



## 2023 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/interactyx.com)
- 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](mailto: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](http://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 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 and 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.