

Member Update

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Summer 2011



Letter From the President

Mark G. Huntley

With 2011 in full swing, the Irrigation Association continues to evolve to best serve the needs of its members and the industry.

As IA focuses on its four key strategic initiatives – **certification, education, government affairs and standards** – we look to you to help create, expand and refine our programs to ensure they meet member needs and define us as being part of the solution to today's water challenges.

In this issue, you will find an update on each initiative as well as a spotlight on certification. I invite you to explore IA's program and service offerings on the IA web site and get involved. We offer many resources for you and your business, and opportunities to engage with peers. Join one of IA's seven common interest groups; become a certified professional; attend an IA event.

I look forward to seeing more of you become engaged in IA's efforts. Together, we have the opportunity to shape the future of our industry.

Sincerely,



Mark G. Huntley
John Deere Water Technologies

Member Viewpoint IA Member Perspectives on the Select Certified Program



A Distributor's Perspective

"We work hard to get our employees certified."

Ewing Irrigation (Phoenix, Ariz.)

"You can profess all you want about how you train your employees, but this independent standard holds more weight. IA is the leading trade association for our industry. A certified employee means that the leading authority has validated our skill set to the customer."

Jim Borneman, vice president of educational services at Ewing, noted that the company counts approximately 75 certified employees, the highest number of certified individuals in any one company in the country.

"We actively promote our certified professionals to our customers, and we work hard to get our employees certified," he said. It not only proves their level of knowledge to clients but also encourages continuing education, one of Ewing's four key corporate values.

Borneman noted that due to Ewing's emphasis on the benefits of certification, a number of the organization's customers have since become certified, even altering their business models to focus more on water conservation and integrate audits.

For companies like Ewing, the benefits of certification are vast: "It validates your skill set to the customers and helps you understand your level of proficiency. Your staff is supported by an additional level of technical training. Because ultimately, you want to sell customers not on what's trendy but on solid solutions."

 EWING

"For a contractor, I can think of no better class that would prepare you to get involved in all types of certifications than the auditor class," said Borneman. He also identified how certified professionals are becoming recognized by states. In California, the Department of Water Resources has implemented the AB1881 ordinance requiring new and renovated landscapes over 2,500 sq. ft. to be audited by a certified landscape irrigation auditor.

Certification Initiative

Increase the recognized value and demand for IA-certified professionals.

Certification Update

As the most widely accepted certification program in the industry, IA's Select Certified program continues to be upgraded and expanded in pursuit of the long-term goal of accreditation by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies. Recent improvements to the program include:

- **Launch of the certified agriculture water manager program.** Debuted at the 2010 Irrigation Show, the CAWM recognizes experience and excellence among industry professionals who evaluate, operate, manage and improve agricultural irrigation systems to achieve the highest possible level of water-use efficiency.
- **Significant changes to the CEU policy.** These include simplification of the CEU qualifying activities list, transition to a two-year CEU renewal cycle in 2011 and implementation of a new cancellation and retake policy. For more on CEU changes, visit www.irrigation.org/ceus.
- **Update of CLIA and CGIA programs.** The certified landscape irrigation auditor and certified golf irrigation auditor exams introduced new test questions in December 2010 to more accurately reflect the professional's job in the field. Field audit submission and retake policies were also clarified.

For more information on certification, contact IA Certification Director Sherrie Schulte (sherrie@irrigation.org; 703.536.7080).

continued

Member Viewpoint

IA Member Perspectives on the Select Certified Program

A Contractor's Perspective

"We'd like to be looked at as the experts. Having folks that are more knowledgeable will allow us to do that."



Chris Williams, CGIA, CIC, CLIA, ARCSA Accredited President, Landscapes of the South (Canton, Ga.)

"Earning my CLIA was an eye opening experience," said Williams. "It made me look at irrigation in a different way, and want to do a better job of it – in installations, maintenance – and to assist customers with proper water techniques and scheduling."

Williams quickly foresaw the benefits of certification. "My learning came from the school of hard knocks," he said, noting that he started working in the field right after high school. But he credits IA's certification program for helping him expand his abilities in the field. "It's been beneficial to both me and the business to bring additional skills that help customers and help us with growth and profits."

