

MERCHANDISERS OF THE YEAR

This award is bestowed on those PGA Professionals who have demonstrated superior skills as merchandisers in the promotion of golf. This award recognizes excellence in golf shop operations in three categories: Private, Resort, and Public/Military/Semi-Private.

MERCHANDISER OF THE YEAR PRIVATE CATEGORY

Jay Dufty, PGA
Washington Golf & Country Club
Arlington, Virginia

Jay Dufty has been selected as the recipient of the 2018 Private Merchandiser of the Year Award for his dedication and success at Washington Golf and Country Club. Since arriving in January 2015, Jay has worked hard to establish merchandise goals, standards, and increase overall presentation. Improving sales and gaining member loyalty has been a great accomplishment in the three years since Jay has taken over.

Jay was born on January 23, 1973 to Doug and Karen Dufty in Morris, Minnesota (about a two hour drive south of Fargo, North Dakota.) He grew up with his older sister, now Paula Smith, who resides in Woodbury, Minn. When Jay was three, he tagged along with his father to Pomme de Terre Golf Club in Morris where Doug coached the University of Minnesota-Morris Golf Team. This would be Jay's first introduction to golf and by the age of five, he was playing right along with the rest of his family.

Before Jay entered third grade, the [Dufty'sDuty's](#) moved to Fargo where they lived a short bike ride from a 9-hole course. Jay and his friends would ride to the course and play whenever they had the chance. His passion for the game earned him a job at Moorhead Country Club in Moorhead, Minn. working for Head PGA Professional Larry Murphy. Mr. Murphy, a member of the Minnesota PGA Section Hall of Fame, mentored Jay throughout his adolescent career as he played all four years on the High School golf team. The encouragement from Mr. Murphy also triggered Jay's interest to become a golf professional, resulting in his enrollment in the Professional Golf Management Program at New Mexico State University.

While attending NMSU, Jay worked as a PGA Intern at Oak Tree Country Club in Edmond, Okla.; Wildflower Golf Club in Detroit Lakes, Minn.; and Rum River Hills Golf Club in Ramsey, Minn. Following graduation, he accepted an Assistant position at Blueberry Pines Golf Club in Menahga, Minn. and also worked during the winter months at TPC Scottsdale. In 1997, he moved into the Head Professional position at Blueberry Pines, earning his PGA Membership in 1998. He continued to work there until a full-time Assistant position opened up at TPC Scottsdale at the end of 1999, starting his career in the TPC network of courses. In the spring of 2001, Jay became the Head PGA Professional at TPC Myrtle Beach where he stayed for one season before moving north and accepting a position as Head PGA Professional at TPC

Potomac at Avenel Farm. After thirteen years at TPC Potomac, Jay advanced his career as the Director of Golf at Washington Golf and Country Club in Arlington, Va.

Jay saw a new opportunity to re-invent the golf shop at Washington Golf & CC. A new buying experience needed to be created with the design to create loyal buyers from their members. His team created a plan to wean out old merchandise, clean up over supplied inventories, freshen up the inventory mix, provide unique buying experiences through creative trunk shows, timely rotation of merchandise displays, and concentrate on hard good sales by promoting their golf professionals as the certified fitters. In his 20 years leading golf shops, his first year at WGCC was the most rewarding year based on efforts translating in to sales.

Jay's merchandising philosophy is that any quality golf shop that is successful has a 'feel' when you walk through the door. Feel can be aroused through quality displays, design, product mix, and people. Jay wants the golf shop at WGCC to create an emotion. It doesn't matter which emotion is felt as long as the emotion is positive. He wants members to feel proud, satisfied, happy, surprised, and very content upon arriving or leaving. Jay also feels that staff members bring the 'feel' to life. His philosophy is that people make the difference. It is their job as professionals to find great items to sell and display it accordingly and to be great communicators so they know how to sell new items quickly or stale items efficiently. Most importantly, he believes in managing the process of merchandising so margins aren't lost through shrink and mismanagement. Lastly, be creative!

As a PGA Professional, Jay enjoys the mix of variety and consistency that comes with every work day. As a team leader, he takes great pride in developing and executing a strategic plan and making sure that all staff members have a part in the success of the plan. He has a passion for developing his staff and strives to help them achieve their goals. He is also very involved with the Middle Atlantic PGA on both the Chapter and Section levels. Over the last few years, Jay has served on the Section's Membership Committee. Currently he serves as Vice President on the Central Chapter Board.

This is the second Section award that Jay has received. His first was the Section's President's Award in 2014. Jay and his wife Michelle have been married for twelve years and together they have a son, Mason (10), and a daughter, Mia (8). Michelle, the bedrock of the Dufty family, is very understanding of Jay's passion for his career and has been his biggest supporter. She is also successful in her career as Senior Director of Product Marketing for Sonatype, a leader in software and services.