

Clarke, Deines, Kothe & Phillips receive NTA awards at 2020 Turf Conference January 17, 2020

The 2020 Nebraska Turfgrass Association Turf Conference was once again a great success. We enjoyed a packed house with great sessions in both turf and landscape management, a popular tradeshow with great raffle prizes from our sponsors, and the honor of presenting awards to Dr. Bruce Clarke, Jerry Deines, Ron Kothe and outgoing NTA president Steve Phillips.

Dr. Bruce Clarke, Professor and Extension Specialist at Rutgers University received the NTA Presidential Award. This award is given to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the turfgrass industry in Nebraska, the nation, or both. His research lab has produced several graduate students that have had a significant positive impact in turfgrass pathology. His research with *Anthracnose* is just one of these impactful areas of study. He has received a plethora of significant recognitions including the USGA Green Section Award from the United States Golf Association (USGA) in recognition of distinguished service to golf through work with turfgrass.



The NTA Distinguished Service Award is given to an individual who has made significant contributions to the turfgrass industry in Nebraska through service and support to the NTA and the ideals it represents. The NTA Board of Directors award two of these awards in 2020. **Jerry Deines** originally covered Nebraska as an equipment salesman for Midwest Turf and Irrigation. He was then promoted to the Sales Manager's position where he remained until his recent retirement. Jerry was an outspoken and avid supporter of the industry in Nebraska and the region.

The other recipient of the Distinguished Service Award was **Ron Kothe**. After college, Ron took over as head Superintendent at Southern Hills, a 9-hole stockholder owned facility with approximately 120 members. Starting in 1989 Ron oversaw construction of an additional nine holes which he helped design. With help and advice from other NTA members, Ron was able to build nine additional holes including irrigation with a \$150,000 budget. With Ron's vision and continued construction projects, grew to support a membership of 450 by 2005. Ron has been a member of the NTA for over 30 years and counts fellow NTA members among his closest friends.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension education programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.



Steve Phillips, UNL Campus Recreation, was also recognized for his service to the NTA as he served as the 2019 President of the Board of Directors. We thank Steve for his support of NTA and look forward to his continued guidance as he continues to serve on the Board of Directors.

We thank all of these awardees for their contributions to the Nebraska Turfgrass Industry. We also thank all the conference attendees, vendors, sponsors and speakers for contributing to another successful turfgrass conference. The support of everyone involved will help the UNL turfgrass program continue to serve our industry with research and Extension programing.

NTA Board of Directors and UNL Turfgrass Program, turf@unl.edu