

John D. Lyberger, PGA
Congressional Country Club
Bethesda, Maryland

John D. Lyberger, PGA has been named the 2015 Professional of the Year, the highest honor paid to an active PGA Professional, for his outstanding service and commitment to the Middle Atlantic PGA. John is the consummate professional dedicated to the PGA mission. His integrity, energy and demeanor have built a lasting reputation that has won him unequivocal respect from his peers in the industry, as well as at the prestigious Congressional Country Club. Not only has he been active in several MAPGA Committees, John serves as the Director at Large on the Board of Directors.

Under John's leadership, Congressional Country Club has hosted successful PGA Tour events and 2 U.S. Open Championships. Congressional's golf shop has received the "America's 100 Best Golf Shops" award every year since 1998. John was awarded Golfweek's "Top 40 Influential People in the Golf Industry Under the Age of 40" in 2004, and he was the youngest professional, at age 31, to ever host a U.S. Open in 1997.

John grew up in a golfing family. John's parents, Jack (now deceased) and Dolores, were avid golfers and members at Windber Country Club in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Jack and Dolores introduced John and his three sisters Pam, Jill, and Amy to the game of golf at a very young age. At the age of eight, John would drag a 7-iron and a putter behind him on the golf course as he walked the fairways with his parents. He would typically make it through to the 7th hole before becoming exhausted, but he never gave up and learned patience and respect while playing with his parents. When John was 12 years old Dick "Rocket" Roberge, PGA Professional at Windber Country Club gave John a job picking up range balls. He paid him 50¢ for every bucket he picked and cleaned. During the down time, Dick would encourage John to play and would accompany John on the golf course. Dick taught John about the many facets of the game such as rules, etiquette, strategy, club repair, merchandising and customer service.

Dick Roberge left for another position when John was 16 and the club management asked John to run the golf shop for the season. It was an extraordinary experience setting up tournaments, collecting scores for handicaps, fixing broken golf carts, filling soda machines, and ordering and selling shop merchandise. It was after that experience that John decided to pursue a career in golf.

John was named the Greater Johnstown Area Junior Champion in 1981 and won four junior club championships from 1977 to 1980. In 1982, John was a George F. Wheeling Scholastic Invitational champion (36-hole medal-play high school golf tournament). From 1984-1988, John attended Ferris State University and was given the opportunity to intern at Congressional Country Club for two summers in 1985 and 1986. He received a Bachelor's degree in Marketing with an emphasis in Professional Golf Management from Ferris State University in 1988. Upon graduation, John was offered and accepted the assistant professional position at Congressional where he worked under PGA professional Kent Cayce through 1993. Kent was quick to recognize John's skills and promoted him to first assistant in 1991. That same year, John was elected as a PGA member. In 1993, John sought and accepted the Head PGA Professional position at WestWinds Country Club in New Market, Maryland. Having gained three years' experience at WestWinds, John rose above the competition and was selected by Congressional Country Club as their Head PGA Professional in January of 1996. In 1999, he was named PGA Director of Golf.

Leading the golf operation, John has received numerous awards since. In 2008 he was awarded the prestigious National PGA Merchandiser of the Year. Also, John was recognized as the Middle Atlantic

PGA Section Merchandiser of the Year in both 1999 and 2007. In 2009, John was named the PING Fitter of the Year.

His service to the Section has also been a priority since becoming a PGA Member. John currently serves on the MAPGA Sponsorship Committee and has been very influential with the Section's great success with sponsorships the past several years. His service to the Section also includes serving the Board of Directors as the Director at Large, serving on the Club Relations and Employment Committee from 2003-2004, and serving on the Membership Committee for five years until 1997.

Outside of the Section, under the recommendation of Michael Leemhuis, PGA, former GM/CEO of Congressional Country Club, and encouragement of Jim Singerling, former CEO of CMAA John joined the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) in 2002. After completing the required certification process, John sat for the exam and successfully completed the requirements to achieve his certified Club Management (CCM) status in 2011. At that time, John was one of the 10 PGA Member CCMs in the world.

John has strived to be well rounded in all areas of the profession and is known for his leadership abilities and inspiring and growing the game of golf. His leadership skills are on display every day as the Director of Golf. John is responsible for 113 employees including 10 PGA professionals, six PGM interns, 37 outside staff, 52 caddies, and eight support staff. John's motto is "Inspect what you Expect," and leads by example. He inspires fellow golf professionals through encouragement and believes in training, empowering and providing opportunities for his fellow golf professionals. John takes great pride in having 11 former assistant professionals that have become PGA Head Professionals.

One of the major avenues John uses to grow the game of golf is through the Middle Atlantic PGA College Golf Seminar. John advocated for the creation of the College Golf Seminar to provide information to juniors and their parents that helps them to navigate playing college golf and exploring scholarship opportunities. This forum provides attendees a chance to meet and enjoy breakout sessions with Division I, II, III coaches. Congressional Country Club has hosted the event for the last four years and upwards of 200 people attend the event each year.

John is proud of his wonderful family which includes his wife, Darcy, who is Congressional's Director of Retail and the President of the Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM), Sean Ryan (28), Amanda (21), Jaclyn (19), Holly (16). John and Darcy enjoy traveling, rooting for their favorite sports teams and experiencing fine wine. This year brings excitement as August wedding plans are underway for Sean and his fiancée Lindsey Moore. Amanda graduates from University of Tennessee in the spring and Jaclyn finishes her freshman year at Florida State University. Holly is enjoying high school and looks forward to getting her driver's license.

John believes that self-discipline is the foundation on which professional success is rooted and sound personal relationships launched. John constantly learns new skills and is always looking to maximize his potential and inspire those around him. His patience and ability to communicate with Club members is unparalleled and has earned him great respect. As in life, his golf philosophy is simple; keep everything in perspective.