



Voting Details

- ✓ *Voting is open November 6 - November 15, 2025 for all VSFMA Chapter Category 1-6 Members in good standing*
- ✓ *The New Executive Board will be introduced at Symposium on December 4th*
- ✓ <https://form.jotform.com/243087336446057>

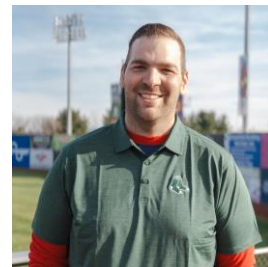
2025-2026 Executive Board Candidates

President

Name: Will Cole

Job Title: Director of Field Operations

Employer: Salem Red Sox



Will is from Greensboro, North Carolina but grew up in the Tidewater region of Virginia. He now lives in Roanoke with his wife Amy and their three children: Landon, Emma, and Ryleigh. Will is a huge fan of Chelsea FC and the US National Soccer teams. He is also a marathon runner and has traveled along the east coast to run including the 2022 New York City Marathon. Will became the first sports turf manager in 2023 to win back-to-back Virginia Sports Field Managers Field of the Year in the Parks and Professional categories. He has past sports turf experience across the state of Virginia in university, K-12, and Parks & Recreation levels. Will is currently on this 3rd season with the Salem Red Sox (Single A for the Boston Red Sox) as the Director of Field Operations.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I want to join the VSFMA BOD because of the positive impact this organization has made on the sport field managers in the state of Virginia. I would love to be a part of the BOD to continue the positive impact that the organization has within the state and continue to grow the chapter for future sports field managers.

Treasurer

Name: Derik Cataldi

Job Title: District Sales Representative

Employer: Landscape Supply



Derik Cataldi is from Gordonsville, VA and is a graduate of Virginia Tech ('09 and '13). Derik has a BS in Crop and Soil Environmental Science with an emphasis on Turfgrass Management and a MS in Crop and Soil Environmental Science with his thesis focusing on producing commercially acceptable sod using biosolids.

After graduating Derik worked for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Urban Nutrient Management Program. For 4 years he worked with golf course superintendents, sports turf managers, lawn care operators and Virginia Tech Extension volunteer groups to actively create, review, approve and track the implementation of certified Virginia nutrient management plans.

Derik joined Landscape Supply in early 2017 as the Assistant Branch Manager for the Charlottesville location. He worked with lawn care operators, sports field managers, construction companies and homeowners at the service counter to help match them with solutions to fit their needs. He is now a District Sales Representative serving customers along the I-95 corridor from Fredericksburg south to Dinwiddie County and I-64 west to the Shenandoah Valley. Derik focuses on working with sports turf managers and lawn care operators, helping to not only find them solutions for their facilities and businesses, but also helping with pesticide and certified fertilizer recertification.

Derik enjoys playing golf, maintaining the lawn and helping with his wife's cut flower business.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

The VSFMA fulfills a critical role of providing networking opportunities and education to those who manage sports fields. I am a firm believer that our learning is never really finished and look forward to being a part of the BOD to continue to offer these opportunities.

Secretary

Name: Trae Brown

Job Title: Sales Representative

Employer: Genesis Turfgrass



I began my career in the green industry back in 2007, starting with golf course construction and shortly after as an Assistant Superintendent. By 2011, I redirected my focus towards parks and recreation management, successfully overseeing sports fields and facilities across three local governments in Northern Virginia, most recently with Loudoun County. As of August 2024, I am excited to bring my skills to my new role as a sales representative for Genesis Turfgrass. I currently live in Front Royal, Virginia with my wife and our 5 children.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

My vision for VSFMA is to enhance our reputation as the leading authority on sports field and facility management in Virginia. Although we are an established organization, there is still work to be done to be recognized as a group of professionals and experts. We need to better educate our members on how to raise awareness within their communities and organizations, as well as emphasize the importance of the roles they play. Developing partnerships with like-minded industry organizations will be crucial in spreading our message. In a time of more stringent regulations, we must communicate the benefits that our members and fields provide to improve the health of our athletes and the environment. By presenting a relatable and cohesive message, we can expand our influence within the industry and among decision-makers in our communities and at the state level. Additionally, we should promote and market our work to generate interest in the future of our industry. There is significant potential for expansion and opportunities to grow our association. This growth would lead to increased involvement across all membership classifications and encourage more of our current members to become actively engaged.

