

# National Secretary Candidates Q&A

PGA Members Henderson, Rea, Schneider and Williams seek election this month during 2020 Annual Meeting

**O**n Oct. 29, delegates to the 104th PGA Annual Meeting – taking place virtually this year due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic – will elect one of four PGA Members who are currently running as candidates for the national office of PGA Secretary. The newly elected Secretary will thus be in line to become PGA President in the fall of 2024, and would serve in that position throughout most of 2026.

With the election drawing near later this month, *PGA Magazine* asked questions of each candidate for national Secretary: Tom Henderson of the Connecticut PGA Section; Don Rea of the Southwest PGA Section; Dave Schneider of the Nebraska PGA Section; and Kelly Williams of the Kentucky PGA Section. Their responses follow.

**Over the past 12 months, the PGA of America has experienced some unprecedented challenges. How do you see the Association better serving the members and the game in times like this?**

**Tom Henderson:** We are presently experiencing a time in our lives that is unprecedented. COVID-19, protests and natural disasters have given us so much to handle all at once.

What has been helpful to me is to feel like I have been informed. The current need to disseminate critical information again points to effective communication. We are fortunate that golf is naturally resilient. Our game will survive and, presently, is flourishing in many areas of the country.

However, we as an Association need to keep our members informed on the “state of the union,” and what resources are available to them during these emotionally and financially trying times. We need to be able to pivot and adapt on the fly.

I believe the Association did an admirable job earlier

this year aligning with the CDC and other industry leaders in creating the Back2Golf guidelines ... but our reach needs to go further. We need to communicate with each Section, find out their challenges/needs, and provide them with the tools to cope and survive.

We can do this by making sure that our PGA Members and Associates know what resources are available to them: ADP funding, the PGA Member Assistance Program, Disaster Relief, the Golf Emergency Relief Fund. We need to have this information communicated virtually and provide a disaster hotline to field questions.

More than any other sport, golf is well-positioned for success during trying times. We, as an Association and as individuals, need to market that to our fellow PGA Professionals and the masses.

**Don Rea:** We'll serve them through communication and crowdsourcing. We need to utilize more forms of communication to ensure our PGA Members feel engaged and that we care.

Currently, we use emails and video to talk to our PGA Members. PGA CEO Seth Waugh and President Suzy Whaley created some extremely helpful videos during the early days of the pandemic, but only a small percentage of our members knew about or watched them.

Throughout this campaign, I have used texting, postcards, phone calls, videos and emails to communicate, and texting has the highest response rate by far. That leads me to believe we need to create a PGA app. All of us respond to app notifications – the little red number in the corner of the app does not go away until you open it. Many of our Sections are currently creating their own apps, too, and the PGA needs to help them. I see a PGA app that features a PGA Member directory, PGA.Coach tools, PGA leadership information, PGA VendorMatch, a Section-specific widget and more.

The Back2Golf guidelines and the Golf Emergency Relief Fund are great ideas; we just need to make sure that all of our PGA Members know about our great ideas. Some of our members created Facebook pages to share best practices of dealing with COVID-19. This has exposed a need: We need to create a crowdsourcing solution for our PGA Members that features the best practices being created by them, all in the name of helping fellow members.

## 104th PGA Annual Meeting

**Where:** Virtual gathering due to COVID-19

**When:** Oct. 29, 2020

**Who participates:** PGA Officers, Board Members, Past Presidents, Section delegates and alternates, PGA of America Members and staff.

**MSR credits:** PGA Officers, Past Presidents, Board Members, Section delegates and PGA Members who participate in the 104th PGA Annual Meeting will receive a to be determined amount of PGA Required MSR credits. Visit [PGA.org](http://PGA.org) and [PGAmagazine.com](http://PGAmagazine.com) for the latest details.

**How to view:** Activities and presentations from the 2020 PGA Annual Meeting can be viewed live and will be archived afterward on [PGA.org](http://PGA.org).

**Twitter:** @PGA1916 and #PGAAnnual



**Dave Schneider:** The past 12 months have challenged all of us in ways we never thought possible. It has challenged us physically, emotionally and financially.

