



# PGA

Philadelphia Section

For Immediate Release

## Philadelphia PGA Announces 2018 Special Award Winners, Highlighted By Golf Professional of the Year, Patrick Shine

Lower Gwynedd Township, PA., December 17, 2018 ... The Philadelphia Section, PGA of America, today announced its 2018 Special Award Winners, highlighted by Golf Professional of the Year, Patrick Shine, the PGA Director of Golf at Commonwealth National Golf Club, in Horsham, Pennsylvania. In total, the Philadelphia PGA, through its Special Award Committee, chose 11 winners for 2018 out of 140 PGA Professionals who were nominated for awards this past season, including:

- Golf Professional of the Year
  - Patrick Shine, PGA Director of Golf, Commonwealth National Golf Club, Horsham, PA
- Teacher of the Year
  - John Bierkan, PGA Director of Instruction, Aronimink Golf Club, Newtown Square, PA
- Assistant Golf Professional of the Year
  - Ashley Grier, PGA Assistant Golf Professional, Overbrook Golf Club, Villanova, PA
- Horton Smith Award
  - John Dunigan, PGA Golf Professional, White Manor Country Club, Malvern, PA
- Bill Strausbaugh Award
  - Dean Kandle, PGA Head Golf Professional, St. Davids Golf Club, Wayne, PA
- Player Development Award
  - Gerry Davis, PGA Head Golf Professional, Flourtown Country Club, Flourtown, PA
- Youth Player Development Award
  - Andy Miller, PGA Director of Instruction, LedgeRock Golf Club, Mohnton, PA
- PGA Patriot Award
  - John Carpineta, PGA Golf Professional, Bensalem Township Golf Club, Bensalem, PA
- Merchandiser of the Year – Resort
  - Sara Muldoon, PGA Director of Golf, Hershey Country Club, Hershey, PA
- Merchandiser of the Year – Public
  - Dustin McCormick, PGA Head Golf Professional, Glen Brook Golf Club, Stroudsburg, PA
- Golf Salesperson of the Year
  - Kevin McClellan, Sales Professional, Heritage Creations/Cutter & Buck, Eastern Pennsylvania, Southern NJ and Delaware Regions

### Golf Professional of the Year

A 20-year PGA Member, and the Philadelphia PGA's 2017 PGA Merchandiser of the Year – Private facilities, Patrick Shine has been named the 2018 Golf Professional of the Year, the highest recognition the Section bestows annually on a distinguished member.

For Shine, his entire life has centered on the golf business, starting as a caddie in the 8th grade, and studying the PGA Professionals he worked under for many years. From that time, he knew he wanted to follow in their footsteps.

During the past two decades, including the past 13 years as PGA Director of Golf at Commonwealth National, Shine has done just that, while standing out among his peers for exceptional leadership and customer service expertise. Leading by example is Shine's trademark for work, life, family and community, and when it comes to relationships and respect, he has no equal. Each and every day for

Shine is defined by treating employees, no matter the level, as well as every club member, with the ultimate respect, while creating relationships that transcend business.

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Today, Shine is one of only 155 PGA Members, out of a membership of nearly 29,000 men and women, to hold three or more advanced certifications, including Instruction/Player Development, Retail Merchandising and Golf Operations.

“A hands-on approach works best for me; I have done the job of every subordinate, giving me perspective on their needs and wants,” said Shine. “I can literally place myself in their shoes and have a deep understanding of what I can do to make them more successful. There is not a job or chore that I won’t tackle. Each of our golf employees follows my lead and everyone pulls together to ensure the best golf experience for members and guests.”

Having a strong passion for teaching, and recognizing the impact of player development, Shine demands a strong emphasis on teaching and coaching from his entire staff. That is the cornerstone of his entire operation, as he believes that Player Development is the single most important role of any golf professional ... driving players to play better and play more often is a recipe for a successful golf club. All of his golf professionals are also encouraged to cultivate a teaching book, and they are scheduled to accommodate a member’s needs for coaching at all times.

