



PGA

Michigan Section

BIO OF SPECIAL AWARDS CANDIDATE

Name of Nominee: Chris Sobieck

Year Elected to Membership: 1997

Award Nominated for: Bill Strausbaugh Award

It is a tremendous honor to be nominated for any section award and I truly appreciate the consideration. For the past 26 years I have been actively involved in the Michigan Section as an Assistant Professional, Head Professional, General Manager, and course owner. I have worked at several facilities throughout Michigan and Arizona, and for the past three years have held the General Manager position for Watermark Properties managing its' seven golf properties. Prior to coming to work for Watermark Properties, I spent 16 years as the General Manager and one of the partners at The Golf Club at Thornapple Pointe. As I have moved forward and start to work towards the twilight of my career my focus continues to shift towards ways for me to give back the the game and career that have been so rewarding to me.

The past 20 years in the role as a general manager has allowed me to interact and help lead many future individuals in different roles within our industry. I currently have the pleasure to have helped guide 2 General Managers, 7 Head Professionals, 3 Directors of Instruction, 1 division one golf coach, 1 major national club fitter for Titleist, 1 south Florida Section employee, 12 current assistant professionals, and countless leaders in other industries. Working daily with so many wonderful and caring people really puts into perspective how many great and talented people are part of and work in our organization. Getting to this point would not have been possible if I had not also worked for many people who taught me and emphasized the importance of giving back and helping others.

My involvement in the section came as I served two terms as an at large Director with the Michigan PGA (from 2013-2016). During my tenure at Thornapple Pointe and continuing with Watermark Properties, I have been given the freedom to start and expand a charitable program that has achieved over \$25,000 in direct donations through this year. I have served on several charitable boards, and for the past three years I have been the girl's JV Golf coach for Forest Hills Central High School. With the program I started a winter "hit and homework" program on Wednesday's with all of the girls participating (no cost program). I also started a summer play program with 100% team participation. The program has grown from 18 to 24 girls, with no girls being cut from the program to

help promote the development of the girls on and off the course. My experience with my own daughter and watching her develop into a collegiate golfer and the positive impact our experience had on her led me to the coaching position and opportunity to help others. Spending time and providing these girls a positive learning environment through golf, I feel has really paid off outside of golf. As each year passes watching and girls that I have worked with continue to show improvement and a love for the game has been very rewarding. Seeing many former players, who were beginners to the game, now working at various of our facilities and growing as individuals has been another positive development. This fall I became an assistant coach for the Men's Golf team at Davenport University. This has been another great opportunity for me, as a former collegiate golfer, to help provide guidance based on my past experiences with the game. It's also an opportunity to provide leadership and mentoring to another group in an important age group.

Being a member of the PGA has provided me many opportunities to befriend and mentor many aspiring apprentices and professionals within the industry. It has also allowed me the opportunity to interact and develop relationships with so many people whether through coaching, their first job, or even through our guests and members. It has brought me much joy and fulfillment over the course of my career and my wish is for my fellow PGA Professionals to experience the same joy as I have.