I'm grateful for all the efforts across our Association, from Chapter Officers all the way to our national Officer team and PGA Headquarters staff, who I've had the privilege to work alongside to protect and serve our membership and game. Their dedication and utter refusal to let the situation dictate our success reassured me that the greatest challenges can be overcome by leadership and communication. As your next PGA Secretary, I bring a passion for both.

My definition of leadership is an experienced and equipped body willing to cast a vision that connects a forward-thinking strategy with an articulate and compassionate approach to serve the needs of those they represent. I believe that my resume will set me apart and prove the strength of my experiences which, across our nation, encompasses six different Sections and all three Lifelong Learning career paths. Both demonstrate in their own way that I am equipped to better understand the unique and individual challenges that face each of our 41 Sections.

To me, active communication is simply the act of transferring information back and forth between entities. This requires active listening and conveying of information. We have the privilege of having the lines of communication already in place to be able to convey vital information in a real-time setting — that relay is our Section Executive Directors. They are our most valuable resource for success.

**Kelly Williams:** Many of our challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic were brought on by our lack of relationships with government officials. We need a stronger voice in every single Section when it comes to government's involvement in our game. While that will prove difficult because legislation comes from national, state and local levels, great leaders will press forward for a solution.

We need to build a playbook for Sections that clearly outlines the steps to share the benefits of our game among legislators at all levels. Furthermore, I see a tremendous opportunity to add a new arm of the PGA Career Services Department that I would call PGA Business Consultants (PGABC).

These staff members would serve in a similar capacity to USGA Green Section Consultants, although they would be solely focused on the individual businesses of our PGA Members. PGABCs would be subject-matter experts who would schedule visits with our PGA Members to review business practices, financials and the culture at our facilities, alongside owners/GMs/city officials, depending on facility type.

Once the visit was completed, a report would be provided to support the practices of the PGA Member, while also providing opportunities for growth. Within growth should come revenue generation for the facility, which provides the opportunity for enhanced compensation for PGA Members utilizing the service. There is so much more to this idea, but I truly believe it is a way our Association could better serve us in the future, both in times of challenge and success.

*In regard to employment, what do you believe is the greatest threat facing PGA Members, and how can the Association and member address this issue?*

**Rea:** Recruitment and compensation. I really like the PGA poster still hanging on many of our walls showing that we fulfill many roles, but wear only one badge. It is a shame that poster is no longer in print. Let's start printing and sharing that message again.

We need to use this "many roles, one badge" messaging when recruiting. PGA Members make a difference at their facilities and in their communities while playing a game that is all about fun, family, fitness and forever. When we tell our story, we need to focus on the messaging that is resonating with all our potential PGA Members out there. We all want to make a difference through our work. For example, we raise more money for charity than all other sports combined. We can be an influencer in our community by focusing on "why" we are PGA Professionals.

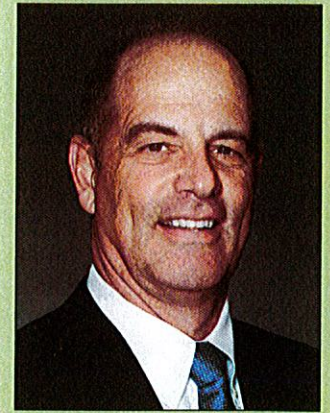
Second, compensation. We need to send a message to the entire industry that we are a cost of goods sold, not an expense. When you invest in the PGA Member, he or she makes that specific course successful through some key performance indicators, like revenue generation, player loyalty and community engagement. There's no doubt we need starting salaries to increase.

The Revenue Scorecard also needs to be automated within PGA.Coach so that our members can create a ROI report for their owners and managers at the end of each month. We need to use software, such as Benchmark, to compare our facilities' performance to those that do not have a PGA Member. Let's show the proof that PGA Professionals truly do grow the game and the business of golf.

**Schneider:** Our greatest threat is the current imbalance that exists within our membership who will be seeking PGA Life Member or Life Member Retired status over the next five to 15 years, and the decreasing number of PGA Associates who would be available to backfill those open positions.