He also places a laser-like focus on his junior program, which is led by his CNGC assistant Professional, Dan Mrozinski, combining an intramural program every Sunday in season, with PGA Junior League and a “travel” team within the Colonial League. During his tenure at Commonwealth, Shine also designed and oversaw the construction of a 600 sq. ft. teaching studio equipped with Flight Scope, which has doubled club and lesson sales in the off-season, allowing his staff to teach 364 days per year.

In addition to his success at Commonwealth, Shine’s dedication to his profession, and his fellow PGA members, has been extensive during his years in the Philadelphia Section. In addition to his current role as Junior Golf Chairman, a position he has held since 2011, he served as District VI Director from 2011-2014, Director of Section Affairs from 2015-2016 and he is currently the Philadelphia Section PGA Secretary, a position he was elected to in 2017.

Patrick Shine’s unmatched commitment to being a successful PGA Professional started in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and it has never waned, guiding him all the way to becoming the 2018 PGA Professional of the Year.

“After being recognized by my peers for such an award you begin to reflect on all the people that you have crossed paths with along this journey,” Shine reflected. “From mentors, like Brian Cairns, who was an assistant professional at the club that I began caddying as kid in Michigan, it was seeing him interact with the membership that made me decide at that time that I wanted to become a club professional. To my first boss out of college, Gary Huebner, a professional that set the standard for how to conduct yourself and operate a golf operation.

You begin to recall the financial struggles as an assistant professional and the many miles traveled from club to club as you learn the business, as well as the many failures and successes during those times. I am blessed to have the love and support of my wife, Toni and my daughter Taryn, who often sacrifice with the time required of all PGA Professionals. I am grateful to have a wonderful place to work and being surrounded by a terrific group of members at Commonwealth National for the past 13 years.

We have a tremendously talented collection of over 800 PGA Professionals in the Philadelphia Section, in addition to the Professionals that have won this award and it is tremendously humbling to be singled out amongst such elite company. I want to use this award as a springboard as I move along as a member of the Section’s Board of Directors, to continue to highlight the value of PGA Professionals both on the golf course and in our communities. This recognition is a starting line not a finish line.”

## Teacher of the Year

The Teacher of the Year Award is designed to recognize a PGA Professional who is an outstanding teacher of golf among the ranks of PGA membership. This award is based on a professional's overall performance in teaching; unusual, innovative and special teaching programs initiated or implemented; articles published; as well as outstanding golfers the professional has instructed. The 2018 recipient of the Teacher of the Year Award is John Bierkan, PGA Director of Instruction at Aronimink Golf Club in Newtown Square, PA.

An accomplished, award-winning teacher, Bierkan was also the Philadelphia PGA Teacher of the Year in 2014 and has been recognized as one of the Golf Digest Best Young Teachers in America every year since 2010. He is also a talented player having qualified for the PGA Professional Championship from 2011-2016.

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According to Bierkan, "Being a strong player is not a prerequisite to being a great teacher. However, if you can do both I believe it's a winning combination and adds validity to who you are as a teacher. Having the ability to demonstrate and play well in tournaments is a great example to our students. The lessons we learn on the golf course and in competition can be passed along to our students."

Passing on his expertise to students is something Bierkan does with great passion, as well as unmatched frequency. In fact, from April 11-October 21 of 2018, he gave an estimated 725 hours of private lessons, 65 hours of weekly junior clinics, 24 hours of ladies clinics and 20 hours of instruction at Aronimink's summer junior program.

The wisdom and knowledge he imparts on students of all ages and playing levels is born off years of studying the teaching profession from the game's best minds. As a student of his profession, Bierkan participated in over 40 schools, clinics, workshops and certification programs from 2014 through 2018.

Further validating his credentials as Teacher of the Year, Bierkan has become an in-demand teaching expert, having participated as a guest speaker at dozens of teaching seminars and summits through his career, while also serving as published author and frequent instruction contributor to Golf Digest and other publications.

"Being awarded the Teacher of the Year Award in the Philadelphia PGA Section is very humbling," said Bierkan. "We have a Section filled with many first-class professionals and teachers and to be recognized among them in this way is a true honor. This wouldn't be possible without the nomination from Chip Richter, PGA, the support of Jeff Kiddie, my boss and Head Professional at Aronimink Golf Club and the many members who have supported me over the years. Growing up in the golf business, being the son of a longtime PGA Professional in Connecticut, this award is extra special. I am very thankful for the countless PGA Members, Family and Friends that have supported me over the years."