College/University Director

Name: John Whitty

Job Title: Sports Turf Supervisor

Employer: University of Richmond



Hello, my name is John Whitty. I'm a 2015 graduate from the Virginia Tech Landscape/Turf Management program. I've been working in this industry since I was in high school. I ran my own landscape business throughout my high school years, I was in the golf course maintenance industry for a while, and have now be managing collegiate level athletic fields for the last five years. Turfgrass is my passion and I love this industry.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I want to continue to be on the VSFMA BOD as it has helped me in my career. I've gotten to know so many people in this industry. Whenever I need to pick someone's brain about something there's plenty of people I know who are only a phone call away. Another reason I would like to continue on the VSFMA BOD is because I feel that I'm just now finally understanding everything that goes on with the board and everything we do to try and promote and keep this industry alive. I believe if I can continue on with the BOD I will have more years of experience on the board to provide more input on ways we could improve as a board and make our industry better.

Commercial Director

Name: Chad Kropff

Job Title: President/Co-Owner, Bulldog Field Equipment

Employer: Bulldog Field Equipment



Chad Kropff, owner of Bulldog Field Equipment for 13 years, brings over 40 years of expertise in sports field management. His career spans prestigious locations including the Atlanta Braves and Montreal Expos Spring Training sites, Walt Disney World Sports Complex in Florida, Anheuser Bush Baseball City Spring Training Site with the Kansas City Royals, Virginia Tech Recreational Sports, and various roles in parks and recreation departments across Virginia.

During this time, Chad also served as an independent contractor for Brickman Turf Services. Chad contributed to international events like the Baseball World Classics and MLB special events in Amsterdam, Australia, Italy, San Juan Puerto Rico, Colombia, and Panama. In 2011, alongside his wife Cathy, Chad founded Bulldog Field Equipment LLC. Their innovative spirit led to the invention of a patented new pitching rubber and double-sided home plate. Today, their company offers a range of field equipment, custom-designed cleat cleaners, and bases, catering to the needs of sports facilities nationwide.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I am eager to join the VSFMA Board of Directors to leverage my extensive experience in both field management and sales to advance the sports field industry. With a solid background supervising employees and mentoring students, I am passionate about sharing my insights on field-related issues.

I have hands-on experience setting up and running field events, collaborating with many professionals in SFMA, and coordinating activities at various levels, from spring training to local parks and recreation. While I initially didn't see myself as a salesman, I have embraced this role through daily sales calls, taking orders, and interacting customers who have with a wide range of sports field management experience.

I believe that my unique blend of practical experience and industry knowledge positions me well to contribute to the organization's growth. I am enthusiastic about bringing fresh ideas to the table, aiming to propel the VSFMA in a positive direction. By joining the board, I hope to play a pivotal role in enhancing the organization's impact and furthering its mission within the sports field community.

Name: Thomas (TJ) Skirsky

Job Title: Outside Sales Representative

Employer: Advanced Turf Solutions



I'm TJ Skirsky, I've been in the industry since 2012. I joined ATS in 2020 after 5 years of being a branch manager at Site One and a warehouse manager at Helena Chemical before that. I am a father of 3 and stepfather of 2. I enjoy music, play drums, guitar, bass, and have a voice made to play drums! I have been to over hundreds of various music shows and have seen plenty of different artists. Outside of work and music, you can find me camping or boating. One thing on my bucket list that I have accomplished, was to travel across the country in my camper. I hope to do it again soon, as there is so much more to see!

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

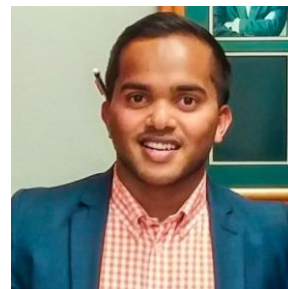
I would like to join the VSFMA to expand my knowledge within the industry. I am currently the membership chair for the VTC and look to build on that experience with our like minded people in other organizations. I have attended a couple of your events now, and I'm always very impressed on how well they are presented, and attended. I enjoy putting together and attending our industry's events, trade shows, and educational meetings. It is always great to talk to people, learn something new, hear other people's struggles and celebrate their successes.

Education/Extension Director

Name: Dan Sandor, PhD

Job Title: Assistant Professor of Turfgrass Science

Employer: Virginia Tech



Dan Sandor, PhD is an assistant professor of turfgrass at Virginia Tech. He holds a 100% teaching appointment as he leads all undergraduate coursework, chairs undergraduate research, advises & mentors students, and serves as the faculty advisor for the Virginia Tech Turfgrass Club. Dr. Sandor directs multiple recruiting initiatives of prospective VT Turf students and has already built and continues developing strong connections with high school agriculture and green-industry programs across the Commonwealth. He is also engaged in multiple turfgrass research, extension, and outreach-education efforts and has served as the education chair of the Virginia Sports Field Management Association since Spring 2021. Dr. Sandor earned his PhD from the Univ. of Arkansas turfgrass science program in 2018; he served as a postdoctoral associate with the Univ. of Minnesota turfgrass science program for 18 months, prior to starting at Virginia Tech in the Fall of 2019.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I have enjoyed and continue to enjoy my role as VSFMA education chair and connecting VSFMA members with professional and scientific experts through the annual VSFMA Symposium and through the annual pesticide-recertification webinar. One of the many benefits of being a VSFMA member are these continued opportunities for growth; while much of this growth comes from actual “doing” of on-the-job labor requirements and responsibilities, and from communicating (i.e., fellowship and field-day events with other VSFMA members), a portion of these growth opportunities also comes from learning new things from those aforementioned experts who teach, train, and deliver the latest applied research findings and/or industry-leading