Currently, 42 percent of our active PGA Members are over the age of 50. As the current national Employment Committee Chair, I'm perfectly positioned to attack these issues head-on. Per my conversations with all 19 PGA Career Consultants, we must address the five key factors contributing to the decline in number of PGA Associates who will become PGA Members over the next five to 15 years. Those factors are time to complete program; tuition and expense costs; requirement for active employment prior to beginning the program; work-life balance; and, finally, below-average

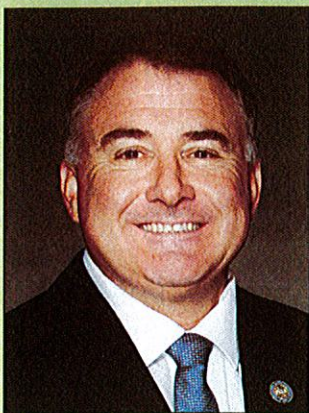
## Tom Henderson, PGA



Tom Henderson, the 2015 PGA Golf Professional of the Year, is the PGA Director of Golf at The Round Hill Club in Greenwich, Connecticut. A PGA Member since 1983, Henderson has served on the Board of Control from 2014-2016 and is presently completing his term on the PGA Board of Directors, representing District 2 (Metropolitan, New Jersey and Philadelphia PGA Sections).



## Don Rea, PGA



Don Rea is the PGA Owner/Operator of Augusta Ranch Golf Club in Mesa, Arizona. A PGA Member since 2002 and PGA Certified Professional in General Management, Don completed his term on the PGA Board of Directors in 2019, representing District 14 (Pacific Northwest and Southwest PGA Sections). He is current chair of the Community Golf Committee, previously chaired the Junior Golf Committee, and served on the Deferred Compensation Focus Group.

compensation compared to peers.

I feel these challenges can, and must, be mitigated without sacrificing our standards to our education and membership criteria.

We need to adapt. Since March, we have seen the benefit of capturing technology to our advantage by moving our Level 1 PGA PGM classes to a virtual setting. This change will provide an avenue to offset barriers, which I feel is a great start.

I am also supportive of allowing prospective PGA Associates to begin their PGA journey in the program prior to having active employment. The magic answer lies in the interrelated work-life balance and need for increased compensation. I, along with the chairs of the Membership and Education committees, am committed to creating a plan to reduce those additional barriers to PGA membership.

**Williams:** The greatest threat facing PGA Members is work-life balance and its relationship to compensation. The price of golf and health of the game in many areas has made it very difficult for operators to budget appropriate compensation for all positions within our golf operations, especially in the area of PGA Head Professionals

and Assistant Professionals.

As a result, PGA Members are working more hours than ever before without seeing a significant increase in compensation. Furthermore, starting salaries for PGA Assistant Professionals are discouraging the next generation of PGA Members from entering the business.

As leaders, we must focus on constant messaging to our employers centered around the value of PGA Professionals and the shortage of assistants entering the industry. The message can't be based on compensation alone – it also needs to reflect the importance of time away from work, even in the peak season. A PGA Member who is mentally healthy and recharged weekly is more effective in their management of the operation, and no one will disagree with that notion.

We must also remain vigilant on protecting the pricing model for golf, both public and private, so that our operators can generate the revenues needed to cover wages competitive with other industries that will continue to attract future PGA Members. It is going to take a tremendous amount of work in this area, especially from our Career Consultants to deliver the message, but with the power of our brand behind us, it is an achievable goal.

**Henderson:** The greatest threat to employment is the perceived value of the PGA Member to the employer and facility. We as an Association need to

provide the PGA Member with the tools and resources to show our employers how valuable we really are.

Providing relevant education in the form of the three new Career Paths, Specialized Professional Program, PGA.Coach and Lifelong Learning will help tremendously. Education will provide our PGA Professionals with the intel to make valuable contributions to the bottom line. By showing results, we can improve our own bottom line and compensation.

Our Association needs to do its part promoting the PGA Professional. We need to “tell our stories” using mass marketing to showcase our successes – PSAs will provide tremendous support for this cause. Our PGA Journeys campaign is just the start. Our new partnership with CBS and ESPN will provide us with a great platform for this idea, too.

