

PGA PLAYER DEVELOPMENT AWARD

This award bestows special recognition on a PGA Professional for exemplary contributions and achievements in the area of Player Development and for extraordinary efforts in conducting and/or supporting Play Golf America initiatives. This award considers the PGA Professional's growth of the game leadership commitment at the Section and National levels, plus the impact made at his/her own facility.

John T. Oberly Jr., PGA
Mount Vernon Country Club
Alexandria, Virginia

John Oberly has been awarded the 2017 Player Development Award for his strong work as the Assistant Professional at Mount Vernon Country Club in Alexandria, Virginia and the many Grow the Game initiatives he implements at the club. Through his involvement with various programs like Get Golf Ready and Drive Chip and Putt Clinics, John's passion to grow the game of golf is significant.

John was born to father John and mother Karen in Newark, Delaware on November 20, 1985 and also has a sister, Lauren. At age 2 ½ John was diagnosed with Type 1 Juvenile Diabetes. He says when you are a kid and can't eat certain things it can be hard to understand why you are different from others. As he got older, he realized that it was something that did not have to define him but just something he would have to manage for the rest of his life. His mother always told him "it could always be worse" and he uses that phrase throughout his life, including his time on the golf course.

John's grandmother and grandfather introduced him to the game of golf when he was 10 years old. They were both avid golfers. Neither of John's parents played so his grandparents gifted John his first set of clubs and some lessons with their local professional and away they went.

John got his start in golf in outside operations at Ed Oliver Golf Club in Wilmington, De. His first day of work was one that he will never forget, not because of how great it was but because it could have been his last thanks to an unfortunate incident with a range picker and support wires. The members at Ed Oliver Golf Club still call John by his nickname "Crash" when he visits.

John became a golf professional in March of 2008 and was elected to PGA membership in March of 2013. He started his apprentice program while working as an assistant golf professional at Indiana Country Club in Indiana, PA and left there in 2012 to join the staff at Mount Vernon Country Club in Alexandria, Va. where he serves as an assistant.

John avidly attends Section and Chapter education seminars including Section Player Development Workshops, Junior Golf Summits and Teaching Summits. He is also an active member of the MAPGA Assistant Professional Association (APA).

Growing the game is John's top priority at Mount Vernon Country Club, and he has implemented a three tier Get Golf Ready program at his facility to increase participation of all golfers of all skillsets. John also hosts Drive, Chip and Putt Clinics for his junior golfers ages 7-13 to help prepare them for local Drive, Chip and Putt qualifiers held within the Section. One of his best practices is that he offers short clinics to members of various leagues at Mount Vernon before they go out to play their round. He noticed that more members participate in their respective leagues if they attend the clinic first.

John finds it of utmost importance to be as available to his members as possible. He likes to attend as many member events at the club as possible in hopes to recruit new golfers. He knows that his key demographics attend these events and it's a great way to meet and greet and build relationships and trust. These member events are key to growing his Get Golf Ready programs.

John has one very easy and direct approach in his golf philosophy: fun, fun and more fun. Golf is a hard game but it is about that one good shot, or a couple of good ones that keep you coming back. People want to have fun and enjoy golf at whatever level they may be. If he can keep people having fun, he can keep people playing golf!

John is married to Stacie Oberly. They met at Ed Oliver where they both worked before moving to Indiana, PA and start the next chapter of their life together. It was there that John asked Stacie to marry him. They got married in Delaware on September 10, 2011. John feels very lucky to have found someone that understands the crazy hours demand that this job can bring.