



SPORTS FIELD
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Embracing Diversity in Sports Turf Management: Why it Matters

Please scan the QR code
below if you require CEU
credit for this session.



This session is sponsored
by



JOHN DEERE

Embracing Diversity in Sports Field Management

Why It Matters

Presentation by Alpha Jones CSFM & Maritza Martinez



Disclaimer

This presentation is meant to be informative and a learning opportunity for everyone. If you have questions, please write them down; we will happily answer them at the designated times.

Please be open-minded, optimistic for the future, and courteous to your peers.



Our ABC's & Objectives

- **Awareness:**
 - Raise awareness about the benefits of diversity within sports field management.
- **Belonging:**
 - How to create an atmosphere where everyone feels valued, respected, and included regardless of their background.
- **Collaboration:**
 - Emphasizing the importance of collaboration among individuals from diverse backgrounds.

A B C

Our Industry's History

SFMA's Diverse Presidents

- Presidents of Color: 1 of 30
- Gender other than Male: 3 of 30
- Out LGBTQ+: 1 of 30



Current Demographics

MLS's Diverse Head Groundskeepers

- Head Groundskeepers of Color: 1 of 29
- Gender other than Male: 0 of 29
- Out LGBTQ+: 0 of 29



Current Demographics

MLB's Diverse Head Groundskeepers

- Head Groundskeepers of Color: <5 of 30
- Gender other than Male: 2 of 30
- Out LGBTQ+: 0 of 30



Current Demographics

MiLB's Head Groundskeepers

- Head Groundskeepers of Color: <5 of 120
- Gender other than Male: 2 of 120
- Out LGBTQ+: 0 of 120



Current Demographics

NFL's Diverse Head Groundskeepers

- Head Groundskeepers of Color: <5 of 32
- Gender other than Male: 0 of 32
- Out LGBTQ+: 0 of 32

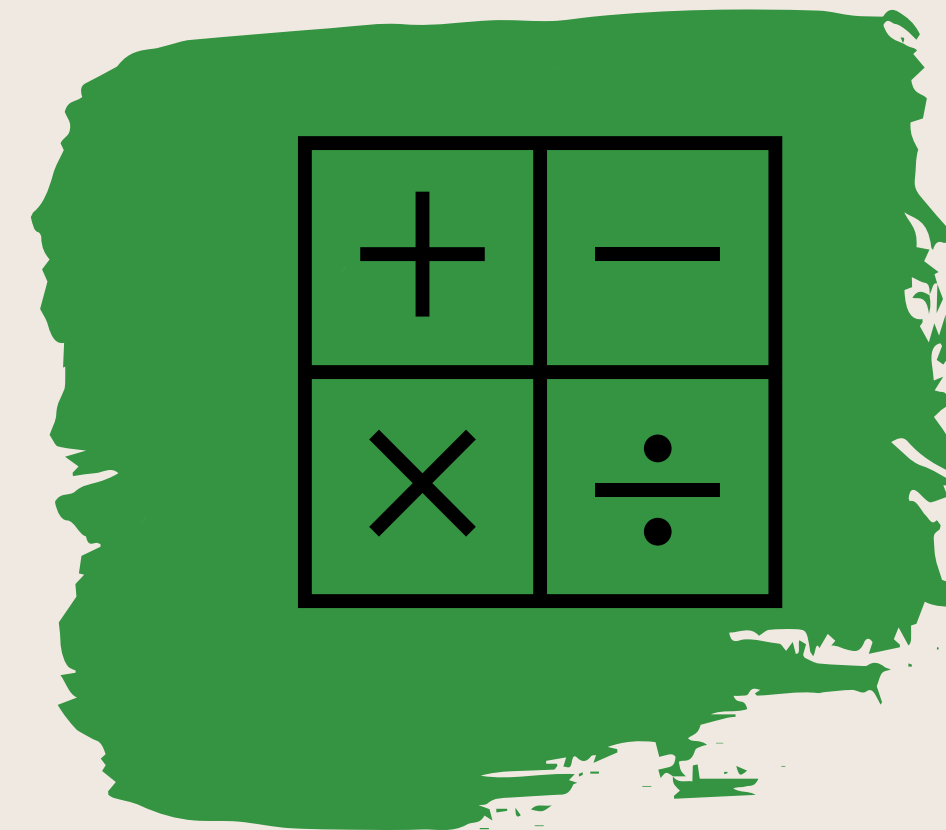


Do The Math

MLS, MLB, MiLB, & NFL's

Diverse Head Groundskeepers

- Head Groundskeepers of Color:
 - ~16 out of 211 positions
 - ~7%
- Gender other than Male:
 - 4 out of 211 positions
 - 2%
- Out LGBTQ+: 0 out of 211
 - ~1 out of 211 positions
 - <1%



What is D.E.I.B.?

