer.

Board members Kevin P. Breen, CGCS and golf course superintendent at La Rinconada Country Club in Los Gatos, Calif., and Kevin P. Sunderman, director of grounds at Isla Del Sol Yacht and Country Club in St. Petersburg, Fla., were elected to serve again. While T.A. Barker, CGCS and superintendent at Fore Lakes Golf Course in Taylorsville, Utah; and Jeff L. White, CGCS and superintendent at Indian Hills Country Club in Prairie Village, Kan., were newly elected to the board.

In addition, delegates voted to approve 11 changes to the association's bylaws.

In Other News:

The First Green Foundation (First Green) and Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) have signed a memorandum of understanding that will bring First Green under the umbrella of the GCSAA's philanthropic organization, the Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG). The

agreement was announced at the 2018 Golf Industry Show in San Antonio.

First Green, an innovative education outreach program using golf courses as hands-on environmental learning labs, has worked with golf course superintendents extensively for more than 20 years. Superintendents form the backbone of First Green initiatives, hosting STEM-focused field trips for students grades five and up. First Green and GCSAA field staff representatives have collaborated to support golf courses and train superintendents, conducting field trips and instruction at GCSAA's affiliated chapters. In addition, First Green has held well-received workshops at the Golf Industry Show for several years.

Northeast Region Members Recognized:

Frank Rossi, Ph.D., associate professor at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y., and one of the world's leading experts on turfgrass science, has been selected to receive the 2018 President's Award for Environmental Stewardship by the board of directors of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

The GCSAA President's Award for Environmental Stewardship was established in 1991 to recognize "an exceptional environmental contribution to the game of golf; a contribution that further exemplifies the golf course superintendent's image as a steward of the land."

In 2014, Rossi was instrumental in the development of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for New York State Golf Courses. The project was initiated in 2012 by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association, and Rossi served as the lead author of the guidelines. Nearly two decades earlier, while working as a turfgrass environmental specialist at Michigan State University, he was key to the creation of the Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program, which was officially launched in 1998.

Chris Carson, the golf course superintendent at Echo Lake Country Club in Westfield, N.J., has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 Leo Feser Award from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). The award is presented annually to the author of the best superintendent-written article published in *Golf Course Management*, the association's flagship publication, during the previous year.

Carson's selection makes him the first three-time winner of the Leo Feser Award in the 40 years that GCSAA has presented it as an annual honor. Carson previously won in 2000 and 2007. The only other repeat winner of the Feser is Darren Davis, CGCS, from Olde Florida Golf Club in Naples, Fla., who won the award in 1997 and 2002.

Carson, a 32-year GCSAA member, authored the story “8 essential budgeting principles for superintendents,” which was published in the October 2016 issue of GCM. The story offered readers time-tested tips on making successful budget requests and communicating with golf facility decisions-makers about how those requests will benefit the facility’s playing surfaces and, ultimately, its bottom line.

“I wrote the article on the budgeting principles that have been successful for me over the years — the same principles I teach at Rutgers — as a way of helping my peers grow professionally,” Carson said. “I’ve always enjoyed writing and the business aspects of our jobs, and putting my thoughts and ideas into print is one of the ways I try to give back to our profession.

Twenty members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) were chosen for the 2018 Melrose Leadership Academy, which included a trip to the Golf Industry Show, Feb. 3-8 in San Antonio.

Academy members are chosen through an application process based on financial need, volunteerism and a drive to advance their careers. The new class participated in networking and leadership activities, as well as attended a variety of education seminars.

- Albert Choiniere of Essex (Vt.) Country Club.
- David F. D’Andrea of Sable Oaks Golf Club in South Portland, Maine.
- Andrew Fries, CGCS, of HB Brownson Country Club in Shelton, Conn.
- John Gabbeitt of Owl’s Nest Golf Club in Campton, N.H.
- Ryan Green, CGCS, of Crystal Lake Golf Club in Haverhill, Mass.
- David W. Johnson of Wianno Club in Osterville, Mass.
- Gregory Klem, CGCS, of Monroe County Golf Courses in Rochester, N.Y.
- Manuel ‘Joe’ Oliveira of Green Valley Country Club in Portsmouth, R.I.
- Dennis Petruzzelli, CGCS, of Billy Casper Golf in Danbury, Conn.
- James J. Ritorto of Lake of Isles Golf Club and Resort in North Stonington, Conn.
- Brian Smoot of Crosswinds Golf Club in Plymouth, Mass.

Twelve assistant superintendent members of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) were chosen for the first class of the EXCEL Leadership Program, which is funded by Nufarm and administered by GCSAA’s philanthropic

organization, the Environmental Institute for Golf.

EXCEL offers leadership training for personal, career and community/industry stewardship exclusively for assistant superintendents. The name EXCEL represents the education, cross training, community, encouragement and leadership development that the program provides.

- Zachary Fleegeer of Stowe Mountain Club in Stowe, Vt.
- Stephen Hicks of Brantford Golf & Country Club in Brantford, Ontario, Canada

Again, if I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Kevin Doyle
GCSAA Field Staff
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Navigating through the RIGCSA Website

Below are instructions on how to login and access your membership information through the website at www.rigcsa.org.