## Assistant Golf Professional of the Year Award

The Assistant Golf Professional of the Year is designed to recognize an individual who has displayed the qualities and attributes for what it takes to become an outstanding PGA Professional. The 2018 recipient is Ashley Grier, PGA Assistant Golf Professional at Overbrook Golf Club in Villanova, PA.

An accomplished player, and former member of the LPGA Futures (now Symetra) Tour, Grier made history in 2017 when she became the first female PGA Professional in the Philadelphia PGA Sections' 95-year history to win a points event. She also earned a spot in the 2018 the KMPG Women's PGA Championship. In addition to those accomplishments, and prior to her arrival in the Philadelphia PGA, Grier was a four-time Middle Atlantic PGA Women's Player of the Year.

She also has a PGA of America Winter's Series win on her resume after she took home the top spot at the 2013 PGA Women's Championship. Grier is also no stranger to National Championships as she competed in the 2007 U.S. Women's Open.

In her role as an Assistant Golf Professional at Overbrook GC, Grier brings the same passion to her job as she does to her competitive game, balancing a full schedule of teaching, merchandising, tournament operations, playing, and member relations. She is also an active participant in both the Golf and Greens Committees, while helping run clinics, junior programs and being actively involved in numerous volunteer initiatives, such as Philadelphia PGA Reach Program, PGA Golf Day Marathon and the PGA Hope Veterans Program, among others. All of these experiences, along with being the daughter of a PGA Professional, has helped position Grier as one of the Section's rising young PGA Members.

"I am honored to have received the Philadelphia PGA Assistant of the year award," said Grier. "I've only been in the Philadelphia Section for three years and I often feel most people think of me as just a good player, but I am more proud to be known as a good person and a great golf professional. I hope that my enthusiasm and passion for my job and the game of golf can inspire others to work hard both on and off the course, knowing that you don't have to sacrifice one for the other and you can be successful in both areas."

"I also consider myself lucky to be at Overbrook Golf Club and working for head professional Eric Kennedy. Eric has been an incredible role model and has taught me so much in the three years I have been working for him. With such a great membership and amazing staff, I truly love working there. If you love the game of golf and love what you do it makes being a golf professional a very fulfilling job."

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### **Horton Smith Award**

The PGA Horton Smith Award recognizes the PGA Professional who is the model educator of PGA Golf Professionals. This award is designed to give special recognition to a PGA Professional for outstanding and continuing contributions to professional education.

The 2018 recipient is John Dunigan, PGA Golf Professional at White Manor Country Club in Malvern, PA. A PGA Master Teaching Professional and PGA Tour Coach, Dunigan's reputation and award-winning accomplishments are unrivaled. He's a book author, published writer on teaching and instruction, and an in-demand speaker at conferences and seminars nationwide. Among his many honors include: Philadelphia PGA Teacher of the Year in 2008, 2015 and 2017; Golf Digest Top 50 Teacher in 2017; Golf Magazine Top Teachers in 2016; Golf Range Magazine Top 50 in 2015 and 2016; and US Kids Golf Top 50 Jr. Golf Leader in 2012.

In his new book, Hole It! Dunigan provides a guide for golfers in to developing expert level skills and shooting lower scores by making more putts when it counts. Dunigan delivers his unique approach to coaching and learning through no-nonsense skill-building exercises, key concepts, technical improvement, and practical mental game coaching that have worked for golfers of all ability levels. Dunigan is also regarded for taking high level instructional information, such as in biomechanics, ground forces and motor learning, and simplifying it for professionals, as well as everyday golfers. He has also successfully collaborated with motor learning doctor, Will Wu, on a program for professionals called, The Coaching Connection, which they are turning into a certification course that will help professionals teach better, change their student's lives, and make more money while doing so.

"One of my favorite aspects of my job is education," said Dunigan. "I love to attend, host, and present at various programs in our section and outside of it. Serving as a mentor to several young professionals and sharing my experience as a long time PGA Member is an honor that I value very highly. The Horton Smith Award is a wonderful recognition of what I see as an essential part of my job: sharing back and forth with my fellow Professionals."

