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Purdue University Groundskeeper Wins 'Stars and Stripes' Field Art Contest

(LAWRENCE, Kan.) – [Sports Turf Managers Association](#) (STMA) – comprised of more than 2,700 men and women professionals overseeing sports fields worldwide and critical to athletes' safety – has named Ryder Haulk, Assistant Sports Field Manager for Purdue University Athletics (West Lafayette, Ind.), winner of the annual "Stars and Stripes" field art contest.

Haulk's "Red, White and Purdue" design at Bittinger Stadium shattered previous voting records, garnering 2,019 online "likes" nationwide and earning him a complimentary pass to the 2019 STMA Annual Conference & Exhibition in Phoenix, Ariz. (Jan. 22-25). Brian Bornino, CSFM, also assisted with the project which included 50 stars and 13 stripes within the Purdue "P." Finishing in second place – with more than 1,300 votes – was Danny Losito, Head Groundskeeper of the Columbia Fireflies (Columbia, S.C.).

"We always enjoy seeing the distinctive designs our members create to celebrate the Fourth of July, and this contest is a fun way to showcase their impressive skills," says Kim Heck, CEO of STMA. "It was great seeing the Purdue community come together and support Ryder and his team."

Haulk attended Purdue for two years before transferring to Penn State University, where he received an Associate's Degree in Turfgrass Science. He is currently enrolled in the B.S. of Turf Science program at Penn State University. Previous experience includes stints with the Indianapolis Indians, Washington Nationals and Florida State University Athletics.

"We're honored to have won the Stars and Stripes contest; there were so many great entries this year!" says Haulk. "Creating themed field art without sacrificing safety or playability is always a fun challenge and it was truly a team effort as our student employees – Lane Zink, Brett Shoultz, Matt Homco and Anthony Marquet – were a big help in creating the design."

"Two Flags and a Star," "The Original American Flag" and "Happy Birthday America" were among the 2018 designs submitted by turf professionals from major sports leagues, NCAA and parks and recreation sectors.

Last year's winner was Andrew Marking, Head Groundskeeper for the Quad Cities River Bandits (Davenport, Iowa), the Class-A affiliate of the Houston Astros. With the help of Assistant Groundskeeper Andrew Anderson, Marking crafted a "Banks of the Mississippi River" field pattern at Modern Woodmen Park.

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More information: 800.323.3875.

About STMA

STMA is the non-profit, professional association for men and women who manage sports fields worldwide. Since 1981, it has provided education, information and practical knowledge in the art and science of sports field management. More than 2,700 members across 34 local chapters oversee facilities at schools, colleges and universities, parks and recreational facilities, and professional sports stadiums. Sports include football, baseball, soccer, lacrosse, softball, rugby and horse racing.

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