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) are key concepts crucial for building a fair and equitable workplace and society.
- DEIB is important in the workplace and beyond because it fosters a culture of respect, understanding, and collaboration. It helps to attract and retain diverse talent, enhancing creativity and innovation and improving decision-making.



Diversity

F. E. A. R.

Forget Everything And Run

Face Everything And Rise

Equity

- The fair treatment, access, and opportunity for all employees, regardless of their background or characteristics. It aims to ensure everyone has the resources and support they need to succeed and thrive in the workplace.
- Equality and equity are terms often used interchangeably but have different meanings when achieving workplace DEIB.
 - Equality- Treating everyone the same, regardless of their circumstances.
 - Equity- Providing fair treatment and access to resources based on individual needs and circumstances.



Inclusion

- Refers to creating a work environment where all employees feel respected and supported, regardless of their background or characteristics.
- “Get everyone pulling on the same side of the rope, and the possibilities for growth and success increase exponentially.”



Belonging

- Feeling accepted, valued, and included within a group or organization. In the workplace context, belonging refers to the feeling of being a valued team member and having a sense of connection and community with colleagues.
- Employees Who Feel Like They Belong:
 - More likely to feel invested in the overall mission & goals- Leading to greater productivity, collaboration, teamwork.
 - Greater Employee retention
- Employees Who Feel Like They Do Not Belong:
 - More likely to experience feelings of isolation & disengagement- Negatively impacting their productivity.
 - Greater employee turnover

Benefits

- **Diverse Skill Sets**: A diverse grounds crew brings together individuals with varied skills, experiences, and perspectives. This diversity can lead to a more versatile team capable of tackling a broader range of tasks and challenges.
- **Innovation & Creativity**: A diverse and inclusive work environment encourages the exchange of ideas from different backgrounds. This diversity of thought can spur innovation and creativity within the grounds crew, leading to more effective problem-solving and improved processes.
- **Enhanced Workplace**: DEIB initiatives promote a culture of respect, understanding, and collaboration. A positive workplace culture fosters better communication and teamwork among crew members, contributing to a more enjoyable and productive work environment.
- **Increased Applicant Pool**: By actively promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in job advertisements and recruitment efforts, organizations can attract a broader range of applicants. Highlighting a commitment to DEIB can make the grounds crew position more appealing to individuals from diverse backgrounds.



Challenges Faced in Embracing Diversity

- Resistance to Change:
 - Some might resist diversity due to fear or desire to maintain the status quo.
- Biases or Stereotypes:
 - Unconscious biases can affect fair treatment and opportunities.
- Tokenism:
 - Superficial diversity without meaningful inclusion can lead to resentment.
- Organizational Resistance:
 - Structural barriers or lack of alignment with diversity goals can hinder progress.



How do I build a diverse talent applicant pool?

Strategies for attracting and retaining diverse talent

- Internship programs targeting diverse candidates.
- Partnering with diverse organizations, colleges, & universities.
- Mentorship and sponsorship initiatives
- Hosting diversity-focused events
- Creating and accepting an inclusive culture in your workplace.



Creating an Inclusive Environment

Strategies to foster inclusivity:

- **Leadership Support:**
 - Ensure leaders champion diversity and inclusion.
- **Representation:**
 - Strive for diverse representation at all levels
- **Training:**
 - Provide diversity training for all employees
- **Address Biases:**
 - Actively address biases and microaggressions.
- **Accountability:**
 - Hold others and yourself accountable for promoting inclusion.



Questions

Alpha Jones

Em a il:

ajones@astros.com

Phone Number:

(919) 451-5499

Maritza Martinez

Em a il:

mmartinez@stlcitysc.com

Phone Number:

(478) 231-1704