

2025 Player Development Award Candidate Bio Form

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

Email *

kpmckinley@yahoo.com

Name of Nominee: *

Kevin McKinley

Facility Employed at: *

First Tee Northern Michigan

Year Elected to Membership: *

2002

Please describe each of the programs conducted to grow the game at your facility, in the community, in the Michigan Section and nationally including the number of consumers who have attended these programs in 350 words or less: *

Kevin conducts many programs for youth with 906 registrants for summer programming in 2024 along with over 6500 in schools. Here are the highlights:

- * First Tee Camps - 18 4-day camps with 337 students
- * Advanced Skills Academy - 1 8-week session with 14 students
- * GAJUGA - Gaylord Area Jr Golf Association - 1 8-week program for 60 students
- * PGA Jr League - Gaylord Program had 40 students; Harbor Springs program had 60 students and the 13U Team finished T-2nd in the State Championship (2 strokes from First) losing in a 5th man playoff to play for the State Championship.
- * Little Linksters - (5&6 year olds) - due to popularity, Kevin added 2 sessions this year and added a location. 6 separate 4-week sessions for 81 kids.
- * Cheboygan Area Junior Golf - 6-week program for 148 kids then added a 2-week Advanced Program for 14 kids. This program is totally FREE to all juniors.
- * Indian River Junior Golf - (sister program to Cheboygan and also FREE) - 6-week program for 55 kids
- * Girls Golf - Also due to popularity, Kevin added a session this year. 2 8-session programs for 50 girls
- * Mackinaw City Camp - 6-session program for 12 kids
- * Harbor Point Day Camp - 4-day Camp for 8 kids
- * Boyne Adventure Camp - Taught 8 weeks for 75 kids
- * Fall Golf League - 2 separate leagues for 2 age groups. 4-week clinic and play days for 24 kids
- * Camp Harbor - 1-day visit to local day care for 16 kids
- * Otsego County Sportsplex - 1 day visit to 80 kids
- * Golf In Schools - Served 19 school districts by going into the gym classes and taught over 6500 kids. Also went to Field Days for 9 schools and saw 3000 kids.
- * Camp Daggett Partnership - conducted clinics and activities at Camp Daggett's Father/Son and Mother/Daughter Weekends and saw over 50 parent/child tandems.

In addition, Kevin continues to conduct the following programs for adults:

- * Challenge Mountain - 3 different busloads of individuals with physical and/or mental disabilities. 60 total participants.
- * Crossroads Industries - Kevin reached out to another organization servicing individuals with disabilities in the Gaylord Area and visited them 1 time with 1 more to come. This was 16 participants.
- * Kevin started the Military Golf League in 2017 at Treetops and upon his departure from Treetops in 2022, the league was in danger of disbanding as Treetops was not going to do it anymore. Kevin assists two veterans (Denny and Jim) from the league to continue to operate the league at Garland, Michaywe and Gaylord GC. The veterans play for 16 weeks in PGA Jr League Format with Kevin supplying the pairings. Kevin also arranged sponsors for more than half of the events making the program free to the veterans more than half of the dates played. He recently brought a team of 8 to the Military League State Championship organized by Michael Rey to American Dunes. This league has 72 players.

Please describe what you have done to measure the impact of growth of the game programs in the areas of player retention, increased rounds, increased customer satisfaction and impact on the facilities bottom line in 250 words or less: *

* The Golf in Schools Program is the best barometer of success for the youth programs operated by First Tee. From 2023 to 2024, students seen in schools increased by 4000 students and the goal was to increase the number of summer registrations we had. We were able to increase registrations by 200 kids and this could have been higher if we had more staff. Fortunately, the board has approved the addition of 2 full time year round employees for 2025.

* Satisfaction is another measure that is used to measure success. We are currently conducting a survey so if I'm fortunate enough to be selected for an interview, those numbers will be available.

* Skill is another measure of success. In 2023, our PGA Jr League teams competed in the State Finals but neither cracked the top 6 (U13) or top 2 (U17) to make it to day 2. In 2024, our U17 team improved their finish from the previous year despite only having 4 players participate. Our U13 team made it to day 2 and missed out on playing for the championship by a 5th player playoff. Our score was only 2 strokes away from the state champions.

Please describe your involvement and significant leadership contributions through mentoring and sharing with other PGA Professionals about Player Development and Growing the Game in 250 words or less: *

- As an officer of the Michigan Section, Kevin was instrumental in developing the Michigan Section's Growth of the Game Grant Program. This program infuses in excess of \$50,000 per year to assist professionals in our Section with their player development programs at their facility.
- Under Kevin's guidance, a program of the year was developed to award the top Adult program and top Youth program in the state additional funds for the following year to allow their program to flourish. The additional cash was only one aspect of the benefits of the grant program with the other (possibly more important) being acknowledgement and the sharing of ideas with the entire Section at a Michigan PGA Meeting.
- After Kevin's successful school program growth in 2023-24, He was asked to come present thoughts and ideas to several PGA/PGM students at Ferris State University. It is likely that Kevin will also be training the students to develop their own golf in schools program in mid-Michigan.
- As Michigan Section President, Kevin developed a video update on a regular basis that included pertinent Michigan Section and PGA of America information. Always present in these videos was the highlighting of growth of the game efforts by professionals around the Section who might not otherwise get recognized.

Please describe up to 3 Best Practice Ideas that have been successful in your growth of the game programs in 250 words or less: *

1. Kevin learned the golf in schools program as only something that would be interesting for elementary school children. However, Kevin took his schools program into middle and high schools in 2023-24 with creative games that got the older kids competing in individual and team formats. Great things were heard from teachers and students and they are interested in bringing First Tee back in 2024-25.
2. Partnering with other organizations who serve similar and different segments of the population that First Tee does has been a home run. The Challenge Mountain/Crossroads (individuals with disabilities) and Camp Daggett (parent/child) partnerships have been extremely beneficial and very rewarding for staff at First Tee.
3. Kevin is convinced the Military Golf Leagues should be available in all corners of the state and even the country. The PGA Jr League (Scramble Match Play) format is very conducive to all ability levels and you do not have to worry about handicapping. For more information on how to start a league, Kevin would love to have professionals talk to him, Michael Rey or Doug Temple.

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

PGA of America Patriot Award - 2017

MICHIGAN SECTION

- * Youth Player Development - 2024
- * Bill Strausbaugh - 2018, 2024
- * Golf Executive of the Year - 2022
- * Professional Development Award - 2019
- * Golf Professional of the Year - 2017
- * Patriot Award - 2013, 2015, 2016

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