



2026 GCSAA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW MEDIA FACT SHEET

February 2-5, 2026, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.

100 YEAR CELEBRATION OF GCSAA

- GCSAA was founded Sept. 13, 1926.
- This is the 97th GCSAA Conference and Trade Show.
 - First show was 1927 in Chicago, Ill.
 - There were no shows in 1943, 44 or 45 due to World War II.
 - The 2021 show was held virtually due to the pandemic.
- Orlando has been the most frequent host of the show. This is the 12th time the show has taken place in Orlando (1990, 96, 99, 2002, 05, 08, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26).
- Check out the GCSAA Centennial Experience (Booth #2361 on the trade show floor) for a historical look at GCSAA's first 100 years.
- GCM, GCSAA's monthly magazine has a two-page spread on a designated decade in each magazine starting with the October 2025 issue (1920s in Oct., 1930s in Nov., 1940s in Dec., and 1950s in Jan.). You can go to pages 16-17, or 18-19 in each issue since to see historical notes about those decades (link to magazines: <https://www.gcmonline.com/current-issue>)

GCSAA COMMUNICATIONS / MEDIA RELATIONS STAFF CONTACTS

Brian Martorana, senior director, marketing and communications, bmartorana@gcsaa.org

Angela Hartmann, director, communications, 785-393-1361 or ahartmann@gcsaa.org

Mike Strauss, media relations manager (media contact), 785-865-8444 or mstrauss@gcsaa.org

Kelsey Underwood, communications manager, 785-331-9423 or kunderwood@gcsaa.org

Claudia Alterman, senior manager, digital content, 785-318-1056 or calterman@gcsaa.org

CREDENTIAL PICK UP

Credentials can be picked up at the Orange County Convention Center as early as Sunday from noon-5 p.m. or from 7 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Wednesday and 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday.

[GCSAA Conference and Trade Show Media Registration Direct Link](#)

MEDIA CENTER

The Media Center is located on the trade show floor just to the left inside the main entrance in booth #2100. Hours are:

Monday 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Tuesday 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Wednesday 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Thursday 7 a.m. – 1 p.m.

WIFI INFORMATION

Media WIFI access information in the Convention Center can be obtained in the media center.



2026 GCSAA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW MEDIA FACT SHEET

February 2-5, 2026, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.

ONLINE INFORMATION SOURCES

- [GCSAA Conference and Trade Show website](#)
- [Exhibitor press releases and product information](#)
- [GCSAA Conference App](#) - Download on your phone for full information, including schedules, exhibitors, attendees, trade show and convention center maps, speaker information, etc...

*To login to the GCSAA Conference App, you will login with the email address used to register, and **the password can be found in your original registration confirmation email. The app password is the same as the password used to access the registration portal.** If you wish to change your password later, simply click on the menu in the upper right corner, then click My Profile, and then click on Change Password.*

- **Golf Genius** – Follow all the tournament action Saturday, Jan. 31-Monday, Feb. 2.
 - Online at: www.golfgenius.com/ggid/26gcsaa
 - Via the app and enter GGID “26GCSAA”

ATTEND AN EDUCATION SESSION / INTERACTIVE FACILITY TOUR

Media can attend education sessions if space is available and it is approved by the GCSAA representative near the classrooms. **Please know that as of Jan. 27 around 70% of the sessions are sold out and there may NOT be room for media.** Please allow those who registered for the sessions to have a seat before you do. For facility tours, space is available, but please check in with the GCSAA representative on hand prior to the start of the tour to let them know you are a member of the media. **No Audio Can Be Captured.** Video is allowed if not a distraction. **Please alert Mike Strauss which education sessions and/or interactive facility tours you will be attending in advance at mstrauss@gcsaa.org.**

THINGS TO SEE ON THE TRADE SHOW FLOOR

- GCSAA Centennial Experience (Booth #2361)
 - A historical look at GCSAA's first 100 years on the trade show floor, Wednesday and Thursday.
- Flyaway Geese Dog Demos (Booth #3813)
 - Demos daily, plus a trained dog will be given away to a superintendent.
- Inside The Shop (Booth #1010)
 - Equipment manager demonstrations
- New Product Showcase



2026 GCSAA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW MEDIA FACT SHEET

February 2-5, 2026, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.

BIG EVENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Monday

- GCSAA Golf Championships Final Round at Disney Magnolia, 7 a.m.
- Interactive Facility Tours, Education Seminars and Power Hours, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Opening Session, Valencia Ballroom, 3:15-5 p.m.

Tuesday

- Health in Action 5K Run and 2K Walk, 7:30-8:30 a.m.
- Interactive Facility Tours, Education Seminars and Power Hours, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
- GCSAA Centennial Celebration at ICON Park, 6:30-9 p.m.

Wednesday

- Distributor Preview (on the trade show floor), 8-9 a.m.
- Trade Show Floor Open, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Education Seminars and Power Hours, 1-5 p.m.

Thursday

- Trade Show Floor Open, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Closing Session, Valencia Ballroom, 1:15-2:30 p.m.
- Closing Event, Valencia Ballroom, 2:30-4 p.m.