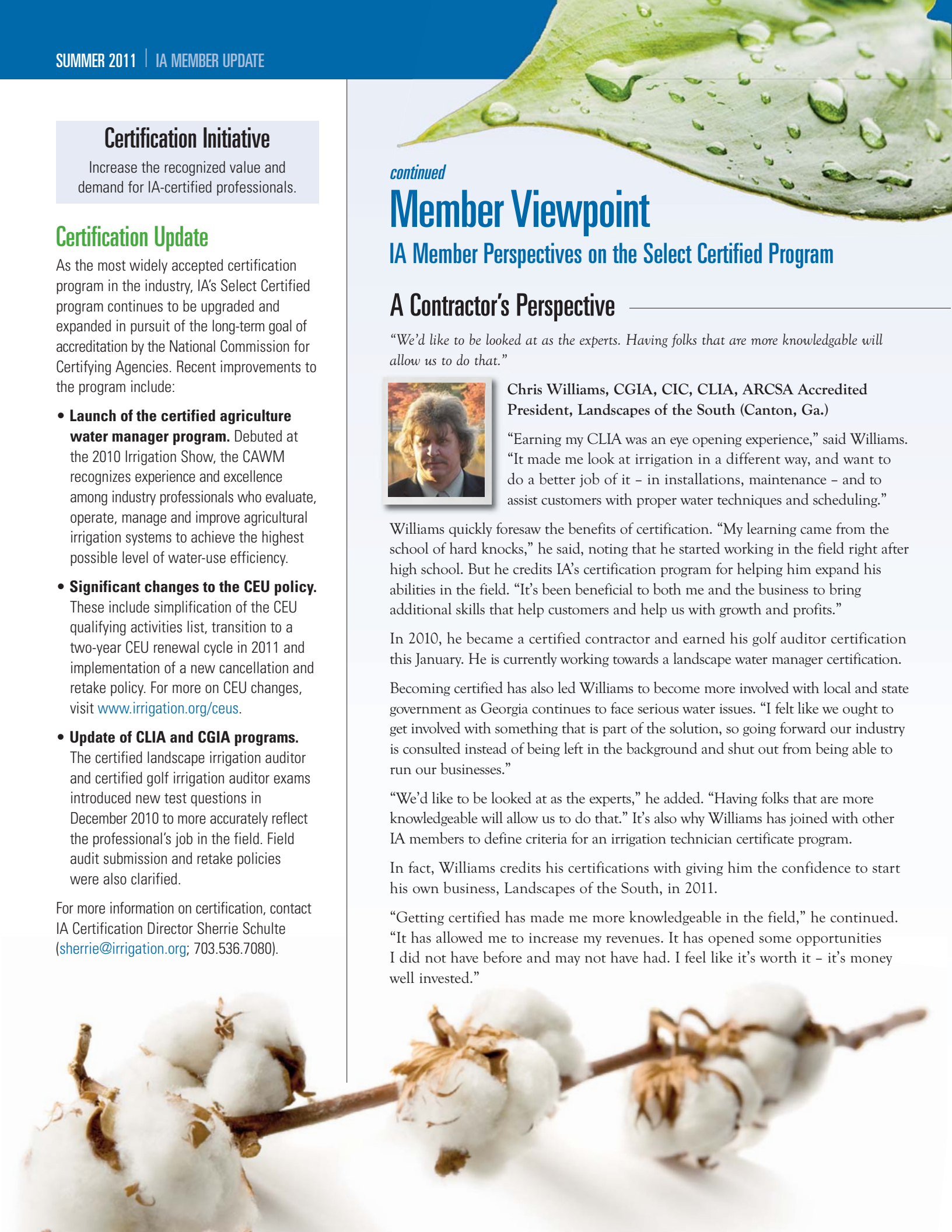
In 2010, he became a certified contractor and earned his golf auditor certification this January. He is currently working towards a landscape water manager certification.

Becoming certified has also led Williams to become more involved with local and state government as Georgia continues to face serious water issues. "I felt like we ought to get involved with something that is part of the solution, so going forward our industry is consulted instead of being left in the background and shut out from being able to run our businesses."

"We'd like to be looked at as the experts," he added. "Having folks that are more knowledgeable will allow us to do that." It's also why Williams has joined with other IA members to define criteria for an irrigation technician certificate program.

In fact, Williams credits his certifications with giving him the confidence to start his own business, Landscapes of the South, in 2011.

"Getting certified has made me more knowledgeable in the field," he continued. "It has allowed me to increase my revenues. It has opened some opportunities I did not have before and may not have had. I feel like it's worth it – it's money well invested."



Government/Public Affairs Initiative

Influence policy to increase the demand for efficient irrigation.

Government Affairs Update



The IA is working hard to establish its national grassroots program to help our members become successful advocates for their company and the industry. The objective of the program is to engage IA member volunteers in building relationships with state and federal level legislators and policymakers to raise awareness of industry issues and positions. Some key efforts to date include:

- **Introduction of IA's national grassroots program, IA IMPACT, including:**

- *Launch of the Legislative Coordinator program.* Designed to put "boots on the ground" at the state level, IA member volunteers will serve as key points of contact between state governments and IA government affairs staff. These legislative coordinators will be the eyes and ears of IA on legislative and regulatory issues in their states.

- *Completion of the third annual Legislative Conference held in Washington, D.C., in March.* The conference brought member volunteers and IA staff members to Capitol Hill. Contacting more than 40 congressional offices, participants addressed lawmakers on agricultural conservation funding, EQIP, WaterSense, and the economic and environmental benefits of efficient irrigation.

- **Finalization and posting of position statements that clearly define the association's political positions.** Now on IA's web site, these statements are critical tools for members and staff as well as the local, state and federal lawmakers they engage. These position statements set a clear direction for IA to successfully advocate for policies that support our mission.

For any questions regarding IA's legislative initiatives or to inquire about an upcoming government affairs briefing, contact IA Federal Affairs Director John Farner (john@irrigation.org; 703.536.7080).