### **Bill Strausbaugh Award**

The Bill Strausbaugh Award recognizes a PGA Professional who mentors fellow PGA Professionals by improving their employment situations through service to the community. The 2018 Bill Strausbaugh Award recipient is Dean Kandle, PGA Head Golf Professional at St. Davids Golf Club in Wayne, PA.

Kandle epitomizes the term mentor and has dedicated his career to giving back to his fellow PGA Members. In his position as the Head Professional at St. Davids, he has been committed to furthering the careers of each of his fellow staff members, many who have gone on to earn leadership positions throughout the industry.

Among his mentorship techniques, and to help guide the current staff at St. Davids Golf Club, Kandle meets in private for 30 minutes each week during the season. After catching up on what's happening at home and at the club, they spend the last 10 minutes talking about the Professional's future, and setting goals to reach the next career level.

In order to create a wider impact on his fellow PGA Professionals, in April 2017 Kandle created a website known as Golf Professional Growth ([www.golfprofessionalgrowth.com](http://www.golfprofessionalgrowth.com)). With the tagline of "Work Smarter, Live Better," the content is focused on generating awareness on how the modern PGA Professional can better manage their time, lead their people and improve themselves. The goal of the site is further the values of the Association and the golf profession as a whole through one singular focus ... commitment: Commitment to the Game, Commitment to Leadership and Commitment to Growth. Through this unique online platform, Kandle can promote constant growth and education and guide fellow members to learn from his lifetime of experiences.

"Knowing the legacy of Bill Strausbaugh, being recognized with this honor makes it even more special," said Kandle. "There have been so many PGA Professionals that I've looked up to for help during my career, that giving back to others can only begin to repay my gratitude for that assistance. One of the special aspects of our business is the commitment to helping each other succeed, and I appreciate all of the people that I've been able to work with and impact in a small way."

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### **Player Development Award**

The Player Development Award is designed to recognize a PGA Professional for extraordinary, exemplary contributions and achievements in the area of player development. The 2018 recipient, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year, is Gerry Davis, PGA Head Golf Professional at Flourtown Country Club in Flourtown, PA.

Highlighting the intangibles that earned Davis the repeat honor include his dedication to Section and community activities that focus on cultivating golfers on many levels, such as being a member of the Player Development and Education Committees; and volunteering at the Philadelphia Golf Show, ShopRite LPGA Tournament, Drive, Chip and Putt qualifiers, and PGA Hope Program for Veterans.

In his duties at Flourtown CC, Davis epitomizes the drive and desire needed to grow the game, and develop players. One of his unique best practice creations is "Golf at the Pool," a program which brings golf to Flourtown's more than 1,200 pool members, and has directly led to golf membership growth. In addition, Davis' Golf 101 for Ladies is a big hit, as he conducts 3 levels of player development for women, including a 'Golf and Wine Clinic,' 'Bring a Friend Clinic' and 'I want to win the Club Championship Clinic.' Davis' passion also resonates at the junior level, as he has been instrumental in growing Flourtown's PGA Junior League Golf since 2014. In addition, he makes certain his spirited golf programming remains expansive and inclusive by working with the Special Olympics, hosting local High School golf teams and conducting clinics for adults and kids during his annual community "Growing the Game" initiative.

"I am once again extremely honored and humbled to have been awarded the Philadelphia Section Player Development Award for 2018," said Davis. I am excited to be recognized as a leader in growing the game of golf and service to the PGA. I am passionate about changing lives and love

what I do every day. Above all, it is an honor to be part of the Philadelphia Section PGA and their dedicated Professionals.”

### Youth Player Development Award

The Youth Player Development Award is designed to recognize a PGA Professional who has displayed extraordinary, exemplary contribution and achievement in the area of player development. The 2018 Youth Player Development Award recipient is Andy Miller, PGA Director of Instruction at LedgeRock Golf Club in Mohnton, PA.