Make no mistake, our success is not solely on the Association. It is on us, the PGA Member, who needs to be engaged and proactive. Nothing is going to get handed to us; we need to earn it. A 2014 study showed that PGA Professionals who played with and interacted with their members were able to retain those same members when it came time for membership renewal.

By staying engaged and improving our worth, higher compensation and benefit packages will follow.

**As PGA REACH continues to grow, talk about the key pillars you believe will have the most impact for our PGA Members, our brand and the game?**

**Schneider:** PGA Jr. League, along with Drive, Chip & Putt, have created an exponential avenue to introduce children of every socioeconomic and diverse cultural background to our game. Thus, I believe we are headed squarely in the right direction with these programs. For this response, I'd like to focus more on our programming related to inclusion and our military.

Our Association is uniquely positioned to bring healing and cultural blending into our current national conversation. Sports have long been the medium that transcends political and social turmoil. I would personally start with engaging in more active recruitment of participants from our PGA WORKS Collegiate Championship and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Imagine if you will, “PGA HEAL.” I believe that with a concentrated effort of invitation on behalf of our PGA Members and Associates, we can bring underserved people of diverse backgrounds into a game that we can all enjoy together.

From this, we will continue to grow our game. New PGA Members and new PGA leaders will emerge as healing across all lines begins.

In addition, we are seeing more and more of our military personnel returning home from the battlefield. This is a great opportunity for PGA HOPE to be front and center when they return to our soil to provide the opportunity and support that our combat veterans desire and deserve.

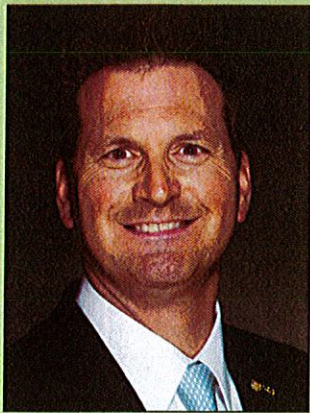
We have a tremendous platform in front of us with our new 11-year contract with ESPN that can help spotlight all three pillars.

We need less talk and more action.

**Williams:** PGA Jr. League continues to introduce



## Dave Schneider, PGA



Dave Schneider is the PGA General Manager and Chief Operating Officer at Happy Hollow Club in Omaha, Nebraska. He has been a PGA Member since 1996, currently serving in his final year on the PGA Board of Directors representing District 8 (Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota PGA Sections). He served two years on the national Education Committee, and currently serves as the chair of the national Employment Committee.

junior golfers to the game at a record pace and it promotes golf as a safe and inclusive activity, even during the pandemic. I am extremely bullish on PGA Jr. League and, if elected, will take it to another level – through our public school systems.

If our game is being introduced and taught as a part of school curriculum, PGA Members will see the benefits of both juniors and parents entering the game. Every time more players enter the game, there is opportunity for increased compensation for PGA Members, as well as the health of individual golf facilities across the 41 Sections.

Increased participation should also be reflected in pay-back to the Sections that are at the heart of introducing the game in schools. Just imagine if kids were learning to play golf in schools rather than curriculum including square dancing or pickleball? Where would our game go? What if Sections were given the tools from the national level to build partnerships with schools and, for each golfer introduced and involved at the local level, there was pay-

back to that individual Section and PGA REACH?

These are the kind of partnerships that we need to be building to grow our game, be more inclusive and promote golf as an activity for everyone – not just a select few. I have personal success in this area and am excited to scale my model for the benefit of fellow PGA Members and growth of the game.

**Henderson:** PGA REACH is driven by three main pillars: PGA HOPE, PGA Jr. League and PGA WORKS. Each of these pillars directly effects our PGA Members, our brand and our game:

### Members

PGA HOPE has been an absolute success in our local Sections and nationally. I have had the good fortune to participate in the very successful program of the Metropolitan PGA. Selfishly, the time spent coaching in the PGA HOPE program has been some of my most rewarding time spent in golf. How often do you get a chance to save a life?

### Brand

Through PGA REACH, we have established ourselves as a leader in developing golfers. In recent years, we have been challenged with growing the game. Navigating through the challenges of COVID-19, we have been blessed with an opportunity. More people have either entered into or returned to the game, and we

need to wrap our arms around all golfers. This is the perfect opportunity to embrace the next generation of golfers in a socially-distanced and concussion-free game. PGA Jr. League continues to be one of golf's greatest vehicles for creating future generations of golfers.

