

DAVID WORTMAN CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

This award bestows special recognition on an outstanding amateur, whose contributions to golf in the mid-Atlantic region include the promotion of the game, the Middle Atlantic Section and its professionals, and overall support of MAPGA programs and golf throughout the region.

Kimberly L. Thomas
*Vice President, Director of Golf Services
Golf Course Specialists, Inc.*

Kim began playing golf at age 10, introduced to the game by her grandparents and parents in Annapolis, MD. Her grandparents made sure that golf was a family event. Kim has fond memories of the lessons learned about life and the game of golf from her tireless, 80-year old “grandpa coaches”. Along with their coaching on the course, they introduced Kim to the importance of the PGA professional on the lesson tee in finding enjoyment in the game.

Before getting into the business of golf, Kim applied her Computer Science education to management and consulting in information technology starting with the General Electric Company in 1983. A stint in graduate school in 1990 gave her the opportunity to research the golf industry, where she conducted studies on Information Technology in Golf, Public-Private Partnerships in Golf Facility Development, and Businesswomen & Golf.

Excited about the industry, Kim started her career in the game in 1992 with an internship for Golf Course Specialists (GCS) in Washington, D.C. She worked in all facets of the operation — including grounds maintenance, driving range, professional shop, golf school and accounting/HR office. It was there that she became hooked on the “soul of public golf.” Moving up through the ranks of GCS, Kim focused on how the sport of golf can positively impact the personal and professional lives of all types of people. Today, as a principal of GCS, she is Vice President/Director of Golf Services for the company’s five management contracts.

Kim firmly believes that golf is a game for everyone. Her enthusiasm, innovation and commitment to promote the game to diverse audiences are the spirit of what she coins “real public golf.” Real public golf is Kim’s passion. She views it as a rewarding challenge — to help bring a traditional sport to non-traditional segments of the Washington metro area.

This attitude has led to Kim’s lead role in many inner-city junior golf programs over the past 10 years, serving over 500 kids annually. She donates the use of D.C. golf courses, along with her time and energy, to many programs, including Paul Berry’s D.C. Public School Development Program, the First Tee of Washington D.C. (of which she is a member of the Board of Directors), Langston’s Hook a Kid on Golf, Open Fairways and many more. Her goals are to help ensure that inner-city kids gain exposure to PGA professionals and are given opportunities to play Washington area golf courses, including invitations to MAPGA junior golf events. In 2001, Kim received the 2001 Community Service Award from Wilson HS Athletics for her assistance to their golf program. Her work with the MAPGA on the Paul Berry and the First Tee of DC programs is particularly noteworthy, not only assisting in the organization of the program and the utilization of MAPGA professionals, but often volunteering herself!

Her commitment to promote the game and The PGA is also evident from her company’s success in growing the Capital City golf School. The School’s innovative “learn, practice and play” programs for women, Juniors and groups provide affordable golf instruction to over 4,000 students annually on a national level, GCS promotes player development programs with the National Golf Course Owner’s Association – Take Your Daughter to the Course Week and Kids on Course \$1 Greens Fees. Kim is also a Board member of the Executive Women’s Golf Association D.C. Metro Chapter serving over 550 + women golfers.

Kim received her Bachelor’s Degree in Computer Science and Economics from Goucher College (Baltimore, MD), and holds an MBA degree from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. She is

married to her high school sweetheart, Bob Thomas, whom she calls *“the golfer in the family.”* *The MAPGA proudly salutes Kim Thomas as the 2002 Citizen of the Year.*