

## ***ASSISTANT PGA PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR***

*This award bestows special recognition on an assistant PGA Professional who, through a commitment to improving opportunities for assistants, has distinguished himself/herself in service to the Section, his/her peers, and facility.*

***Shannon McKew, PGA***

*River Bend Club*

*Great Falls, Virginia*

Shannon McKew's strengths as a player, teacher/coach, merchandiser, tournament operations leader, and enthusiasm for growing the game of golf all contributed to her success as an assistant professional at TPC Potomac at Avenel Farm.

Shannon was born on December 1, 1994, in Baltimore, MD to parents Sydney and the late Thomas McKew. Growing up, she played lacrosse and basketball for recreational and travel club teams and was introduced to golf by her mother and father at the age of 13. Shannon wanted to compete on her high school's golf, basketball, and lacrosse teams, and was determined to graduate as a twelve season athlete. She began playing golf with her mother and father at local Baltimore County public golf courses and immediately got hooked onto the game, searching for that "secret" to golf that her father was always eager to find.

By her sophomore year, she began taking scheduled golf lessons with PGA Professional, Bill Madonna, and her game started to improve significantly throughout her high school years. While she didn't think her skills were developed enough to play at the collegiate level, Coach Bill believed in her more than she believed in herself. She credits the support she received from him and her father that inspired her to walk on to the golf team at Florida Southern College. Coach Robbie Davis accepted her on the team as a redshirt freshman and by the time she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise Science & Biology, she became one of the top players on her team, obtaining an individual tournament win her senior year. She says she would not be where she is today, paying it forward in the industry as a PGA Professional without the influence of Coach Bill, her mother, and her late father.

After her freshman year of college, Shannon spent the summer months working at Baltimore Country Club, as a Golf Services Associate. She obtained valuable experience working for Greg Jones, PGA in her first golf-related position and enjoyed supporting the team with daily operations and member events. Shannon returned to this position the following summer and spent five consecutive seasons at Baltimore Country Club. In 2019, she entered the PGM Associate Program and joined the staff at TPC Potomac at Avenel Farm as an Assistant Golf Professional. Shannon was elected to PGA Membership in May of 2022, and she continued in her role until late 2022 when she was named as PGA Head Professional at the River Bend Club.

In Shannon's first season at the TPC Potomac, she hosted half a dozen complimentary clinics for beginner golfers who joined the Ladies Golf Association and supported non-golf related events (i.e. cocktail parties and trunk shows), which led to instant growth in membership. Shannon started her first year with 38 members and has grown this

association to 70 members and counting. She continues to support this Association, adapting to benefit the needs of its members in a never ending journey to growing the game for Women and beginner golfers at her facility.

Shannon supports her local First Tee Organization by participating in multiple Pro-Am events with members throughout the year. She was also an instructor for summer junior golf camps and clinics and is a PGA Junior League Coach. She supports local women's events by playing in tournaments such as the Maryland Women's Open and MAPGA Women's Championship.

Shannon is engaged to fellow PGA Professional, Grant Strawoet, and they plan to marry in April 2023.