

# Begitschke receives 2025 Musser Award of Excellence

February 27, 2025



*Erick Begitschke*

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The Musser International Turfgrass Foundation has selected CSSA member Erick Begitschke of the University of Georgia (UGA) as its 2025 Award of Excellence recipient.

The award is given to outstanding Ph.D. candidates, who in the final phase of their graduate studies, demonstrated overall excellence throughout their doctoral program in turfgrass research.

Begitschke received his bachelor's degree in Turfgrass Management from the University of Georgia and his M.S. degree in Turfgrass Weed Science at Mississippi State University under the guidance of CSSA member Dr. Jay McCurdy. His research at Mississippi State focused on utilizing preemergence herbicides in hybrid bermudagrass sod production. Between his M.S and Ph.D., he worked for SePRO Corporation as a research associate in North Carolina.

He is currently finishing his Ph.D. in Crop and Soil Science with a concentration in Turfgrass Science from UGA under the guidance of CSSA member Dr. Gerald Henry. As a graduate research assistant in Dr. Henry's lab, he helped conduct numerous research projects at the Athens Turfgrass Research and Education Center. His Ph.D. research centered around utilizing athlete biomechanical data to measure field performance and player safety on sports fields.

Begitschke has already published nine peer-reviewed research papers from his M.S. and Ph.D. projects and has six more currently in draft or under review on the topic of turfgrass science. He is an author of more than 30 scientific abstracts and has given approximately 40 research presentations nationally and internationally. He plans to dedicate his career to offering sustainable solutions to turfgrass managers through

applied research.

Learn more about the legacy of Professor Musser and the foundation at [musserfoundation.org](https://musserfoundation.org).

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