### Game

Golf needs to look more welcoming, and it looks more welcoming when people working in it look more like the people we are trying to attract. PGA WORKS has provided us with a vehicle to accomplish this.

We can't rest on our laurels. We need to hold on to the golfers we have and continue to develop new golfers. PGA REACH provides a vehicle to do that.

**Rea:** First, there is no doubt that we need to make our game look more like America. PGA WORKS is doing a fine job in that arena, but we can do more.

PGA Jr. League and PGA Family Cup are great programs that our members can use to create revenue for themselves and their facilities while growing the game during this pandemic. Connecting Nextgengolf will result in another win-win with an even bigger impact on facility revenue generation. However, I am worried about PGA HOPE.

While it is a tremendous program that I have personally seen change the lives of veterans and very powerful in its nature, PGA HOPE is going to struggle. Currently, some of our programs are not being funded or have run out of funding. The idea was to solicit your own funding after two years. Well, sponsorship is drying out, and the PGA will need to focus on ways to further support the sustainability of this important programming benefitting our veterans.

I suggest we create a PGA HOPE Committee comprised of our past Patriot Award winners and address this funding challenge immediately. PGA REACH Senior Director Ryan Cannon and his staff are doing an amazing job. However, I believe that a committee made up of our national award winners working with Ryan's team will be the right combination, making sure this current challenge doesn't turn into a catastrophe that will impact our military veterans across America and, ultimately, our brand.

### *How would you work to better activate the scale of the membership and Sections for the benefit of all?*

**Williams:** We are part of a Google generation where technology has made the world smaller than ever before. As such, we can't operate in silos as 41 Sections.

Instead, we need to blur Section boundaries with ideas and best practices shared through the utilization of technology. During my term on the PGA Board of Directors, I always looked forward to the minutes from the monthly Executive Director calls because they have their finger on the "pulse" of our Association. Executive Directors are constantly sharing ideas, so we as members need to do a better job sharing, as well.

What if we had a PGA Member app on our mobile devices to better connect us? What if that app could send a notification of an interactive virtual best practice share on a regular basis? Simply RSVP via the app



## Kelly Williams, PGA



Kelly Williams is the PGA General Manager at Greenbrier Golf & Country Club in Lexington, Kentucky. A PGA Member since 2007 and PGA Certified Professional in General Management, Williams completed a term on the PGA Board of Directors in 2019, representing District 10 (Kentucky, Middle Atlantic and Carolinas PGA Sections). He has served on the Properties Advisory, Audit, Education and Marketing & Communications committees during his time on the board and in Section governance.

to attend, login at the scheduled time and hear a PGA Member from a neighboring or faraway Section sharing ideas virtually without leaving the comfort of our own office or home – that is innovation and activation of scale!

Furthermore, a nominal fee could be collected from those in attendance that could go back to the host Section or PGA REACH programming in the presenting member's area. Partnerships that pay through ideas to make us all better operators are just one of the many pathways I see to better activation of our Section, and enhance the lives and careers of all PGA Members.

**Henderson:** My campaign slogan is "Strength in Numbers." Simply defined, *everyone* is included, and the key component to accomplishing this is communicating, especially two-way communication.

It starts from the bottom up as well as from the top down. Too many times in the past, I felt that programs and initiatives were dictated down from the top. Real two-way communication begins on the local level, because each Section is unique and has different wants and needs. We need to seek out and listen to what our members and Sections need. Give them what

they need to be successful within the national guidelines.

The main conduit for effective Section communications is the Executive Directors. The SBO (Section Business Operations) team at PGA Headquarters is in place, and it's off to a great start. It needs to be developed and nurtured. Again, this will truly work only with two-way communication in place.

PGA Members on the ground also need to play a role in business development. We need to focus on our local markets, and get involved in our communities. Actively being involved in community outreach programs such as golf in schools, summer camps, YMCA, CYO and Boys & Girls Clubs is critical in growing the game and developing our businesses.

