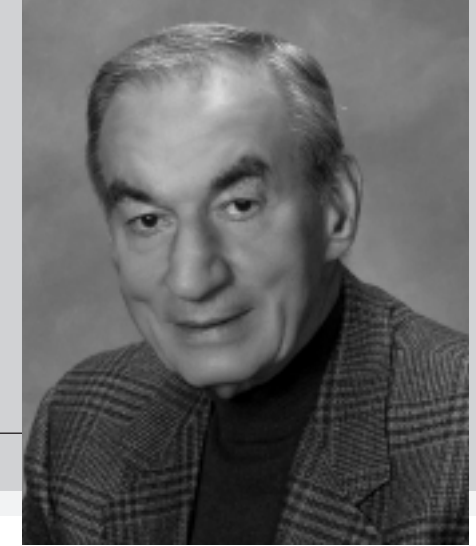




DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS



Joseph M. Duich '52, '57g

To Joseph M. Duich for his lifetime commitment to teaching turfgrass management and his exceptional contributions in developing new turfgrass varieties used on golf courses worldwide.

Golfers who appreciate their golf ball holding its line on a fast green can thank Penn State turfgrass Professor Joseph Duich. For more than 40 years, Duich developed turfgrass varieties that tolerate close cutting, producing faster greens and quick-healing grass for tees and fairways, where divots are common. The bentgrass varieties he developed, starting in the 1950s with his mentor, Penn State Professor H. Burton Musser, are used on 90 percent of the golf courses around the world, and the royalties they generate have helped build the University's renowned turfgrass programs.

Duich's connection to Penn State dates to 1948 when he enrolled after serving two years in the U.S. Marine Corps. He started as a landscape architecture major and spent his first year at Clarion University—one of many sites around the state where Penn State freshmen studied because of the University Park space shortage caused by the influx of

post-war G.I.s. "I didn't know you could study turfgrass," he says, "until I came to University Park and saw the turfgrass plots where East Halls are now." He met with Musser, who started Penn State's turfgrass program in 1928. "One hour with him and I transferred to agronomy," Duich says.

As a student, he worked with Musser on Penncross, a variety of creeping bentgrass released in 1954, which quickly became the standard for golf course putting greens around the world. When Musser retired in 1959, Duich assumed responsibility as turfgrass project leader. Through his efforts, the Turfgrass Project developed into the Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center, and Duich assembled a research-teaching team that enhanced Penn State's program. While trained as a plant breeder, Duich pursued research and teaching with equal vigor. During his tenure, he taught eight turf courses, enrolling more than 5,700 students, and supervised 21 graduate students. He elevated the two-year technical program in Golf Course Turfgrass Management to international acclaim with more than 1,100 graduates.

Duich has authored more than 100 technical publications on research ranging from

putting green speed management to Penngift crownvetch, for highway erosion control. Throughout his career, Duich continued to develop and release bentgrass varieties including PennEagle (used on fairways and tees); Pennlinks (used on greens); Seaside 2 (for courses in coastal and extremely dry climates); and six Penn A and Penn G series (strains that can withstand extremely low mowing heights).

In the mid-1960s, Duich and several other alumni organized the Penn State Turfgrass Alumni Club, which meets annually during the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) conference. In honor of his mentor, he co-founded and serves as an officer of the Musser International Turfgrass Foundation, which presents an annual Award of Excellence and cash award to the outstanding Ph.D. candidate in his or her last year of study. The Joseph M. Duich Turfgrass Endowment, established in 1990, supports the Turfgrass Project.

In 2006, the GCSAA recognized Duich's lifetime commitment to his profession with its most prestigious honor, the Old Tom Morris Award. He has also received the GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award

(1976); Golf Course Builders Association of America Rossi Award (1995); and the United States Golf Association Green Section Award (1981).

Penn State previously honored Duich with the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences (formerly Agronomy) Outstanding Alumni Award in 2004. He is a life member of the Penn State Alumni Association.

Duich and his wife, Patricia '53, live in State College, Pa. They raised three children, two of whom, Katherine and Robert, graduated from Penn State. Their youngest, Michael, graduated from the University of Florida. They have five granddaughters.

