

For more information contact: Dave Pease, Executive Secretary, Alumni Turf Group alumniturfgroup@gmail.com

More information about the Alumni Turf Group available at www.alumniturfgroup.com

Alumni Turf Group to Support University of Massachusetts' New Professor of Urban Landscapes

The University of Massachusetts Turf Program announced that Evan Mascitti, Ph.D. has joined the UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture faculty in a new position entitled Urban Managed Landscapes. Evan comes with a strong academic background with M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Penn State that is complimented by significant experience in the sports turf industry. In his most recent position, at Biocore LLC, he researched surface testing as it relates to athlete injury and performance.

The Alumni Turf Group voted unanimously to give monetary support to Dr. Mascitti's start up package at the University. This financial support will allow him to immediately fund research projects in what Mascitti calls four overlapping buckets that include applied turf agronomy, sustainable urban green spaces, sports field safety and playability, and engineered soils. These areas of research will make up the components of an Urban Landscape Program.

"This continues the longstanding practice by ATG of using every dollar raised directly for turfgrass research, logistics, and student recruitment. To date, this brings the total philanthropic effort, aided by matching funds, to just under \$1.6 million to the Turfgrass Program at the University," said ATG Executive Director Dave Pease, "This is a direct benefit to those of us in the industry as it assists us in producing the highest quality turfgrass conditions."

Mascitti will serve as the primary instructor for the Introduction to Turfgrass Management course and develop additional courses for turf and horticulture students in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture. His research program will broadly address current issues relevant to urban landscapes, including sustainable management of lawns, golf courses, sports fields, and other green spaces. This research will serve as the foundation for Extension and outreach activities to New England stakeholders and will include establishment of trials at the Joseph Troll Turf Research Center.

Mascitti said of his goals at UMass, "I plan to conduct research that solves real-world turf challenges while uncovering the science behind them. This will serve not only sports turf, but also golf, lawns, and sustainable urban landscapes."

"The ATG Board was involved with the effort to hire for this position and was pleased when UMass had decided to go with Evan", said ATG President Bob Ruszala, "his energy and experience coupled with this new position at UMass will add a new dimension to the turf program. We think that this added element will support all the turf specialties taught at UMass while supporting the growth of Urban Landscape careers."

The Alumni Turf Group (ATG), formed in 2005, is a 501c3 organization made up of turf professionals who are graduates of the Stockbridge School of Agriculture and the University of Massachusetts. Through fundraising, ATG hopes to further research and education, promote UMass alumni in the turf management profession, and instill pride and commitment in the turf programs at the University of Massachusetts.

Additional information for this event, membership applications, and ATG information are available online at www.alumniturfgroup.com.