BMPs that empower VSFMA members to enhance their job skills, and equip them with fiscally-sound strategies and environmentally-sustainable solutions for their field(s), budgets, athletes, and employers. As VSFMA members deal more and more with labor challenges & economic constraints, and face many unknown challenges, that largely include the reduction of many cultural and chemical inputs, it is imperative that we continue to invest in and maximize these educational opportunities, so VSFMA members are fully prepared for what lies ahead in the 21st century... and beyond!

Parks/Recreation Director

Name: Todd Campbell

Job Title: Athletic Field Turf Manager

Employer: Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation



Born and raised in upstate New York, lover of the outdoors, father to 1 human and 2 dogs, attending SUNY Cobleskill receiving a degree in Plant Science in 2008. Ventured to Baltimore to work for the Orioles in 2009 to then work the next 12 years for the University of Florida where I decided to move closer to my routes to take a stab at the parks and rec side of the industry.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

Only being in Virginia for two years I want to join the VSFMA BOD to grow professionally, grow my network, and try promoting the good of turfgrass management throughout the state of Virginia at every level.

Name: Jason Ferrell

Job Title: Division Director of Parks Maintenance

Employer: City of Danville



My career within the green industry has spanned nearly 25 years with experiences on golf courses, commercial landscaping, and sports turf management. Being a 2008 graduate of Virginia Tech enabled me to continue pursuing a career in turfgrass management with a broader understanding of all aspects of growing turf. Initially, after graduating, I worked with a local commercial landscape company in South Boston, VA as the Turf Specialist that eventually led to me leading a full-time landscape maintenance crew. This was a pivotal time for me as many of the skills and techniques I use today were learned from this position. In 2012, my career took a different turn within the industry when I became the Sports Turf Manager for Averett University in Danville, VA. For nearly a decade, we worked to make the University's sports facilities the best in the conference and

were awarded the Pioneer Athletics Fields of Excellence award for 5 consecutive years. Later, in 2020, I became the Director of Grounds for the maintenance of all properties owned by the University. Finally, in April of 2022, I accepted my current role as the Division Director of Parks Maintenance for the City of Danville's Parks and Recreation department. This position allows me to continue developing my skills and helping staff better serve their community through the maintenance of 35 parks within the City of Danville.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

For me, joining the VSFMA BOD would further emphasize my commitment to the industry within the state of Virginia. I believe that sports turf managers play a crucial role to the success of athletes no matter the playing level, and having an organization such as the VSFMA to support the efforts of these individuals increases the likelihood of the success of the profession for years to come. Turf managers put in countless hours to perfect their craft for the only reason of wanting to give their athletes or citizens the best experience possible on their playing surfaces. We, as stewards of the land, enable kids and adults to have a place to play their beloved sports without worry of injury or harm. You never know if that next kid that comes up to bat or steps onto a playing field will be the next great superstar of their sport. This is why organizations like the VSFMA need committed individuals to serve as board members so we can keep to profession alive and relevant. A board that is in touch with the struggles that are occurring out in the field, help to better develop education and awareness to help its members be better at the profession. Turf managers often exist in a "thankless" space where people take for granted the managed sports facilities they play on. So having the VSFMA as a champion of the turf managers in the state will continue to shine the light on those who make outdoor sports possible.

K-12 Public/Private School Director

Name: Bryan Sheetz

Job Title: Turf/Landscape Teacher -Thomas Dale

High School

Employer: Chesterfield County Public Schools



I grew up playing baseball, but went to college to study music. After teaching music for 15 year, I started my own lawn care business on the side. I joined the Virginia Turfgrass Council and earned a Certified Fertilizer and commercial applicators license. After running my business for a few years and coaching at our local Little League, I quickly noticed how much work our recreation fields needed at that time. I began helping revitalize our fields and spent some time on our league's board. A few years later I had the opportunity to change course and teach landscaping and turf management at the high school level. We started a high school turf program with 26 students and over the last couple years we have grown to three teachers and 180 students. I have continued my studies with the Virginia Tech STEM program and I am an active member of our Virginia SFMA Chapter. I currently teach 5 sections of landscaping and turf management and oversee all of our school's athletic fields.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I truly think this is an amazing industry to be part of. When I first took this job at Thomas Dale, I had an unbelievable amount of people reach out to me showing their support. As a teacher, I feel that leadership is the

forefront of opportunity. I would like to help new people coming into this industry the same way I was supported. In return, I would be working alongside people that have more knowledge than myself, allowing me grow to a better teacher and field manager.

