



PGA

Kentucky Section

2018 KPGA DEACON PALMER AWARD NOMINATION

Name of Nominee: Eric C.C. Gilliland
Facility Name: Audubon Country Club
Facility Address: 3265 Robin Road
Facility Phone Number: 502.637.5625
Nominee E-mail Address: golfshop@auduboncc.org

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

Growing up the son of a U.S. Army pilot, the importance of service, respect, and putting others before self were ingrained in me at a very young age. As a college student, those values were manifested as an officer with my college chapter of Habitat for Humanity and philanthropic efforts with Beta Theta Pi fraternity.

Professionally, I have found that putting the individual goals of my staff before my operational goals is the formula for building an outstanding golf operation. This philosophy begins with being a good listener. I believe that if I come to know what is important to the members of my team, I will be able to help them achieve their goals. In return for my commitment to their success, my staff demonstrates a unique loyalty and desire to exceed my expectations and those of our membership.

My staff and I work tirelessly to anticipate the needs of our membership, constantly working to enhance the member and guest experience. We are always in pursuit of innovation and new technologies to make our programming fresh and more enjoyable. I thoroughly enjoy coming to the club every day surrounded by self-motivated individuals who are committed to serving the membership and making each other better. Their success while on my staff and beyond is one of the greatest rewards of my position.

I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to serve the Kentucky Section PGA in a number of different ways since my election to membership in 1996. Although I worked with and for a number of PGA members early in my career, I learned from Dick Bradow, PGA and Mike Riley, PGA that section involvement is the responsibility of every PGA member. They demonstrated, by example, that not only do we have an obligation to our association to contribute, but it is critical to our professional development. I quickly became involved as an assistant professional, serving on the Kentucky Section Communications and Membership

Committees. During that time I regularly contributed articles to the section newsletter “Forethoughts” and wrote the section submission for PGA Magazine. Once established as a head professional, I enjoyed three terms as KPGA Director, chairing both the Tournament and Sponsorship Committees.

After serving six years on the KPGA Board of Directors, I shifted my focus to coaching youth sports. I found that coaching middle school basketball was a terrific way to reconnect with my family during the off-season. I found the opportunity to have a significant shared experience with them to be truly special. Over 15 years of coaching boys and girls basketball there were so many unique rewards. Two PGA staff members helped me coach a boys’ team to a city final four. My step-son Tony and I coached my son Conner’s team to a city championship. I assisted my father-in-law in coaching my daughter, Libby, to a 6th grade city final. I was fortunate to be able to coach her 7th and 8th grade teams as well.

An unintended consequence of my basketball relationships was how many players to whom I became a golf instructor. One of the boys I coached as a 6th grader, now a high school junior, Lee Hurst will be competed for a state golf championship and intends to play golf in college. Our instructor/student relationship began with the rapport we developed in the gym. This is simply one example of how the PGA Professional can have a positive influence in the community by engaging outside of his/her facility.

Since my diagnosis, my focus on family has been understandably acute. When asked to participate in KPGA initiatives, I have been selective. Fittingly, I was approached by Lindsay Williams, wife of District 10 Director, Kelly Williams, about a new initiative. We discussed the void in support for spouses who marry into a remarkably demanding profession. We looked at opportunities to connect families who could benefit from one another’s shared experiences. From these discussions the PGA Connect concept was born. I applaud Lindsay’s passion for this initiative and could not be more proud to partner with her in the pilot we have begun in Kentucky. The support we have received from Darrell Crall, Suzy Whaley, Kim Shafer, and Steve McMillen was invaluable in getting the project off the ground. It is our belief that these organic connections will help us to keep quality PGA members in the business by fostering support and understanding of the day to day responsibilities of the profession. We also believe there is an opportunity to engage these families in supporting the charitable initiatives of the KPGA. The interest we are receiving from other sections is very exciting and gives us hope the pilot will become a national model for bringing together PGA families.

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.

The most significant recent contribution to the Association is my work through PGA Golf Day to benefit the Colon Cancer Prevention Project and Kentucky Golf Foundation. In 2014, with my daughter Libby as my caddie, I began playing 100 holes to raise funds and awareness for these worthy organizations. The mission of the CCCP is to drastically reduce colon cancer incidence in the state of Kentucky. We are proud to be a part of Kentucky's declining colon cancer mortality rate due to raised awareness, increased screenings, and influence on the state legislature for favorable policies. The other half of our funds raised have gone to benefit the Kentucky Golf Foundation which supports the following initiatives:

PGA Reach Kentucky

Kentucky Golf Hall of Fame

Kentucky Golf Museum

In our first year working together, Libby and I raised \$5,950. In 2015, we were able to increase that slightly to \$6,110. In 2016, we partnered with my senior assistant, Chris Wilson and my son Conner to raise \$10,915. In 2017, we had our most successful PGA Golf Day to date, raising \$16,557 for our designated charities.

