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Sports Turf Managers Association, Minor League Baseball Announce 2016 'Sports Turf Manager of the Year Awards' Sponsored by STMA and John Deere

Four Groundskeepers to be Honored at Winter Meetings in National Harbor December 5

(LAWRENCE, Kan.) – [Sports Turf Managers Association](http://SportsTurfManagersAssociation.org) (STMA) – the professional organization for 2,600 men and women who manage sports fields worldwide who are critical to the safety of athletes and coaches – and Minor League Baseball (MiLB) today announced the 2016 “Sports Turf Manager of the Year Awards” sponsored by STMA and John Deere.

Since 2000, STMA and MiLB have honored members who manage fields in Triple-A, Double-A, Single-A and Short Season or Rookie divisions. This year, one of the four honorees is a multi-year winner, exemplifying a commitment to excellence and an unwavering dedication to maintaining world-class professional baseball playing surfaces.

Award winners include:

- Triple-A – Casey Griffin, Albuquerque Isotopes (Albuquerque, N.M.)
- Double-A – Brock Phipps, Springfield Cardinals (Springfield, Mo.)
- Single-A – Greg Burgess, Greenville Drive (Greenville, S.C.)
- Short Season or Rookie – Matt Neri, State College Spikes (State College, Pa.)

“I want to acknowledge the safe and beautiful playing surfaces that all of our minor league members produce each year,” says Kim Heck, CAE, CEO of STMA. “The competition was fierce and the quality of the natural grass playing surfaces produced by these four award winners is stunning.”

Phipps is being honored for the fifth time in his career and fourth consecutively (2008, 2013, 2014, 2015). Burgess is a second-time winner (2008), while Griffin and Neri are first-time winners, joining an elite class of sports turf managers. Additionally, Griffin was the inaugural winner of STMA's "Stars and Stripes" contest in July.

Winners are selected via a 16-member awards committee, compiled by STMA. Each nominee is independently scored on cultural practices, game day routine, resource utilization, staff management and the groundskeeper's involvement and support of the sports turf industry.

STMA will present awards to recipients at the annual Major League Baseball Winter Meetings awards luncheon in National Harbor, Md. on December 5.

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More information: 800.323.3875.

About STMA

STMA is the not-for-profit, professional association for men and women who manage sports fields worldwide. Since 1981, the association and its 34 local chapters have been providing education, information and sharing practical knowledge in the art and science of sports field management. Its more than 2,600 members oversee sports fields and facilities at schools, colleges and universities, parks and recreational facilities, and professional sports stadiums.

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