Professional Sports Facility Director

Name: Drew Norris

Job Title: Vice President / Head Groundskeeper

Employer: Richmond Kickers Pro Soccer /
Richmond Ivy Soccer Club



In 2025 I will be entering my 14th season working in grounds and my 5th with the Richmond Kickers. I oversee both the business and gameday operations of the club, as well as the grounds and field level experience for players and coaches. I've worked in the professional sports landscape, the PGA TOUR, Collegiate Athletics, and Parks and Recreation so I can bring a well-versed view to the table.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I'd like to return to the board in 2025 to continue to push forward initiatives to involve the younger generations into the sports turf world. I was offered the opportunity at 14 years old to learn the ropes of this business, and love passing that information forward to the next generation. I'd like to build off the work our current board has done and work to increase membership across all channels.

Name: James Petrella

Job Title: Director of Field Operations

Employer: Richmond Flying Squirrels



I am entering my 11th season in professional sports turf. I've done sports turf in various parts of the country from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Washington state. In my spare time I like to travel, hike, watch sports, and try out different breweries and wineries with my wife. Virginia is a great place to do all of those things!

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I want to join the board of directors because I want to try and help any way that I can to strengthen the turf industry here in Virginia and beyond. This industry has provided me with so many opportunities to grow and meet people. I would like to continue to have the opportunity to do that and grow as a leader.

At Large (2 Seats)

Name: Steve Ruckman

Job Title: Lead Construction Manager

Employer: Innovative Turf Applications &
Consulting, Inc. (ITAC, Inc)



I grew up in New Albany, IN, where I worked on my family farm. When I was not working on the farm, I played baseball and soccer. In high school I took the initiative to take care of my 9th grade baseball field where I would be seen raking, watering, and fixing the clay areas before and after practices. I also managed the mowing of the varsity soccer field as part of my vocational class duties, which sparked my passion for turfgrass management.

I attended Purdue University, where I earned a BS in Turf Science. During my college years, I worked for Valhalla Golf Club, preparing for the 2008 Ryder Cup. Afterwards I embarked on a 15-year career in Minor League Baseball, including roles with the Cincinnati Reds' and Philadelphia Phillies' triple-A teams. In the fall of 2009, I took a leap of faith and moved to Richmond to become the Director of Field Operations for the Richmond Flying Squirrels where I dedicated 10 years to the team.

In 2019 I decided to "retire" from professional sports and I accepted the position of Division Supervisor for Sports Field Management at Henrico County's Recreation and Parks department. There, I managed 199 athletic fields, encompassing synthetic and natural playing surfaces, as well as general park grounds. This experience deepened my expertise in project and construction management.

In 2023, I joined ITAC, Inc. as the Lead Construction Manager. I'm also an active member of the Sports Field Management Association (SFMA), serving on various committees. I earned my Certified Sports Field Manager (CSFM) designation in January 2022 and currently serve as the president of the Virginia Turfgrass Foundation.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I am excited to express my desire to join (or rejoin) the Board of Directors of the VSFMA. My passion for sports field management drives my ambition to contribute to an organization that helped me when I first moved to Virginia. Having spent over 20 years in the industry, I have gained a deep appreciation for the vital role that well-maintained sports fields play in our communities. I believe that the VSFMA is key to promoting best practices, sharing knowledge, and enhancing the professionalism of sports field management across Virginia.

As a board member, I aim to leverage my experience to support the association's mission. I am particularly interested in initiatives that promote sustainability and innovative management techniques, which I believe are crucial for the future of sports facilities. Moreover, I am eager to collaborate with fellow board members to strengthen our outreach efforts and engage more professionals in our community. By fostering connections and sharing resources, we can continue to elevate the standards of our industry. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute my skills and insights to the VSFMA. Together, I believe we can make a significant impact on sports field management in Virginia, ensuring that our fields remain safe, sustainable, and enjoyable

for all athletes and communities. Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the possibility of working together to advance the goals of the VSFMA.

Name: Kyle White

Job Title: Key Account Manager

Employer: Luck EcoSystems



Kyle has served as the Treasurer of VSFMA from 2021-2024. He is proud to be a part of this industry and organization. In his role as treasurer he helped the VSFMA Executive Director in creating a budget and using a platform like QuickBooks to keep track of all expenses and income as well as reporting information to the executive board.

Why do you want to join the VSFMA BOD?

I love sports and how they impact you as an individual but also your community. Being a part of this organization that helps bring families and communities together in a safe environment is something I hope I can continue to help.