In 2007, I met with an Audubon Country Club family about creating an event in honor of their special needs son, Cole Herrick. Cole was born with a long list of developmental issues which would require many surgeries and institutional support. Kosair Charities covered almost all of the expenses related to Cole's care, a number which would have broken almost any family. The Herricks wanted to give back to the charity which had given so much to their family. We had the first Cole's Classic to benefit Kosair Charities on September 26th, 2007. In its five year run as Cole's Classic and three years as the Kosair Classic, the event raised over \$400,000. These funds were used exclusively to help children cover the cost of their medical needs in Kentucky and Indiana.

When Kosair had a change in vision in 2015, I wanted to continue hosting an event that would be close to my heart and that would be embraced by our membership. That spring, with the help of a committee of Audubon members who had been impacted by colon cancer, I created the Colon One Golf Scramble. Although our player base was small, we raised significant funds and were able to reach a new audience to encourage symptom awareness and screening. In 2016 we were able to grow the event slightly. More importantly, we gained interest from local gastroenterologists. With their support, on October 16, 2017, we proudly held a 122 player event, raising a net profit of \$22,113.02 for the Colon Cancer Prevention Project.

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.

I believe that what I have been able to accomplish, post-diagnosis, is a testament to early symptom recognition. I have made a point of talking openly about an uncomfortable topic in the hopes that a preventable disease can be defeated. The summer after my recovery from surgery I achieved my goal of competing in the Kentucky Open at Hurstbourne Country Club. Although I was only 115 pounds, I was able to endure near 100 degree temperatures and very difficult course conditions in completion of the tournament. That was a special achievement for me and my family with my father-in-law on my bag to see me through. The support and encouragement I received from my peers was overwhelming. Each year that I remain cancer free is a blessing I do not intend to waste.

After 15 years of coaching middle school basketball, Presentation Academy gave me the opportunity to coach golf at the high school level. I just completed my second season as the assistant golf coach. I truly enjoy developing young players and recruiting young women into competitive golf.

We have so many unsung PGA heroes who are using all of their spare moments to make our communities better. I believe that PGA Professional has a unique opportunity, if not responsibility, to make a positive impact on a daily basis. We are truly blessed to have men, women, and juniors trust us with their recreational time and discretionary dollars. We are a very important part of the lives of so many people affording us a platform to do great things. As a young professional, I never could have imagined using my position to positively impact the health decisions of club members and students. To have people tell me that they have been screened or had someone screened as a result of one of my efforts is truly rewarding.

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.

I am very fortunate to be asked to advise fellow professionals and employers on a regular basis. In a collaborative way, we work to achieve goals that are honestly obtained through hard work, placing others before self. Whether through our work with golfers, grade school teams, or local charities, I am hopeful that that my personal and professional efforts will always have a positive impact on the community.

5. Please provide any additional information regarding the nominee and his/her contributions relevant to The Deacon Palmer Award.
6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received.

2017 Kentucky PGA – Deacon Palmer Award (National Finalist)
2016 Kentucky PGA – Deacon Palmer Award (National Finalist)
2014 Kentucky PGA – Co-merchandiser of the Year, Private
2013 Kentucky PGA – Merchandiser of the Year, Private
2010 Kentucky PGA – Bill Strausbaugh Award
2008 Kentucky PGA – Horton Smith Award
2005 Kentucky PGA – Bill Strausbaugh Award
2004 Kentucky PGA – Golf Professional of the Year
2002 Kentucky PGA – Merchandiser of the Year (National Finalist)



PGA
Kentucky Section

2018 KPGA DEACON PALMER AWARD NOMINATION

Name of Nominee: Kirk Schooley
Facility Name: Juniper Hill Golf Course
Facility Address: 800 Louisville Road, Frankfort, KY 40601
Facility Phone Number: (502) 875-8559
Nominee E-mail Address: kschooley@frankfort.ky.gov

The nomination form should be typewritten.

1. Please describe the nominee's service and commitment for others and their success regardless of situation.
 - 1) Nominee served on the Kentucky PGA Board of Directors for many years and has been involved with Big-Brothers-Big Sisters on several occasions over the years (until he got too old). He also hosts numerous fund raisers at Juniper Hill for many youth organizations.

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.
 - 2) Nominee hosted PGA Jr. League Team, Junior Golf Clinics, as well as full schedule of men's & women's events including the Annual Governor's Open featuring top playing professionals from all across the country, while at the same time: caretaking a parent full-time; unfortunately having to plan her funeral mid-summer; receiving 6 blood transfusions for a bleeding ulcer; and finally, dealing with a cancer diagnosis. Other than that it was a fairly uneventful year!