An accomplished, award-winning PGA Professional, Miller has received numerous honors and accolades throughout his career for his work with youth player development, including: Philadelphia PGA Junior Golf Leader Award in 2013; US Kids Golf Top 50 Instructor in 2013 and 2014; US Kids Golf Master Teacher in 2016; Golf Range Association Top 50 Growth of Game Instructor in 2016 and 2017; and Golf Digest Best Teacher in State 2017-2018. He is also a frequent guest speaker on the topic of building successful junior programs at conferences and seminars around the country, including the PGA Merchandise Show.

Miller has had the opportunity to serve on the Philadelphia Section’s Player Development Committee and currently serves as the Chairperson for the Philadelphia Section Instruction Committee. Further, he’s been part of the local Berks County Junior Golf Association Championship for the past 3 years and has helped to grow junior golf tremendously in the area.

Since moving to LedgeRock Golf Club in 2015, Miller has driven tremendous growth in the junior golf programming at the facility. He started a Junior Ladder Program with 6 levels that gives juniors a clear path to becoming an elite player. He also grew the PGA Junior League Program from 10-36 participants which enabled LedgeRock to host its own league. And, he started a Fall Junior Team Golf Program that had 24 participants in each of the first two seasons, 32 players by year three and then 36 in 2018.

“Receiving this award is extremely gratifying in the sense that it is selected by my peers,” said Miller. “It means that other PGA Golf Professionals think I’m doing a great job in developing young boys and girls not only as golfers, but as young men and women. I take great pride in what I do, and am blessed to have the opportunity to work with such amazing juniors.”

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### PGA Patriot Award

The PGA Patriot Award bestows special recognition on a PGA Golf Professional, who personifies patriotism through the game of golf and demonstrates unwavering commitment and dedication to the men and women who have valiantly served and protected the United States of America. The 2018 Patriot Award recipient, for the second consecutive year, is John Carpineta, PGA Golf Professional at Bensalem Township Golf Club, in Bensalem, PA. In addition to winning his second straight Patriot Award, Carpineta also won the 2015 Philadelphia PGA Player Development Award, as well as both the 2006 and 2011 President’s Council on Growing the Game, which is a national award.

Along with serving on the Section’s Player Development Committee, Carpineta co-chairs the PGA HOPE (Helping Our Patriots Everywhere) program, along with the Wounded Warriors Project and Philly VA Amputee Swing endeavor. Having served in the military himself and having attended many seminars dealing with vets and military personnel, Carpineta has acquired a sense and feel for the needs of his students beyond the lesson tee. By combining his service experience with the requirements of military golf programs he feels prepared to help his students in ways unrelated to golf. He has now added some different items to his standard “teaching aids” that make students feel relaxed with him, both as teacher, comrade and confidant.

In concert with his desire to help Veterans, and as a basis for winning the Patriots Award two years running, Carpineta was largely responsible for securing Bensalem Township Golf Club as the new home location for the PGA HOPE program, after the previous site lost its lease. Now, moving forward, and under the direction of Carpineta, PGA HOPE can reach new heights in using golf to enhance the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of Veterans with disabilities.

“Once again, I am proud to be chosen for the Patriot Award for my work with PGA HOPE,” said Carpineta. “This program is my passion and to be honored twice for work that I love is truly humbling.”

### **Merchandiser of the Year (RESORT)**

The Merchandiser of the Year Award is designed to recognize a PGA Professional who has excelled as business person/merchandiser in the promotion of golf. The PGA honors PGA Professionals in three categories: Private, Public and Resort facilities. The 2018 Merchandiser of the Year (Resort) is Sara Muldoon, PGA Director of Golf at Hershey Country Club in Hershey, PA.

In winning her third award (2015-2016 Merchandiser of the Year – Resort) Muldoon remains in unique situation, whereby Hershey Entertainment and Resorts owns the golf merchandise concession at Hershey Country Club. As a result, all earnings from Hershey Country Club help to fund students at the Milton Hershey School, a private philanthropic boarding school in Hershey, PA., which was established for impoverished, healthy, male and female orphans of various backgrounds.

“It is truly an honor for Hershey Country Club to win this award. We continue to raise the bar in our golf shop in terms of products and service to our customers year after year,” said Muldoon.

