

## Chris Derrick Climbs the Corporate Ladder

When Jeff Higgins left Agrium, Inc., he gave Chris Derrick the opportunity to do the training and research for the *Experience at FarmLinks*. Chris is a great fit for this position because of his experience in many levels of the business:

“I started installing irrigation systems for home owners as a summer job in 1989. I also was a small engine mechanic for one of my dad’s friends. Then came landscaping installation and maintenance, sports fields, golf courses, and now.....fertilizer specialist. My first real start after college was as a grunt worker at the Country Club of Birmingham. After graduate school I wanted to start at the bottom, and I believe I did.”

Chris may have started at the bottom of the ladder, but he started with a solid educational background. He attended Austin High School in Decatur, AL, graduating in 1993 and becoming an Eagle Scout along the way. Afterwards he obtained a B.S. in Horticulture at Auburn University, later receiving his M.S. in Agronomy and Soils in 2001 at Auburn University.

Chris is grateful to Dr. Beth Guertal, Dr. Jeff Higgins, Lee McClemore, CGCS, and Mark Langner, CGCS for their guidance and advice along the way. He believes that “Success is not a one way ticket to the top. Sometimes you fall. Getting back up on your feet gets you closer because of what you’ve learned from it.” Chris has used this perseverance in good stead.

When asked about his opportunity at Agrium, Chris said, “I owe a lot to my mentors. Without their support and opportunities, I wouldn’t be where I am. Jeff Higgins ultimately gave me the opportunity to work for Agrium, who recently purchased Pursell Technologies, Inc.”

In his present position Chris has a chance to speak in front of some of the biggest names in the industry. While he really enjoys the opportunity to meet new people, sometimes Chris misses the hands-on work on the course...“I’m not going home as dirty as I used to, but I still have my moments.” There are so many possibilities open to Chris in his career, but someday he thinks he might like to retire to academia. Another goal is “maybe some day I could work for a little while at Fenway Park, Go Sox!”

In addition to being a “Sox” fan Chris likes high tech home audio/video electronics. “Of course I’m way behind the technology curve living in Fayetteville.” But Chris loves FarmLinks and says it was truly a “great two and a half years working as the assistant superintendent!



*Chris Derrick spends more time presenting seminars and working behind a desk for Agrium, Inc. these days, but sometimes misses being out on the course.*