

Excellence Personified

Mcmahon Group, Inc., the St. Louis-based consulting firm, and *Club & Resort Business* have announced the 2009 recipients of the Excellence in Club Management (ECM) Awards program, established in 1997 by the McMahon Group and co-sponsored since 2005 by *C&RB*.

In addition to presentations at their individual clubs that will be held throughout the coming year, the winners, along with those from previous years, will be recognized at an Awards Dinner to be held on February 10 at The Farms Golf Club in Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., in conjunction with the 2010 Golf Industry Show in San Diego. The Awards Dinner will be sponsored by Bollinger Insurance Solutions, ClubCorp, Cybex Golf Fitness, Global Allies and Rodney Strong Vineyards.

In-depth articles detailing the achievements that led to the

selection of each of the 2009 winners will appear in upcoming issues of *Club & Resort Business*.

The annual awards are selected through nominations submitted on behalf of qualified candidates by other parties. Award recipients are selected solely on the basis of their achievements at the club they currently manage; lifetime achievements are not considered.

A Selection Committee comprised of a peer group of club managers conducts the judging; the McMahon Group and *Club & Resort Business* are not involved in the selection of the award winners.

A full listing of judges, in addition to information on past winners and on how to nominate candidates for future years' awards, can be found at the special website for the ECM Awards program, www.clubmanageraward.com

WINNER

Country/Golf Clubs with 600 or More Full-Privilege Members



Carmel

John M. Schultz, CCM
General Manager
Carmel Country Club
Charlotte, N.C.

How do you whip a debt-ridden club, with over 1,000 members who are growing more dissatisfied and restless by the day, back into shape? Call in the Marines—or at least an ex-Marine who followed his four years as a Sargeant at Guantanamo Bay with another five years as a Reserve Staff Sargeant while in college.

By 2003, John Schultz had added 16 years of club management experience to his education and military service—and Carmel Country Club enlisted him to clean up a situation that had grown to crisis proportions.

“Renovating our golf course and enlarging our clubhouse in the late 1990s resulted in millions of dollars in debt,” reports David Watterworth, the club’s President. “We spent several years unsuccessfully attempting to repay the debt while experiencing a decline in member usage.”

As Carmel’s new GM, Schultz has applied what he jokingly refers to as his “trained killer” instincts to not only repay all debt within four years, but also direct a strategic plan that led to the opening of a new \$5 million pool complex. “The pool has brought in many new members and is the envy of Charlotte,” says Watterworth. “John’s leadership has allowed us to reinvest for the future.”

WINNER

Country/Golf Clubs with Fewer than 600 Full-Privilege Members



Zen Mikulski
General Manager
Lehigh Country Club
Allentown, Pa.

Some managers consider it fortunate if they can gain the strong support of one Board President over the course of their tenure at a club. But when support for the nomination of Zenard (Zen) Mikulski for Excellence in Club Management Award recognition was solicited from the current and former Board leadership at Lehigh Country Club, all ten of the living Board Presidents who had worked with Mikulski during three-year terms quickly got in line to write glowing letters of commendation. The last letter came from Thomas Weaver, who wrote simply that “without question, my greatest contribution to [Lehigh CC] during my tenure as President was overseeing the hiring of Zen Mikulski as the club manager [in 1978].”

“The mastery of Zen” displayed by Mikulski while directing club operations through all of those terms has kept Lehigh CC on solid footing and in position to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2010. “Budgeting and cost controls is probably [Zen’s] greatest strength,” says current President Robert Zamboldi. “He has met or exceeded the operating budget in 30 of 31 years, and led us unflinchingly through difficult and challenging periods.”

2009 Excellence in Club Management Award Winners



WINNER

City, Athletic or Specialty
(Non-Golf) Club



Richard A. Lareau, CCM
General Manager/COO
The Briar Club
Houston, Tex.

Many Board Presidents fall back on predictable (and sleep-inducing) platitudes when nominating their club managers for awards. But the letter written by Mark Worscheh, President of The Briar Club, to support Richard Lareau's nomination for an ECM Award reads like a spellbinding

novel, as it recounts with riveting details the story of what Worscheh called the club's "finest moment": how Lareau directed club-based relief and recovery efforts in the wake of the destruction and disruption caused by Hurricane Ike in September 2008. Thanks to Lareau's quick and tireless leadership after the disaster, Worscheh wrote, "The Briar Club became more than a source of leisure for its members—it became a true refuge and a [source of] a return to normalcy."

And, he added, the "unsung heroism showed by Lareau and his staff in the weeks after [Ike] was not an isolated surprise." In fact, Lareau offered his first clue of how he would perform under pressure from the moment he arrived at The Briar Club in 2003. "[Prior to] his arrival, management turmoil was *de rigueur*," Worscheh admits. "His hiring ushered in a different era focused on good club governance, and high service and professionalism."

WINNER

2009 Rising Star
Award



Mr. John M. Corey, CCM
Assistant Manager
Genesee Valley Club
Rochester, N.Y.

John Corey's ascension as a "rising star" in the club industry only confirms a status that Genesee Valley Club has already recognized several times over during the past 20-plus years. Corey started at Genesee Valley as a busboy in 1989, and has earned a steady progression of promotions—rising through

the responsibilities of grill room supervisor, dining room supervisor, steward, and services manager—before assuming his current role in June 2007.

The one constant that has been displayed while in all of those positions, and that has always served to "prosper his growth," says Thomas Spellman, the club's General Manager and Chief Operating Officer, has been Corey's "dedication and 'can do' attitude."

"[John's] contributions to the success of Genesee Valley are legion," Spellman adds. "His professionalism, high standards of excellence, and devotion to member service are without question a major reason why we have been named a Platinum Club several times running and are currently rated among the top 15 city clubs in the country. His strong work ethic and tenure have given him the know-how to help develop our team, and to always give members the opportunity to relax and enjoy themselves at a platinum-level club."