Muldoon’s key to success to golf shop centers on a full understanding “who” Hershey’s customer is, thus ensuring that orders are tailored to the individual. Aside of seasonal weather-related issues that club deals with, Muldoon looks at all challenges as opportunities when it comes to merchandising, such as managing dead zones, like a window area, handicap computer area and a wall area outside the golf shop office. Her team’s focus on these areas has paid off with a sales increase of 9.54 % in just one year.

Muldoon’s overall merchandising philosophy for Hershey Country Club begins by asking five key customer questions - Who? What? When? Where? And How? By knowing the answers to these questions, and continually evolving with trends in the marketplace, she truly believes that her operation will enjoy consistent and continued success.

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### **Merchandiser of the Year (PUBLIC)**

As with the Resort category, the Merchandiser of the Year Award for Public facilities is designed to recognize a PGA Professional who has excelled as business person/merchandiser in the promotion of golf. The 2018 Merchandiser of the Year (Public) is Dustin McCormick, PGA Head Golf Professional at Glen Brook Golf Club in Stroudsburg, PA.

McCormick, who has owned the golf shop at Glen Brook for the past 5 years, is solely focused on the customer experience and trains his staff to go out of their way to welcome and assist customers, without too much interference that will impede a sale.

“It is an absolute honor to receive the Philadelphia PGA MOY Public award for 2018,” said McCormick. “There is so much talent within our Section, this award could have gone to a number of great golf

professionals. I hope I can represent the Philadelphia PGA in proper fashion and be there to lend assistance to any fellow professional in the future. I wish everyone the best of luck in the upcoming season.”

As part of his customer-centric approach, McCormick has created a truly welcoming environment in his shop, that features seating areas with TV’s and coffee all day long. He believes the longer he can keep customers in the golf shop the better chance of selling product. It also creates a great deal of loyalty with customers, where they are supporting Glen Brook instead of the big box stores.

### Golf Salesperson of the Year

The Golf Salesperson of the Year Award recognizes a sales representative who contributes to the Section and is involved with sponsoring Section events. They are also respected among their fellow Section clubs and have implemented new ideas to assist growing the game of golf. The 2018 Golf Salesperson of the Year is Kevin McClellan, Sales Professional for Heritage Creations/Cutter & Buck in the Eastern Pennsylvania, Southern NJ and Delaware Regions.

McClellan, who also won the Salesperson of the Year Award back in 1999, operates based on the philosophy of “say what you do and do what you say.” Throughout this career working with Philadelphia PGA Section facilities, he has enjoyed great trust and confidence among the PGA Professionals he services. He has also served as a dedicated sponsor of the Doylestown Open, The Pro-President, Match Play Championship and The Pro-Assistant Pro. In addition, he has supported the PAO and Central Counties Chapter over the years.

“I was taken by surprise when I heard the news regarding the Salesman of the Year award,” said McClellan. “Being recognized by The Philadelphia Section PGA is very humbling. I care deeply about my customers’ success and to have those same people select me for this honor is extremely gratifying. I plan to use this milestone in my career as motivation to push to new levels professionally. Thank you for all for the continued support and warm wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season.”

### About The Philadelphia Section PGA

The Philadelphia Section PGA (PPGA) is one of 41 geographical sections of The PGA of America. Composed of PGA Professionals who serve as the “Experts in the Game & Business of Golf,” the PPGA encompasses Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey (Trenton – south), Delaware and parts of Northern Maryland. Since the 1920s, the PPGA has been the voice and face of golf throughout the region backed by over 850 PGA Professionals and Apprentices who promote the enjoyment and involvement in the game of golf, and who are at the forefront of programming/events at more than 300 public and private golf facilities, including some of the country’s most acclaimed golf courses. PPGA members collectively impact over 2 million rounds of golf annually, encompassing over 100,000 club members, hundreds of thousands of public course golfers, business leaders and one of the country’s strongest stable of junior golfers. The PPGA is further complemented by its charitable arm, the Philadelphia Foundation, which was created to positively impact lives and communities through the game of golf. For more information, visit [www.philadelphia.pga.com](http://www.philadelphia.pga.com) or follow us on social media: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

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