



## Message from the President

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Greetings!

I had anticipated on sending this message in late January after conference. Times got ahead of me and here we are in April amid a pandemic that is crippling our economy and stripped our normalcy. We've lost our connection with each other. Some of us are working to keep our fields maintained on reduced staffing models. Some were forced to leave their fields and facilities and shelter in place. Some of us have been furloughed or even laid off. Yet some fields are still be used against shelter in place guidelines. This is survivable. We will survive. This is a time to overprotect but not overreact. Most importantly it is a time to practice some compassion and take care of each other.

Let's look at 2019 and how we did in meeting our goals:

First and foremost, we continue to garner interest from members wanting to serve the chapter, and we hit an all-time high in membership numbers in 2019 with 162 members. That in itself is a success, although we did fall short on our goals we made as a group for 2019.

•**5 Educational Events.** We only hosted 3. Hunter Industries hosted a fantastic Water Conservation Event in March, the City of San Marcos hosted a great event in June and University of San Diego hosted an informative Pest Management Event with 4 CEUs in December.

We also were able to relocate our Scholarship Golf Tourney to Mt. Woodson Golf Club in September which was a welcome change. We raised enough funds to send 3 members to West Palm Beach, FL all expenses paid for the STMA Conference. Airfare and lodging to West Palm Beach, FL is not cheap- we we're very pleased with our fundraising at the tourney. Thank you!

We had planned on putting together 2 Summer "Field Days" at locations in San Diego County, but we're only able to secure 1 field day in San Marcos. We were looking forward to a MiLB joint event with GLAB STMA at the Lake Elsinore Storm, but it fell through. We learned that venues are difficult to secure and getting commitment to hosting us well in advance is even more difficult. As you all know, schedules change quickly.

•**Update of Website.** We looked into a full overhaul of the website to fulfill our goal of a more robust, modern and functional platform. After a lengthy and detailed process to find the right vendor to change it and maintain it, the cost was too expensive. We currently have someone maintaining our website, so we're going to explore doing what we can do with what we have to save costs.

•**Renewal of Presence on Social Media.** SoCal STMA is back on social media, but our presence needs improvement. Please follow us on Twitter (@STMASoCal), Facebook (Southern California Sports Turf Managers Association), and Instagram (socialstma).

Below is our plan for 2020:

**Educational Events.** Due to COVID-19, we are on a holding pattern with events this year. We plan on having events at local venues and hosts will present on their operation to attendees. As of now we're hoping to host a Summer Field Day and our Pesticide Event. The locations are to be determined. We appreciate our members volunteering to host us last year and hope to visit more local facilities this year.

**Scholarship Golf Tourney.** We're working to return in the fall to Mt. Woodson Golf Club as normally scheduled. Playing conditions were great there and they treated us well! Let's hope COVID-19 allows us to.

**Digital Platform.** We will work to update and improve functionality of our website and increase our presence on social media. We are aware of the need for the website to serve as a tool for membership to register for events.

My vision for the chapter remains the same: **To keep our members connected and provide resources to help them deliver safe and high-quality athletic surfaces.** I am hoping the Board of Directors and I can deliver on that vision for you this unprecedented year. Our profession and this business often makes us weary and tired. Our goal is to create SoCal STMA experiences to re-energize, get the passion back, make new connections and return from our times together smarter than you arrived.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email (jkoss@sdsu.edu) with any questions, concerns, or suggestions how to better serve you. Thanks for all you do to support SoCal STMA and to positively represent the sports turf industry here in Southern California. Take care of yourselves and your family, and wash your hands!



Joshua Koss, CSFM