



FUNDING TURF ADVANCEMENTS #12: Annual Golf Classic for Fundraising and Fun!

The New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA) is proud to support the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science by providing funding for research endeavors, student scholarships, staff salaries, needed equipment, building/farm repairs, and much more. One way the non-profit organization raises money is the annual Golf Classic.

Twenty-four years ago, the inaugural NJTA Golf Classic took place on one course and raised between \$10-\$15 thousand dollars. The annual event has grown exponentially. The 2019 affair spanned all three golf courses at Fiddler's Elbow Country Club and raised about \$100,000 to help advance the turfgrass industry!

"This is the largest number of pre-registered golfers we've ever had," said NJTA Board Member and Rutgers instructor Dr. Karen Plumley. "That's an all-time high and means that we pretty much had two foursomes on every hole on all three 18-hole courses."

Already thinking about next year's big event, the chair of the golf classic committee, Shaun Barry, never loses sight of what the pomp and circumstance honors.

"It is the biggest one-day turfgrass research fundraiser in the world," he said. "We are here to celebrate the positive effects that come from the work of the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science."



Many NJTA members share that sentiment of recognizing and appreciating the university's turfgrass testing efforts. Steven McDonald, Rutgers instructor and owner of Turfgrass Disease Solutions, LLC, said, "This is my favorite event of the year because it directly benefits turf research and science."



Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science Director Dr. Bruce Clarke enjoys working closely with industry partners, whom he considers his “extended family.” The annual NJTA Golf Classic gives Dr. Clarke the opportunity to hear about the impacts of Scarlet Knight research and education firsthand.

“We talk with a lot of superintendents. A lot of times they thank us for all the research we’ve been doing over the years and tell us how much it means to them. It is very gratifying to see all these people and hear how much our work has helped them,” Dr. Clarke said. “The Classic also highlights and celebrates the tremendous partnership and sense of family that has developed between the industry and the faculty, students, and staff in the Rutgers Turfgrass Program. This has become **our** program.”

Overall, the annual NJTA Golf Classic is an excellent networking opportunity and a hugely successful fundraiser. “Over the years, we’ve raised over \$1.5 million to give to the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science in some way, shape, or form for professorships, scholarships, research, and other projects like the economic development report,” said NJTA Executive Director Cece Peabody.

To top it off, the Golf Classic IS all fun and games. “It is an absolutely amazing event,” said Rutgers alumnus William Keyser of Wilfred MacDonald, Inc.

“It’s wonderful to see all the people in the industry that you work with on a regular basis. We get out, have some fun, hit some balls, and I look forward to it every year!”



FUNDING TURF ADVANCEMENTS is Brought to You By: **YOU & ALL Members of the NJTA**

The New Jersey Turfgrass Association (NJTA) exists solely to promote the turfgrass industry in the Garden State through education, professionalism, and leadership. Thanks to the support of members like you, the NJTA is able to subsidize some of the research needs of the Rutgers University Center for Turfgrass Science.

If you would like to support these efforts further, you are welcome to [Donate to the NJTA Foundation](#) anytime!

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