**Please use the email address that you receive RIGCSA information. The website will not recognize you as a member if you use a different email address. Please try to use the same email when you login or register for events.*

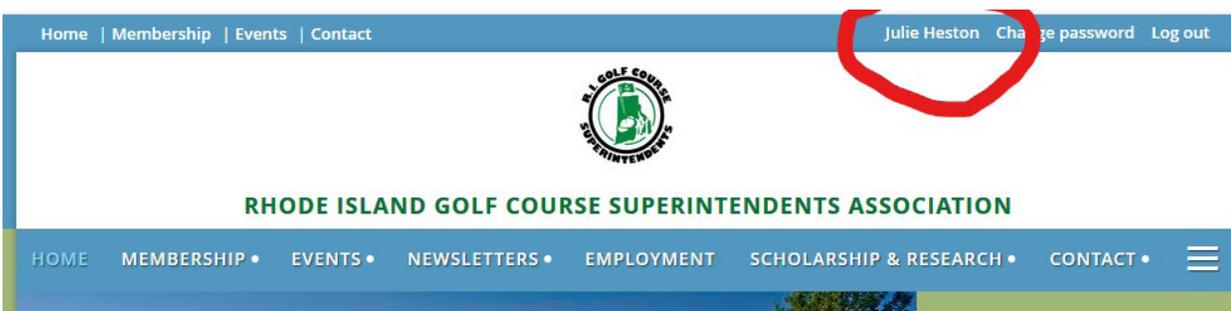
1. Click login button at top right corner



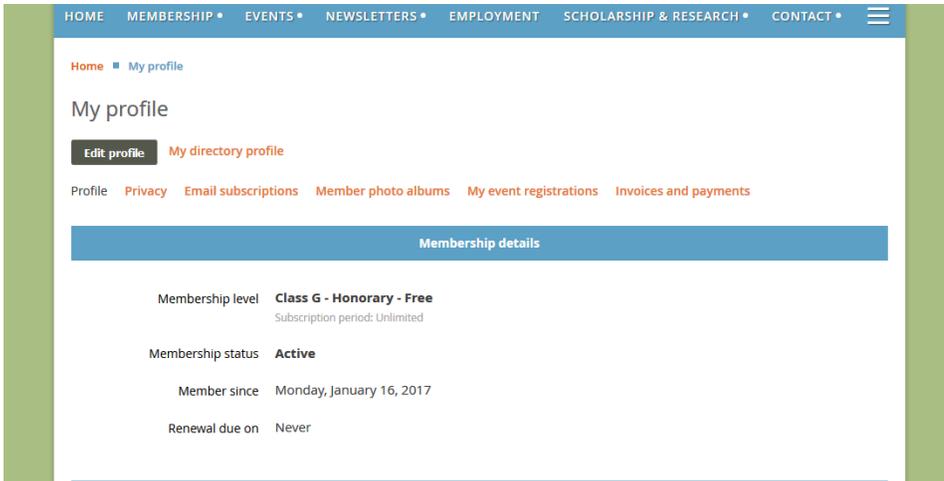
2. Enter your email address and password. If you don't have a password then click on "forgot password" and a generic password will get emailed to you. Once you enter that password, you can always change it to something you will remember.

A screenshot of the login form. The title is 'Please log in to continue'. Below the title, it says 'Please login to continue to the page you have requested.' There are two input fields: 'Email' and 'Password'. Below the password field is a checkbox labeled 'Remember me'. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Log in' and 'Forgot password'.

3. Once logged in, click on your name in top right corner. This will bring you to your profile or member information which you can choose to edit.



- Once on your profile screen, you can edit profile, view your directory information, update your email subscriptions, add photos, look at event registrations, invoices and payments made.



- If you scroll down through your profile information you can also add a logo or photo to your profile for other members to see when they search your name or view the online directory.

Any questions, please feel free to contact Julie Heston at (401) 934-7660 or admin@gcsacc.org



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RIGCSA Member News

Welcome New Members:

Josh Beland,
Superintendent, Winnapaug Country Club

Michael Hughes,
Superintendent, Whitinsville Golf Club

Sunshine:

Our condolences are extended to **Paul Golden** and family on the passing of his son Christopher on March 6, 2018.

Wishing a speedy recover to **Pat Hogan** of Sodco on his recent surgery.

Well wishes go out for continued recovery to **Bill Sansone**, superintendent at Wellesley Country Club, on his recent accident.

Directory Updates:

Read Custom Soils is pleased to announce that **Ed Downing** has accepted a position with our company. Ed can be reached at 508-440-1833.

Bill Rockwell has new contact information
Company: Finch Services, Inc./John Deere Golf
New Cell: 508-360-1778
New email: wrockwell@finchinc.com

RIGCSA 2018 Board of Directors

Elected at the RIGCSA Annual Meeting on January 16, 2018

President – **Christopher Coen**

Vice President – **James Ritorto**

Treasurer – **Dean Chase**

Secretary – **Scott Gabrielson, CGCS**

Director – **Patrick Hogan** (2 years)

Director – **John Lombardi** (1 year)

Past President- **Andrew Cummins**

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