Foundation Update

The Foundation continues to promote the irrigation profession to career seekers. It has refreshed its web site and plans to add more online content. Volunteers and staff have performed outreach at PLANET Student Career Days, the 2011 School Counselor Conference and the ninth annual Faculty Academy.

To support the Foundation and review its achievements in the recently released 2010 annual report, visit www.irrigationfoundation.org.

Standards Initiative

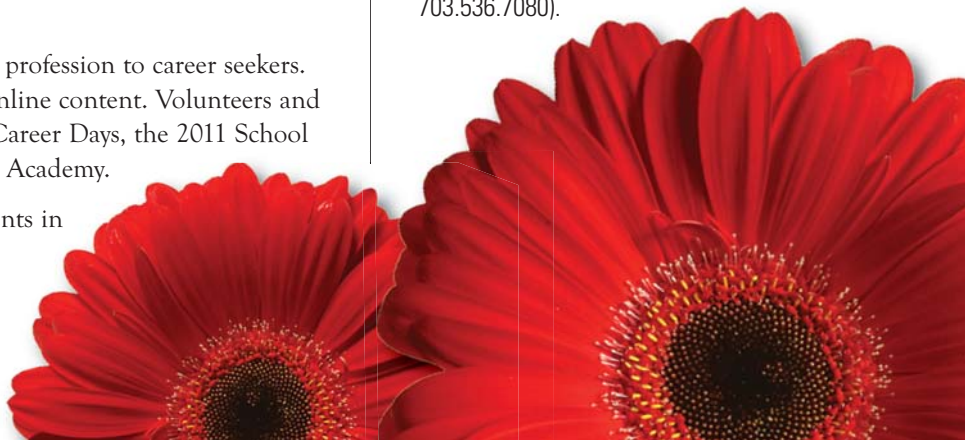
Establish products and practice standards that drive efficient irrigation.

Standards Update

IA's standards initiative incorporates existing efforts (such as the Smart Water Application Technologies program) while expanding our influence over the development of industry standards. Recent activities include:

- Changes to the IA Technical and Standards Committee. Brian Vinchesi, CGIA, CIC, CID, CLIA, CLIM, CLWM, president of Irrigation Consulting (Pepperell, Mass.), is serving as chair. Jake LaRue, product manager at Valmont Irrigation (Valley, Neb.), serves as vice chair. Committee members work to ensure irrigation industry standards and codes reflect irrigation best practices.
- Submission of comments on the Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program regarding the draft weather-based irrigation controller specification.
- Development of the SWAT testing protocol for soil moisture-based sensors (for turf-grass and landscape irrigation). View the protocol online at www.irrigation.org/swat/control_sensor.
- Advocating for standards to benefit the irrigation industry at the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials Green Technical Committee meeting and the International Code Council's Green Construction Code public hearings.

For more information on IA's standards initiatives, contact IA Industry Development Director Brent Mecham (brent@irrigation.org; 703.536.7080).





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Upcoming IA Events

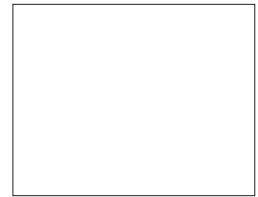
Irrigation Faculty Academy June 21-23

IA Water Conference July 21-22

2011 IA Innovations in
Irrigation Education Conference Nov. 3-8

2011 Irrigation Show Nov. 6-8

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This Show Means Business.



SUMMER 2011 | IA MEMBER UPDATE

Mark Your Calendars

The third annual **Water Conference** is presented by the Irrigation Association in conjunction with the American Society of Irrigation Consultants. "Water for the Future: The Role of Efficient Irrigation" will take place July 21-22 at the Omni Interlocken Resort and Spa in Broomfield, Colo., a suburb of Denver. For more information or to register, visit www.irrigation.org/waterconference.

Attendee registration opens in August for the **2011 Irrigation Show** and **Innovations in Irrigation Education Conference**.

This show means business with nearly 300 exhibitors expected and numerous networking opportunities. The show runs Nov. 6-8 at the San Diego Convention Center. The education conference will take place Nov. 3-8. For more information, visit www.irrigationshow.org.

Education Initiative

Increase the recognized value of IA and Foundation educational programs.

Education Update

In 2008, the Foundation was granted responsibility for content development tasks to improve the quality of irrigation education available and to streamline the augmentation of the association's educational resources. Education delivery continued to be a key strategic initiative for the association as well, and in December, IA created an education task force to examine the industry's education needs. This task force recommended that more resources be dedicated to education, including the hiring of a full-time education director.

Therefore, in December development and distribution of all educational content was returned to IA, allowing the Foundation to focus on its core goal of promoting careers in irrigation. In moving education back to IA, the association will increase its ability to advance industry knowledge and build toward its vision of being the authority on irrigation.

IA's new education director, educator and industry veteran Bob von Bernuth, will focus on creating a long-term plan for IA's education program. For more information, contact Education Director Bob von Bernuth (bob@irrigation.org; 540.946.0023).

