



**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 14, 2010

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**MIDDLE ATLANTIC PGA PROFESSIONAL JIM ESTES  
NAMED RECIPIENT OF 2010 PATRIOT AWARD**

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. – Jim Estes of Germantown, Md., the PGA director of instruction at Olney Golf Park in Olney, Md., and founder of an innovative program in 2007 that has served the needs of more than 500 members of the nation’s armed services, has been named the recipient of the 2010 Patriot Award.

Originated in 2008, the Patriot Award is presented by The PGA of America to PGA Professionals who personify patriotism through the game of golf and demonstrate unwavering commitment and dedication to the men and women who have valiantly served and protected the United States of America.

Estes, 46, was elected to PGA membership in 1993, and will be honored at the 94<sup>th</sup> PGA Annual Meeting, Nov. 6, at Westin Copley Place in Boston. He is the second consecutive member of the Middle Atlantic PGA Section to receive the national honor.

In 2007, Estes founded the Salute Military Golf Association (SMGA), which has teamed with officials of Walter Reed Medical Center and Middle Atlantic PGA Professionals in developing instruction programs and events to serve veterans as well as their families. The partners of Estes’ team are Disabled Sports USA and Wounded Warriors.

“The Patriot Award is one of the most public examples of how a PGA Professional steps forward to give of oneself to the men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country,” said PGA of America President Jim Remy. “The pioneering spirit of Jim Estes comes through in his commitment to help hundreds of our nation’s heroes to find enjoyment and hope through golf. Jim has set the bar high by his work and passion, and we are proud to present him with the Patriot Award.”

Estes, who had pursued a tour professional career from 1988 through 2001, said that SMGA was “like a new calling in my life.”

“Fifteen years ago, I was a selfish tour player who was just trying to make money,” said Estes. “I did not care who I ran over to get there. Now, I believe that we all have a calling. Sometimes, I still have the desire to play to realize my dream – if it happens, fine. If it doesn’t, it doesn’t. I feel much more satisfied now as a person.

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“What has been so special to me is to see the families joining in to support the veteran of their family enjoy playing and learning the game. It is a healthy environment that cuts down on stress.”

Estes said that origin of SMGA evolved from his personal observations of the war in Iraq.

“In 2005, the impact of the war hit me,” he said. “During visits to Walter Reed, I discovered how the tragedies of war affect our service men and women. Since golf is such a mental game, I found that you can help a person to establish a special bond, especially with our veterans. Once they establish that trust in you, they will run through a brick wall for you. The motivation comes from the help we give and the passion that you extend to them.”

The focal point of Estes’ classroom is The Olney Golf Park, which opened in 1999. The facility provides visitors with 100 tee stations, a 12,000-square-foot putting green, indoor heated bays for winter practice; video analysis, and an 80-yard, par-3 training hole to help master one’s short game.

One of the many events Estes has either developed or enhanced is the Rosner Pro-Warrior Tournament, where he teamed with PGA Past President Gary Schaal, an Air Force veteran who served in Vietnam. The tournament pairings brought together PGA Professionals, veterans and junior golfers in August at Cannon Ridge Golf Club in Fredericksburg, Va.

“There are barriers that all players must overcome in learning the game of golf,” said Estes, but he prefers to preach that there are no dead ends. Estes has spent much of the past decade gathering research, working with physical therapists; attending the World Golf Fitness Summit, along with mental training seminars. He also has worked with Bob Buck, the executive director of the Eastern Amputee Golf Association, where he gained insight into the best prosthetics to aid a physically-challenged golfer.

“I think that everybody can hit the ball and play,” Estes said. “If a person has never played sports, they would not understand the movement patterns of a golf swing. But, they do begin to find, with work, that there is a level of fitness for them. Someone who has never touched a golf club before has no idea that they may possess some golf ability. Once we begin to work together, wonderful things begin to happen.”

Born in Washington, D.C., Estes was introduced to golf at age 8 by his father, a physician who also was an accomplished amateur golfer. Estes was the 1982 Washington Area Metro Player of the Year and attended the University of Tennessee on a golf scholarship. After two years, he transferred to the University of Maryland, where he was coached by current Champions Tour star Fred Funk.

Estes graduated in 1987 with an economics degree. He turned professional in 1988, competing on the Carolinas and Sunshine Tour (South Africa), followed by the former Hogan (now Nationwide Tour).

He left the tour life and earned PGA of America membership in 1993, and served at Evanston (Ill.) Golf Club through 1996; during this time he tied for seventh in the 1995 PGA Professional National Championship.

Through winters of coaching, which included lessons with premier PGA Teaching Professionals Dr. Jim Suttie, Mike Adams, Carl Lohren and David Leadbetter, Estes was convinced in 1996 that he could return to play full-time.

His tour playing record includes competing on the PGA Tour from 1994-98, and 133 events on the Nationwide Tour from 1990 through 2001. He won the 1996 Nike Inland Empire Open on the former Nike (now Nationwide Tour), posting a 16-under-par winning total and defeating such members of the field as Stewart Cink.

Estes also competed in four U.S. Open Championships and the 2008 PGA Championship. Next summer, he will compete in his sixth PGA Professional National Championship.

“The tour life was difficult for someone who was the parent of two small children,” said Estes, recalling his bid for a career on the road. “I found I could not balance that, but now I am blessed to have found my second calling in life. My niche is working to help players with physical limitations to become better players.”

Estes and his wife, Susan, live in Germantown, Md. He has a son, Tyler, 15, who is enrolled in a military academy; and a daughter, Samantha, 13.

#### **About The PGA of America**

Since 1916, The PGA of America's mission has been twofold: to establish and elevate the standards of the profession and to grow interest and participation in the game of golf. By establishing and elevating the standards of the golf profession through world-class education, career services, marketing and research programs, the Association enables PGA Professionals to maximize their performance in their respective career paths and showcases them as experts in the game and in the multi-billion dollar golf industry. By creating and delivering dramatic world-class championships and exciting and enjoyable golf promotions that are viewed as the best of their class in the golf industry, The PGA of America elevates the public's interest in the game, the desire to play more golf, and ensures accessibility to the game for everyone, everywhere. The PGA of America brand represents the very best in golf.

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