

Tom Sweeney, CWM

Candidate — President

My name is Tom Sweeney and I've been a landscape contractor for over 45 years, with the past 42 spent with Landscape Care Company, which has been a member of CLCA since 1986.

I have been involved with the Certified Water Management Program since 2007.

I have served on CLCA's state board since 2020 and look forward to serving as the president in 2024.

Landscape Care was recently sold and now is under new owners. This has allowed me to open a new chapter with an energized and motivated ownership, for which I am grateful. As a seasoned veteran, I realize there is still much to learn and ways to grow.

The same is true for our industry. CLCA members enjoy connecting with manufacturers, distributors, competitors and colleagues, sharing and educating one another in a positive supportive approach. This networking is a valuable tool and is vital to our industry.

Throughout CLCA's history, many things have changed in our industry, some of which we take for granted. The committees at the state level provide education and other resources for the membership. This group of volunteers, along with a great and

dedicated staff, put forth the time and effort so our membership can continue to grow their bottom line.

Volunteers at the local chapters are equally or even more important to the distribution of information at local events. I applaud all the volunteers that give their valuable time for regular meetings and organizing events that benefit us all.

We all may have different motives to volunteer, but there are tangible arguments to do so.

- We can make a difference in someone else's lives.
- It can improve overall self-confidence and well-being.
- We can improve your own skills while teaching others.
- We can improve your own mental and physical health.
- Social interaction with like-minded people in the industry helps us grow. (Pun intended)

These are just a few reasons why volunteering is important, and I encourage anyone reading this statement to consider volunteering at their local chapter. Make new friends, share your stories, make a difference.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Lindsay Ono

Candidate — President Elect

When you reflect upon your journey in life, where you have been and where you are going? Are you happy with your progress or do you envision more to come? When I look back on my journey, I've been blessed. I am sometimes surprised where life has led me to becoming a college professor and an officer for the CLCA.

Our experiences, our education, the people we meet all influence the type of person we become. Growing up in the family business, a landscape nursery, I have been exposed to plants my entire life. Playing hide and go seek among the stacks of Kelloggs soil amendments as a little boy, the nursery was my playground with my brothers, sister and cousins. Here I learned the importance of family and taking care of the ones we love and care about.

Since those times, my education and career have revolved around the horticulture industry. On my journey, I have had a number of jobs that give me a well-rounded perspective of our industry. I understand the challenges and entrepreneurial spirit of small business, navigating and understanding large-scale corporate operations, the importance of attention to detail as a lab researcher, and as a college professor and radio talk show host, the importance and joys of learning.

I have participated in numerous leadership roles with many organizations and committees locally, statewide and nationally. From small community groups to the large associations, I have experience working with a diversity of people and projects.

My vision for CLCA is to grow our organization and for our members to be recognized as landscapers of

excellence, known for the beauty and craftsmanship in the landscapes they install.

How do we accomplish this? These objectives will be accomplished using education and social communication. The development of an educational video library will be for member use and available to educators for classroom use. Topics may include basic planting concepts to irrigation design calculations, to innovations in landscaping. When used in the classroom, students will learn about the landscape industry and become accustomed to the CLCA name as an educational authority.

We will use social media platforms, consumer education and landscape promotional videos to inform the public about the dangers of hiring unlicensed contractors or about the environmental benefits of a backyard landscape. Some videos will highlight member-installed landscapes from across the state. Creating informative and entertaining CLCA videos will be how we engage today's consumer. With the CLCA logo prominently displayed in all content, we will build brand recognition for our association and its members.

We work in an industry that continually evolves due to changes in technology, environmental concerns, governmental regulations and consumer preferences. Our association must adapt and evolve with a dynamic, ever-changing business climate to promote our landscape professionals.

My life experiences, education, diverse career background, and leadership training has prepared me for this new journey with my CLCA family. If elected, I look forward to serving as your next California Landscape Contractors Association President-elect.

