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**Sports Turf Managers Association Conference Experiences Record Exhibitors,
International Attendees**

Four-day Event in Denver Featured Nearly 60 Educational Sessions

(LAWRENCE, Kan.) – [Sports Turf Managers Association](http://SportsTurfManagersAssociation.com) (STMA) – the professional organization for 2,600 men and women who manage sports fields worldwide – recently hosted the 26th annual Conference & Exhibition in Denver, Colo. with a record 200 exhibitors and 1,200 attendees from nine countries.

The four-day event was highlighted by the “Seminar on Wheels Tour” at various professional, collegiate and youth sports fields in the Denver region. In addition, attendees took part in more than 60 educational sessions, visited sports turf exhibits and networked with environmental science leaders.

“Our annual Conference continues to increase sports turf exposure and offers a unique networking opportunity,” says Allen Johnson, Certified Sports Field Manager, newly-elected STMA President and Fields Manager for the Green Bay Packers. “We hope the information shared here will aid in the progression of safer and more playable fields for years to come.”

SAFE, the association’s charitable foundation, raised almost \$15,000 during the Conference through its Jan. 13 “Night of Bowling;” Jan. 14 “Casino Night” with close to 60 players; and silent and live auctions throughout the week. Proceeds benefit educational programs, scholarships and grants with the goal of enriching communities through safe, sustainable sports and recreation fields for all athletes.

Karl Mecklenburg, former Denver Broncos captain and All-Pro linebacker, provided a keynote speech on Jan. 15 to the STMA membership. He discussed his challenges rising from a college walk-on and 12th round draft pick to a professional career that included six Pro Bowls and three Super Bowl appearances.

On Jan. 16, the STMA Awards Banquet recognized “Field of the Year” winners. It also bestowed Founders Awards to four members to commemorate significant contributions to the profession. Recipients included:

- Dick Ericson Award: Tony Leonard, Philadelphia Eagles
- George Toma Award: Mike Albino, Ballard Sports
- William H. Daniel Award: Brian Scott, Mt. San Antonio College
- Harry C. Gill Award: Dr. Andrew McNitt, Penn State

This year, the “Student Challenge Cup” saw 31 teams sign up for the event, culminating in more than 115 scholars participating. These students represented both two and four-year colleges across the nation. The Cup concluded with a proctored exam on Jan. 15.

Since 1989, STMA has hosted its annual convention at major cities across the U.S. including San Antonio, Tex. in 2014. Next year’s event will be held in San Diego, Calif. Jan. 19-22, 2016. Additional future sites include Orlando, Fla. (2017) and Fort Worth, Tex. (2018).

For more info on STMA: www.stma.org, www.twitter.com/fieldexperts, 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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