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.
3) Hopefully, golfers at Juniper Hill did not notice any decline in pro shop enthusiasm and guidance for their events and golf games despite some health challenges from the nominee.
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.
4) Nominee has hosted numerous free golf clinics for young people and beginning women golfers each golf season. Nominee has also created an outing schedule which raises over \$250,000 annually for local non-profit organizations.
5. Please provide any additional information regarding the nominee and his/her contributions relevant to The Deacon Palmer Award.
6. Please list any Section or National awards the nominee has received.
Player of the Year 1993, 1997, & 1998.
Senior Player of the Year 2015.

Deadline – January 2, 2018

Return forms to:
Kentucky PGA
Golf House Kentucky
1116 Elmore Just Drive
Louisville, KY 40245
(502) 243-9266 fax

Email Word documents to:
csaner@kygolf.org

2018 KPGA Deacon Palmer Award Nomination

Name of Nominee: Denny Thompson

Facility Name: University of Louisville Golf Club

Facility Address: 401 Champions Way, Simpsonville, KY 40067

Facility Phone Number: 502-852-7064

Nominee E-mail Address: Denny@GoCards.com

1. I have always been committed to building the reputation and contributing to help build the success of others regardless of personal challenges and giving back to others.
2. I continue (after 25 plus years) to inspire, promote, host, participate, teach and give back to the game and the golf industry and local community. I have had the privilege to work at public, private, for profit and non-profit facilities in this community and contribute to the golf industry. I have had the honor to work with, for and aside so many other local PGA professionals and have the opportunity to inspire, grow and maintain the image of a first class PGA professional. In 25 plus years, I have built and maintained an honorable and hard-working reputation in the local community.
3. In the past 25 plus years in the golf business, I have always encouraged young professionals to follow their heart and dreams to be what they want to be. I continue to preach and teach that regardless of my personal challenges.
4. I have always tried to lead and teach by example with a dedicated work ethic. I teach to work hard and treat everyone the same, fair and honest and to create a fun work environment to work in.
5. I continue to work and inspire others to achieve, work hard and continue to promote the game of golf which has given back to me and help overcome my personal challenge. Work is a security zone to forget my health challenges.
6. Quarter Century Award



PGA

Kentucky Section

2018 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 _____

The nomination form should be typewritten.

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 nine years he has spent his evenings teaching and running the Owensboro Junior Golf Foundation. A program that reaches 225 children annually at Ben Hawes golf course and over 3,000 in the school programs. Through his leadership and PGA training he is not only teaching the children golf but also many important values that only golf can teach.

He served last year as the Assistants/Apprentice Committee Chairperson and tried to use his experiences in leadership roles to help foster participation within the group.

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 Owensboro Junior Golf Foundation.

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 being active on the Kentucky PGA Board of Directors for the three previous years.

His Junior League team has grown each of the past three seasons and has reached into Southern Indiana. His role with the Owensboro League has been pivotal in keeping the league going throughout the three years with his willingness to take on the overall league responsibilities.

As leader of the AA Committee he used his leadership skills to help boost the overall perception and commitment of the assistants within the Kentucky Section.

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 Owensboro Junior Golf Foundation. He has talked to several employees and Ben Hawes members going through similar situations. Whether it is cancer or knee surgery they know he will lend a helping hand.

He has used his experiences and difficulties to teach kids in the OJGF what overcoming real obstacles are like and how it can make you a better person and leader. How even during difficult times you need someone to talk to and share what you are experiencing and never be afraid to ask for help.

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 and growing their facilities. He helped keep the PGA Junior League alive in the Owensboro area by taking on a leadership role and looking for ways the

kids could compete. He gave away 200 free golf lessons to help the Parks Department grow the golf courses pass program in 2017 and is schedule for another 250 free lessons in 2018. He has always supported the PGA initiative's as much as possible, strives to introduce a new one every year.

In 2017 he started volunteering for a local girls high school golf team. This allowed him to help teach the young women solid fundamentals and help them overcome obstacles on and off the golf course.

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

I think it's important 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 PGA of America a lot. When I managed to get back to on my feet I had a new found appreciation for work and the career path I had chosen, this made me want to contribute my time to other members and golfers in general. I tried to implement more PGA initiatives, I expanded our reach with the Owensboro Junior Golf Foundation and personally I took on more responsibility with the Kentucky section. This led me to run for the KPGA BOD a decision I find one of my most gratifying. For the past three years I served as a Director At Large for the Kentucky Section, set on numerous committees and chaired the Assistants/Apprentice Committee in 2017. During that time I became Certified in General Management and are currently working on two other certifications within the PGA program.

It has also given 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.

Nada, Zippo, Zilch-YET;)

Deadline – January 2, 2018

Return forms to:
Kentucky PGA
Golf House Kentucky
1116 Elmore Just Drive
Louisville, KY 40245
(502) 243-9266 fax

Email Word documents to:
csaner@kygolf.org.