

2025 Patriot Award Candidate Bio Form

Please submit this form no later than **Friday, October 4, 2024 at 4pm.**

Email *

iziska@americandunesgolfclub.com

Name of Nominee: *

Ian Ziska

Facility Employed at: *

American Dunes Golf Club

Year Elected to Membership: *

2001

Please describe your involvement in the promotion and development of targeted player development programs for military personnel and Veterans in 250 words or less: *

Throughout his professional career, Ian has shown commitment and made a significant impact in supporting service members of the United States armed forces. His active creation and offering of player development programs specific to servicemembers, veterans, and others eager to help are inspiring.

In 2022, Ian's dedication shone through as he played a pivotal role in launching the Grand Haven PGA HOPE Program hosted at American Dunes. The program he and his team deliver shares advice and coaching participants in all areas of the game, including on-course play. Teaching golf is essential, but Ian is driven by serving those who served him, being present for our heroes, providing an environment for togetherness and a safe and social place for veterans to enjoy before, during, and after golf.

His commitment to the heroes attending the PGA HOPE Program at American Dunes is unwavering. He is actively exploring ways to assist the Michigan Section PGA and PGA of America in developing a "HOPE 2.0" so that the participants can remain engaged in golf, continue to work with coaches, and transition to more competitive play.

Please describe your contribution to programs and events including PGA Hope and Patriot Golf Day which supports the Armed Forces and Veterans in 250 words or less: *

Our courageous service members and their families have received invaluable support through Ian's player development programs and golf events. The lasting impact on the youth is equally significant, as these initiatives shape a hopeful future. It began with his "Kid's for Folds Youth Golf Program" and has taken flight; in addition to player development, he is now involved with hosting golf events and competitions that raise awareness of the Folds of Honor and its vital mission.

Driven by his passion for competition and tournament operations, Ian has played a pivotal role in developing the Folds of Honor Collegiate. This college invitational, which now includes both men's and women's teams and is televised nationally, is a testament to Ian's commitment to growth and innovation. His work is not just about the present but also about creating a brighter future for the sport and its participants.

With his unique vision and strong industry relationships, Ian has created two high school golf invitationals that have made a significant impact. To date, these tournaments have contributed over \$13,000 to the Folds of Honor Foundation. "The Corporal B." and "Capt. Sally" provide a platform for high-level competition, including an educational and awareness component and delivering financial support to military families. Coaches have hailed the events as "one of the best high school golf experiences in the county." Ian's ability to bring together a quality group of players and supporters to deliver a one-of-a-kind tournament is genuinely awe-inspiring.

One might say every day is Patriot Golf Day at American Dunes, but Ian felt his Club could do more. Ian assembled his team and created an experience offered every Memorial Day weekend, "Patriot Golf Days." This experience provides visiting guests with a complete American Dunes experience, including Golf's Most Heroic Round, the Most Patriot Gear in Golf, the CAVU Squadron Bar, and a contribution to support PGA HOPE and Folds of Honor.

Please describe your image, service and leadership in support of the military and how you inspire other PGA Professionals in their support of the military and Veterans in 250 words or less: *

With the responsibility of overseeing fifty-plus team members in the golf operation, Ian understands the importance of recruiting quality individuals who understand their role, who work with purpose, and who support the mission of American Dunes; proudly, his team includes several veterans. The Club's mission and the story American Dunes must share, former military members and veterans will play an essential role in the operation.

Daily, Ian is out front sharing the mission and interacting with visiting guests interested in information about the Club, our history, and the Folds of Honor Foundation. He is a lead and plays a significant role in delivering the experience guests receive at American Dunes. He also coordinates and supports special events hosted at the Club, including organizations such as the Veterans Golfers Association, Holes 4 Heavens Heroes, and the Patriots Promise Foundation.

Beyond his role at American Dunes, Ian's commitment to supporting our service members and their families is evident in his active involvement with other organizations. He collaborates with Folds of Honor Chapters nationwide, working with directors to coordinate gear, gifts, and other support for their events. His dedication even extends to traveling to participate in events across the country, including in Kansas City, Florida, and Oklahoma.

Ian remains involved with Ferris State University's PGA Golf Management Program Alumni Association. As a former Head Golf Professional at Ferris State's Katke Golf Course, Ian's network within the PGA is vast. As the Head Golf Professional at American Dunes, he actively shares the Club's mission and communicates and promotes to PGA Members, FSU Alumni, and his former staff. His efforts have been instrumental, particularly in increasing awareness of what American Dunes represents. He has inspired his colleagues to share the story, assist with recruiting new national members, and increase retail sales. All these efforts have significantly contributed to increasing American Dunes' profit, a testament to his leadership and dedication. These contributions to the Folds of Honor support the families of those who have sacrificed or served our nation.

Please provide any additional information you would like to share in support of your nomination *
for the Patriot Award including awards or recognition you've received in conjunction with your
support of the Armed Forces and Veterans in 250 words or less:

As the Head Golf Professional at American Dunes, Ian's responsibilities directly impact contributions and programs offered to veterans, active military members, and their families. The funds assist in providing educational scholarships to spouses and children of America's fallen and disabled service members. To date, the impact Ian and the American Dunes team have provided the Folds of Honor Foundation has surpassed \$3 million.

Ian fully understands the responsibility to uphold the club's mission and feels very fortunate to have landed at American Dunes. Ian continues to support veterans, service men and women, and the Folds of Honor Foundation. He leads a team to provide an extraordinary experience to patriots and America's heroes across this great nation. He looks forward to American Dunes' future, delivering special one-of-a-kind competitions and player development programs, including PGA HOPE, and improving Patriot Golf Days to visiting guests. All done to provide whatever support is required while showcasing a remarkable Jack Nicklaus Signature Design at the birthplace of the Folds of Honor.

Ian is grateful to be able to share a small part of his story and hopes his passion for supporting our nation's heroes is evident. He appreciates the opportunity to be considered for the Patriot Award.

List any other PGA Section or National Awards you've received and the year(s) you received them (50 word limit): *

Patriot Award 2023 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2023 PGA of America
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2022 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2021 Michigan Section PGA
 Horton Smith Award 2018 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2018 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2017 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2016 Michigan Section PGA
 Youth Player Development Award 2016 Michigan Section PGA
 Bill Strausbaugh Award 2016 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Public 2014 Michigan Section PGA
 Merchandiser of the Year Award – Resort 2010 Michigan Section PGA
 Junior Golf Leader Award 2006 Michigan Section PGA

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