

2026 Bill Strausbaugh Award Candidate Bio Form

Please submit this form no later than **Monday, October 6, 2025 at 5:00pm.**

Email *

kmartin@pga.com

Name of Nominee: *

Kyle Martin

Facility Employed at: *

The Fortress Golf Course

Year Elected to Membership: *

2009

Please describe your involvement and contributions through mentoring PGA of America Professionals and Associates and illustrate the significant impact on their careers in 250 words or less: *

As a member of the Ferris State University Professional Golf Management Advisory Board, I make it a goal to give back as much as possible to the incredible program associated with Ferris. It has become a high priority for me to build stronger relationships with the active students in the PGA program. Each year, sometimes twice, I make the trip to Big Rapids to conduct seminars for the students on teaching and coaching, including different aspects including statistical analytics, teaching juniors, adult player development, basic ball flight laws, and teaching seniors. With the strong relationship with the university and program administration, new students that are under my guidance enroll in the PGA Golf Management Program yearly. The Fortress has taken a total of 10 interns; Joey Coriasso, Javen Howes, Maxwell Wilhelm, Suzy Gietl, Mike Rumsey, Carter Lewis, Nathan Brooks, Logan Locatis, Juanita De La Cruz, and Sam Baldwin. Since becoming the Head Golf Professional at The Fortress Golf Course we have had 5 of my students enroll in the PGA Golf Management Program, and have hired one Lead Assistant Professional, Nick Sears, who will be elected to Class A Membership in December of 2025.

Please describe the characteristics you possess relative to your overall integrity and recognition as a person of outstanding character. How have you furthered the values representative of the Association and the golf profession? *250 words or less: *

A few characteristics that are pivotal for outstanding character that I possess include

1. Honesty
2. Integrity
3. Leadership
4. Empathy.

Each of these characteristics showed in 2025 as I won the Ferris State PGA Golf Management Bill Strausbaugh award for my contribution to the PGA Golf Management program and dedication to the professional growth of the students. In addition, later in 2025 I also earned recognition as a Ferris State University Distinguished Alumni award in 2025. I have strived since 2009 to represent not only The Fortress, but the Michigan Section of the PGA as well as Ferris State University. One major goal is to create a positive culture and learning environment for our interns and assistant professionals. Our Lead Assistant has stayed for 8 years, which is a sign to me that the culture, work life balance, and compensation are exceeding his expectations.

Please describe your level of service to your chapter, the Michigan Section and/or to the PGA of America in the area of employment and club relations in 250 words or less: *

I am currently on the Education Committee for the section under Ward Sutton, and served on the Member Content Committee for the PGA of America. I also currently serve on the Ferris State PGA Golf Management Advisor Board. This experiences have allowed me to remain well informed on industry and employment trends both on a section and national level.

Please describe the influence you've had on PGA Professionals, facilities, and employers in regard to employment in 250 words or less: *

We currently employ a PGA Associate, Nick Sears, who is in his level 3 and will earn Class A in December of 2025. The Fortress has taken a total of 10 interns; Joey Coriasso, Javen Howes, Maxwell Wilhelm, Suzy Gietl, Mike Rumsey, Carter Lewis, Nathan Brooks, Logan Locatis, Juanita De La Cruz, and Sam Baldwin. My goal is to take 1-2 interns every year and help guide them through the process of becoming a great PGA Professional. The communication doesn't stop at the end of the internship. Follow up communication is pivotal for them to feel like they truly had an advocate and support system.

Please describe your contributions to building the image of the game of golf, PGA Professionals and the Association in 250 words or less.

Early on in my PGA Education I had a Head Professional convince me I needed my own "Board of Directors" so to speak. He spoke about having people to call and offer guidance and honest, clear feedback on my decisions within my career without emotional investment. This allowed me to bend the ear of the most successful people in the industry I knew. To this day, I still have my own board of directors helping steer me in the right direction, and offer feedback for better or worse. This message really stuck with me, and I have tried to impress that on everyone I mentor or teach within the industry. Having such an incredible experience in the PGA Golf Management Program taught me how to uphold the respect and honesty required to be a great golf professional, and I feel it is my job to continue that tradition with those individuals coming into the industry. That is why I am so involved in the Ferris Program, as well as the Education Committee for the section. Winning the 2024 Bill Strausbaugh award for the PGA Golf Management Program and FSU Distinguished Alumni was validation that my mission was needed and I will continue for the foreseeable future.

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

2024 Michigan PGA Teacher & Coach of the Year

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