GCSAA GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS

- GCSAA will hold its national championship for the 76th time (first event was 1938 with no tournament in 1942-45, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 64-67).
- Toro is sponsoring the Championships for the 32nd year.
- Mike Gianopoulos of Kent Country Club in Grand Rapids, Mich., is the defending champion as he shot 73-77-150 to edge five-time champion Seth Strickland by one shot last year in San Diego.
- Former national champions in the field include Charles Costello (2013), Dylan Foster (2023), Mike Gianopoulos (2025), Michael Stieler (2012, 17), Seth Strickland (2005, 08, 09, 21, 22, 24), Shawn Westacott (2016), and Deon Zendt (2014, 20).
- The National Championship takes place at Disney Magnolia, Sunday and Monday for 72 members with a 5.0 handicap or lower.
- Other events include Four Ball, Golf Classic and Scramble spread out at Omni ChampionsGate, Disney and Reunion and will include more than 600 GCSAA members, Saturday-Monday, Jan. 31-Feb. 2.
- Follow the golf action through Golf Genius
 - Online at www.golfgenius.com/ggid/26gcsaa
 - Via the app and enter GGID "26GCSAA"



2026 GCSAA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW MEDIA FACT SHEET

February 2-5, 2026, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.

TURF BOWL

The 32nd GCSAA Collegiate Turf Bowl Competition, presented in partnership with John Deere, will take place Wednesday, Feb. 4 with the results announced at the Closing Session. The event highlights future industry professionals who test their classroom and field knowledge as part of a team representing their respective universities. Penn State University won last year's competition in San Diego and the school's seven titles are second to Iowa State's 12 since 1999. Purdue, which has won three times in the last five years and four overall, is the only other school with more than one championship since 1999.

AWARD WINNER RECOGNITIONS

- Pinnacle Awards, GCSAA's highest honors for superintendent members (Col. John Morley Award) and golf dignitaries (Old Tom Morris Award).
 - Col. John Morley Award – [Bob Alonzi, CGCS Retired and Joe Alonzi, CGCS Retired, New York](#)
 - Old Tom Morris Award – Paused in 2026 to focus on the Centennial.
- Leadership Awards, presented to highly engaged members who advance the profession.
 - President's Award for Environmental Stewardship – [Jim Pavonetti, CGCS, Greenwich, Conn.](#)
 - Excellence in Government Affairs Award – [Kevin Komer, CGCS, Stowe, Vt.](#)
 - Outstanding Contribution Award – [Bert McCarty, Ph.D., Clemson, S.C.](#)
 - Edwin Budding Award – [John Patterson, CTEM, Johns Creek, Ga.](#)
- Achievement Awards, presented to engaged members who serve their peers.
 - Leo Feser Award – [Charles Fultz, Harrisonburg, Va.](#)
 - Emerging Leader Award – [Steven Spatafore, Los Altos, Calif.](#)
 - Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards – [Kevin Goss, Villa Park, Ill.](#); [Jim Pavonetti, CGCS, Greenwich, Conn.](#); [Robin Sadler, MS, AGS, Calgary, Alberta, Canada](#); and [Justin Brimley, Burlingame, Calif.](#)
 - Grassroots Ambassador Leadership Award – [Casey Anderson, Fort Collins, Colo.](#) and [Jeremy Lewis, Kingwood, Texas](#)

ABOUT THE GCSAA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW

- The GCSAA Conference and Trade Show is run by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).
- Presenting partners include American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBA) and the United States Golf Association (USGA).
- Participating partners include National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and National Golf Foundation (NGF).
- The show is the largest trade show in the golf course management industry.



2026 GCSAA CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW MEDIA FACT SHEET

February 2-5, 2026, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.

GCSAA LEADERSHIP

- [J. Rhett Evans](#), is GCSAA's chief executive officer. He joined the GCSAA staff July 9, 2009, as chief operating officer and was promoted to CEO in January 2011. He is the eighth CEO in the history of the 100-year-old association, which was formed in 1926.
- [T.A. Barker, CGCS](#) (Certified Golf Course Superintendent) was elected as the association's 88th president at the annual meeting in San Diego Feb. 6, 2025. The 22-year GCSAA member is the superintendent at Fore Lakes Golf Course in Taylorsville, Utah.
- [Paul L. Carter, CGCS](#), superintendent at The Bear Trace at Harrison Bay in Harrison, Tenn., has been nominated to the office of president. The 2026 annual meeting, which features the election of new board of directors, will take place Thursday, Feb. 5.

GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY FACTS

- A record-setting 549 million rounds were played in 2025.
- Four of the past five years have been all-time records for rounds played in America on roughly 2,000 fewer facilities than in the early 2000s.
- There are 15,907 golf courses in America.
- Traditional, green-grass participation increased for the eighth straight year, reaching 29.1 million golfers in 2025.

GCSAA 100-YEAR FACTS

- National Association of Greenkeepers of America (NAGA) is formed by Col. John Morley on September 13 at the Sylvania Country Club in Toledo, Ohio. Sixty greenkeepers attended.
- The first national conference and equipment show was held in 1927 in Chicago drawing around 350 attendees and 27 exhibitors.
- In 1951 the association celebrated its 25th anniversary and changed its name to the present-day Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.
- The first permanent headquarters building is inaugurated in January 1974 in Lawrence, Kan.
- GCSAA celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1976 at Sylvania Country Club in Toledo with Arnold Palmer as guest speaker.
- The association planned to celebrate its 75th anniversary with a two-day event in Lawrence, Kan. in 2001, but event was canceled due to the events of September 11.
- In 2023 GCSAA launched the Women's Leadership Academy to break barriers and build networks for women in the turfgrass industry.