Kristin Gallego

Candidate — Director of Education

With over 20 years of experience in the landscape industry, I continue to learn something new every day. With changing economies, product and equipment advancement, the changes in our environment and several other factors, whether your new to the industry or have been around for some time, there's always something to be learned.

This past year as president of the East Bay chapter of CLCA, my goal has been to work as a board to reach out to our members to not only get to know them and help them to feel welcome, but to find out what they are truly looking for in terms of education, that we as a chapter can provide to help make the benefits of being a CLCA member that much more enticing and beneficial.

I feel there are three crucial elements to making your business successful:

- Education — We all need to strive to know all aspects of our business, from beginning to end, from the office to the field.
- Networking — While we may all be in the same industry, we do not necessarily all do the same things. Being able to refer someone you trust for jobs outside your territory or expertise helps build camaraderie with those within the industry and trust with potential clients.
- Support — Being able to have someone to call when you need answers or are dealing with something you haven't had to deal with before.

In getting involved with the association's educational efforts, I would hope to not only learn something new myself, but help bring to the table my own industry knowledge and be a voice for what others within the industry need to know and/or have to offer.

Thank you for considering me for Director of Education.

Jay Martinez

Candidate — Director of Legislation

Thank you for considering my nomination for CLCA's Director of Legislation.

Professionally, I am president of JVM Landscape Construction, Inc. out of Sacramento, and we specialize in residential build projects. In addition to running JVM Landscape, I had been involved in the Sacramento Valley CLCA chapter since 2016, serving as Education Chair and in other chapter roles. Since 2018, I was invited to serve on the state CLCA Legislation Committee — as a general member, chair, and currently as Director of Legislation.

During my recent term as Director of Legislation, I have served by running legislative meetings,

attending and forging relationships at our Legislative Conference, and by attending and supporting LandPAC events throughout the state.

We have expanded our legislative presence in the northern part of the state and created a sustainable committee that will be proactive and recruit others to join our efforts to be involved in legislation. I am also proud to announce we have a new Legislative Chair, Rick Oropeza, who has been thriving in our committee and strengthening it more!

Legislation is important. If we fall asleep at the wheel, legislators can create policies that have negative consequences for our C-27 license, such as higher taxation for small business owners and more unnecessary regulations. We must stay awake and on top of the latest developments, so that we can continue to thrive in our communities and beautify California.

Sal Hernandez

Candidate — Director of Membership

Howdy!

If I have your attention, I hope you get to read my statement. I'm Sal and I don't want to bore you with my accomplishments as to why I am here today, but if I must, these are the highlights:

As a kid, I grew up mowing lawns with my dad in Huntington Beach, CA. Upon graduating high school, I joined the US Navy. While on active duty, I served aboard the USS Curts (FFG-38), PHIBCB-ONE, and EODMU-ONE. My most memorable deployment was to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2009.

Upon completion of my service, I earned a bachelor's degree in business management and an MBA with an emphasis in marketing from the University of Phoenix. I also have an associate degree in Electro-Mechanical Technology from Coastline Community College, as well as my ICPI certification, among others.

My passion for the landscape industry led me to estab-

lish Pacific Breeze Landscape in 2016, and the very next year I realized the value of becoming a member of CLCA. I can honestly say that CLCA has been the core of my successful career as a landscape contractor. For that reason, I want to give back to the industry by spearheading as Director of Membership. My talent and passion are to bring people together, have a good time, and grow.

It is unfortunate to say, but it must be said. The number of our members has been on a decline over the last 5 years. There are many factors as to why, but for sure, the main one is that they do not realize the VALUE. As the director of membership my goal is to treat my position with urgency so that we can strengthen the association and become the source for those in the landscape industry. I intend to work alongside my peers on the board so that we can promptly make the necessary changes to increase our numbers. I like to use the analogy of water when talking about change: It needs to have a good flow so that it doesn't stop and turn into swamp.

Without further ado, let's cut through the red tape and get to work.