I personally have used these programs to spread the word and used them as a source of finding entry-level employees. I believe community programs are an untapped resource that we need to utilize. It all points back to two-way communication — on the local, Section and national levels, top down and back up.

**Rea:** The COVID-19 pandemic has created an amazing spike in people interested in our game. I have witnessed it personally at Augusta Ranch. I keep hearing, "It's like the '90s again," in a good way.

Well, the '90s were great, but they were followed by

a downturn. What mistake did we make then? We did not build databases.

PGA Members build relationships, which turns into loyalty, which results in sustainability. We need to leverage our ability to build relationships to drive more interest in our game. We need to market our members like never before. We need to leverage PGA.com by advertising to non-golfers. My wife and daughter have never seen an ad for golf. Why not?

We need to be where the non-golfers are. Social media, YouTube, TikTok, The Food Network, HGTV, NASCAR, NFL, MLB, Jimmy Fallon, Oprah, etc. We need to feature our award winners and get their stories out to the nation.

We all know that we make amazing award videos. Let's show those videos more than just that one night a year. Let's show the world the story of Eric Eshleman and his student Dr. Condoleezza Rice. Our members are doing what is needed to grow the game, but we are still preaching to the choir. Let's leverage the marketing and advertising relationships of the PGA to not only grow the game to non-golfers, but drive rounds and revenue to our PGA Members and their facilities.

**Schneider:** One of the "spokes" in my campaign platform, which I call "The Wheel," is leadership. On my website, DaveSchneiderPGA.com, I outline in detail my 360-degree leadership approach that does just this — it activates.

It involves the boards, Officers and Executive Directors of our Sections more than our Association has ever done. My vision involves periodic updates from the Section boards and Executive Directors. These updates will involve questions like, "What is mission critical to your Section right now?" or "What are programs/practices that have been successful in your Section?" and "What challenges are you facing and how can the national leadership assist?"

Officers and Executive Directors in each Section will present to their District Director where they, in turn, will have dedicated time at the national board level to update their fellow directors on matters related to their individual districts. This communication will better educate our Officers and PGA Board to the challenges and successes across our Association.

Additionally, we need to better employ the talents and experiences of our 41 Executive Directors at the national level. They are the central nervous system of our Association, with all communication and efforts exchanged through them. Their voice, individually and collectively, needs to be heard directly by the PGA Board.

As your next national Officer, I will actively pursue an overlap in the Executive Director conferences and board planning sessions at least once, if not two times per year. This engagement will allow our national board and Officers to better utilize our greatest asset available — our Executive Directors.

**What would be your plan to help the PGA create greater inclusion in the game, and for members of the Association?**

**Henderson:** If our membership is more inclusive, the



game will be more inclusive.

Early reports indicate that the PGA's Inclusion & Diversity Department has made significant improvements in employment, community outreach, vendor inclusion and education. However, there is still room to grow in employment, governance, mentorship and education.

Going forward, I will focus on not necessarily creating a lot of new programming, but evaluating the existing programs and their effectiveness. All programs need to be routinely assessed, monitored and analyzed. One-day programs aren't as effective as multiple-day programs in increasing exposure and acceptance into the game.

We need to analyze the attrition rate of minorities who have entered our PGA PGM Program. Where are we missing the mark? Is there consistency from Section to Section? I would like to track the Sections with the highest rate of retention, find out their best practices and share them with every Section. Let's build on those success stories.

A marketing campaign is needed as well to heighten the awareness of the opportunities available in the golf industry, highlighting the possibilities and logical first steps.

Mentorship is key, too. I spoke with a PGAWORKS graduate about this and he said that mentorship was very important and that it didn't matter if the mentor was Black or white. He just needed one that was available. Barriers of cost, access and exposure exist, as well. We need to identify challenges and remedies through a dedicated task force.

**Rea:** We need our game to look more like our world, but the problem is not our game at its core — golf is a great sport that everyone can play and enjoy.

The problem is how we promote the game, where we promote it and why we promote. We are the stewards of this game and if we are going to grow it, that means being more inclusive, which will lead to diversity. Our efforts must be intentional to tell the world about golf. Right now, we tend to rely on golfers to grow our game. They tell the people that they know in their social circles that they should try golf.

