

BILL STRAUSBAUGH AWARD

This award bestows special recognition on a PGA Professional who has shown outstanding integrity, commitment to mentoring their fellow PGA Professionals in improving their employment situations, and involvement in community and charitable activities. The award is named in honor of the late “Coach” Bill Strausbaugh, former Head PGA Professional at Columbia Country Club in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and member of the MAPGA Hall of Fame Class of 1989.

Adam C. Smith, PGA
The Country Club of Virginia
Richmond, VA

Adam Smith grew up in Richmond, Virginia. He is the youngest of six children and was the only kid in the family who played golf. Adam had his first job in the golf business, in 1983, as a teenager at The Country Club of Virginia. His father, Bill Smith, was the PGA Director of Golf there from 1972-1993. Adam learned golf at age six, taking lessons from his father. As his game developed as a teenager, he continued with lessons from local PGA legends Leo Steinbrecher, Freddy Christian and Bill Strausbaugh. Adam credits the majority of his early mentorship in the golf business to PGA Professional (and MAPGA Hall of Famer) Paul Michaelian, who served as an assistant professional at CCV while Adam was a teenager.

Adam played on his Varsity High School golf team in 1984, as an eighth grader, and after five years of competitive varsity golf, he went on to play college golf at Radford University. Adam became a golf professional in 1994, after graduating college with a degree in English. Writing golf instruction articles and publishing them is a passion of Adam's. He began his professional career in golf instruction, teaching golf at Bogeys Sports Park from 1994 – 1995. Then went on to work for Matt Ball, PGA at Richmond Country Club from 1995 – 1997. He was then hired by Richard White, PGA at The Dominion Club from 1997 – 1998. Soon after that, he was hired by Mike Hott, PGA at Salisbury Country Club, where he would spend two decades of his golf career, from 1998 to 2018, building a reputation as a reputable instructor in Virginia. Adam was elected to PGA Membership in 2004. In 2018, Adam moved on to Kinloch Golf Club for one year, before being hired by Warren West, PGA at The Country of Virginia in 2019. Since his high school days, every golf job for Adam has been in Richmond, Virginia. And returning to The Country Club of Virginia has not only been full circle for Adam, but also a dream come true.

Adam was named the Middle Atlantic PGA Teacher of The Year in 2008. In 2016, he was awarded the Middle Atlantic PGA Professional Development Award. Adam has been on the GOLF Magazine Teachers to Watch list since 2019. Golf Digest placed him on the “Best in State” list in 2010. He has been named Top 50 Growth of the Game Teaching Professional Elite by Golf Range Association of America and has served as a member of the MAPGA Education Committee. Adam proudly serves on the PGA Magazine Golf Instruction Advisory Board and also on the GRAA Committee for Growing the Game. Over the years, he has spoken at many National Conferences, including the PGA Show

and the PGA Demo Day in Orlando. He also spoke at the PGA National Clubfitters Conference in Chicago and several PGA Magazine Boot Camps up and down the east coast. Adam has hosted and presented during MAPGA Section Coaching and Teaching summits over the years. He has hosted the PGA Magazine National Clubfitting Conference in Richmond, two times in his career.

Adam met his wife, Kristen, at Radford University. She was studying elementary education and would later become a fifth grade teacher. She knew what a catch she had when she asked him to her Delta Zeta sorority formal at Radford. They dated all through college and got married in Richmond in 1997. Adam and Kristen have three children. Their son, Logan (25), is a material science engineer from Virginia Tech's School of Engineering. Logan works in Reading, Pennsylvania in research and development for special metals at Carpenter Technologies. Logan, over the holidays this year, became engaged to his college sweetheart. Their second son, Carter (23), is a graduate of The University of South Carolina. Carter works in Richmond as a construction cost accountant for The Allen Myers Corporation. And they have a daughter, Ellie (21), who is currently a junior at The University of Arizona, in Tucson. Ellie will be studying abroad in Rome, Italy during her second semester of her junior year. The Smith family is entertained daily by their hilarious and fun loving nine year old Yellow Lab, named Maverick.

Adam's personal golf philosophy with every lesson is to "keep it simple and make it enjoyable." When it comes to teaching golf, he believes in learning what the student needs. Adam helps students by using simple techniques, by doing one thing at a time and by making sure the student comprehends the message. Along with his knowledge of the golf swing, he has a passion for assisting with golf fitness training and encouraging wellness and a healthy golf lifestyle. His love for the game of golf, the golf business and his love for his role at The Country Club of Virginia is evident every day. Adam's early years of being mentored in golf, his subsequent mentorship of others, service to the Middle Atlantic PGA Section as well as the National PGA, and his willingness to volunteer his time to his peers make Adam the ideal candidate for the 2024 Middle Atlantic PGA Bill Strausbaugh Award.