



PGA

Kentucky Section

2017 KPGA DEACON PALMER AWARD NOMINATION

Name of Nominee: Charles Whelan
Facility Name: Ben Hawes GC
Facility Address: 400 Booth Field Rd, Owensboro, KY. 42303
Facility Phone Number: 270-687-7137
Nominee E-mail Address: whelance@owensboro.org

1. Please describe the nominee's service and commitment for others and their success regardless of situation.

Charles has always used his PGA membership to serve golfers and grow the game the best he can. For the past eight years he has spent his evenings teaching and running The First Tee of Owensboro. A program that reaches 225 children annually at Ben Hawes golf course. Through his leadership and PGA training he is not only teaching the children golf but also many important values that only golf can teach.

2. Please describe the nominee's performance and service to the Association, fellow PGA Members, and the community to include contributions to building and growing the image of the PGA Professional, the Association and the game of golf while dealing with their own personal difficulty.

Charles always kept his membership active even through lung cancer and a lymphoma scare. He continued to be active at his jobs pre and post surgeries and continued to grow The First Tee of Owensboro. This included traveling to schools to teach juniors golf and also holding the regular junior classes at Ben Hawes. This has continued to the point of being a leader in the Owensboro area in the PGA Junior League initiative and also in joining and being re-elected for the Kentucky PGA Board of Directors.

3. Please describe the nominee's significant impacts made on others and ability to inspire and encourage success and achievement in individuals regardless of the personal challenges they face.

Charles has used his experiences in helping others with difficulties by being someone to talk to and lend an ear. Whether it is a stroke victim taking a lesson

or someone with a disability trying golf for the first time. He has an uncanny ability to empathize with them because he knows how difficult the game can be with physical limitations. This has helped his teaching skills and leadership at Ben Hawes and with The First Tee. Sometimes the best thing a PGA member can do is just listen and try to understand the person's situation.

4. Please describe how the nominee has had significant influence on Golf Professionals, facilities, and employers in the effort to assist others and better the community.

Charles has continuously reached out to PGA professionals in the Owensboro area trying to help them with different events. Recently through the PGA junior League and growing the area's teams to five teams in 2016. He has recently given away 250 free golf lessons to help the Parks Department grow the golf courses pass program and has always supported the PGA initiative's as much as possible, trying to introduce a new one every year.

5. Please provide any additional information regarding the nominee and his/her contributions relevant to The Deacon Palmer Award.

I think it's important that to know that dealing with lung cancer at age 35 was challenging for my career and personal life. To have a tumor removed five years later and led to believe it was lymphoma for a few weeks could have been devastating. Lying in the hospital both times I truly thought about golf and the game a lot. When I managed to get back to work I had a new found appreciation for what I did and decided to contribute even more. I tried to implement more PGA initiatives, I expanded our reach with the First Tee program and personally I took on more responsibility with the Kentucky section. This led me to run for the KPGA BOD and a decision I find one of my most gratifying. It also gave me a better understanding of family and how to be supportive to others when they are in crisis or difficult situations. The PGA is more than just growing the game but it's also about giving back to golf and growing the values this great sport taught us at a young age. This is why I joined the PGA of America and why I will remain a member for life and I hope I can do as much as the members before me have done to make it the success it is today.

6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received.
None