

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Midwest Groundcovers Gets New President

Chris Beytes



One of the largest nursery growers in the Midwest, the aptly named Midwest Groundcovers, has appointed Paul Pirkle as president. Paul takes over from Board chair Christa Orum-Keller, daughter of founder Peter Orum, who's been serving as president since the retirement of Gary Knosher.

Paul, who holds an MBA from Liberty University and a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Minor in Management from Hanover College, isn't from our industry—he comes to Midwest from positions in recycling, brokerage and commercial printing servicing the fleet, retail, OEM and consumer products markets. He most recently served as President of Mid

America Paper Recycling, a \$50-million national recycling firm and scrap processor.

Wanting to learn a bit more, I asked Christa via email why they selected Paul, a non-horticulture person, for the role.

“Our most important goal in recruiting for the role was a strong cultural fit, combined with the essential leadership and business skills,” she answered. “Paul and I have known each other through a business leader peer group for several years. After our Midwest team’s interviewing of him and other candidates, we feel confident that he is the right person for the job, and with only a couple weeks working together, we’re already feeling affirmed in that.” **GT**