We need to help them with their messaging and support their efforts by ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment at our facilities. We must have a marketing strategy that includes PSA-type commercials being shown to non-golfers during the shows and programs that they watch. We need to invite our allied golf associations and lead this movement showcasing the benefits of our lifelong social game.

Additionally, to increase the diversity in our Association, we must solicit the help of our diverse PGA Members utilizing PGA.Coach to champion the message by telling their own stories.

**Schneider:** I believe that the answer begins and ends with commitment. As I mentioned previously, we have a tremendous opportunity at hand. While other sports associations talk about being agents of change, our actions will define us as agents of change.

As we are all aware, our Association is predominantly comprised of white males. When discussing

the 41 Sections' leadership, it is more of the same. As your next Officer, I would continue to promote and market programs like PGA LEAD, an initiative that empowers young PGA Members from all backgrounds to become leaders in our Association.

We have had some fantastic results that have come from that initiative, which is now in its fifth year. I am so incredibly proud that next year, for the first time in our Association's history, District 8 will feature women as Section Presidents in two of our three Sections, represented by Dawn Neujahr of the Nebraska PGA and Erin Strieck of the Iowa PGA.

Both Dawn and Erin were members of the first and second PGA LEAD classes several years ago. Knowing these extraordinary women as I do with their skills, passion and drive, our Association is better because of their leadership. Both have mentioned that PGA LEAD catapulted their confidence and desire to become leaders in our Association. We need to promote these stories across all mediums both inside and outside of the PGA realm.

It is the success stories of PGA Professionals like Dawn, Erin, Paige Cribb, Kennie Sims, Tony Martinez, Howie Pruitt and so many more that will encourage and empower many others to make our game a career and become more successful than they ever imagined.

**Williams:** Greater inclusion in the game dovetails directly into an idea mentioned in my response about PGA REACH: PGA Jr. League in schools.

We need to introduce kids to the game at an early age before they have the opportunity to develop unconscious bias or the belief that they aren't welcome in our game. If we can get kids into the funnel early on through the power of a PGA Jr. League invitation, they will fall in love with the game and our game will begin to look more like the world.

If a more diverse group of children are enjoying our game, it will create a more inclusive workforce in the future. In the near-term to create greater inclusion in our workforce, I would like to entertain a pillar within PGA REACH that would provide grants to employers who hire workers from diverse backgrounds for key positions within their golf operations.

Our employers need a workforce and more diverse backgrounds within their payroll, so a program that aids in diversification of the labor pool that comes with a financial benefit should be motivating to operators. This is an idea that will need more thought and resources to be successful, but at this point, it is a seed I would like to plant within our Association to see how it might grow because it fits well within the PGA of America's Long-Term Strategic Plan.

**How has your experience best positioned you for success as a national Officer, and what strengths will you bring to the leadership team?**

**Rea:** I am a green-grass PGA Professional who has served and currently serves on a diverse set of boards (church, state tourism, NGCOA, PGA).

I have always signed up and shown up because I love golf. I love to play it, but I really love to see the



impact it has on people and the community. Golf raises money for great causes, brings people/families together, gives our veterans a reason to get out of the house and is fun.

I am an energetic leader who loves to empower individuals to make a difference. I build teams through consensus decision-making and always listen for the next great idea. As PGA Members, we are the leaders in the game. Leading comes with responsibility.

The relationships/friendships that I have made over the past 20 years include management companies, the GCSAA, the NCGOA, PGA of Canada, legislators and tee time providers to name a few. I am excited to leverage these relationships to increase collaboration, communication and community. I am ready to continue this lifelong commitment for the next six years and beyond as a passionate ambassador of our great game, the PGA of America, and the industry that we all love to be a part of. I would love your support to be the next Secretary of the PGA of America. God bless.

**Schneider:** Experience means personally encountering or having knowledge of a job or activity. I have been extremely blessed to have worked in six different Sections in prominent roles in all three of our career paths. This has provided me with an invaluable glimpse of what our 29,000 PGA Members are dealing with in their daily lives.

I have scrubbed clubs, but I've also overseen multi-million-dollar expansions in a wide variety of facility types, including private equity, private for-profit, resort and daily fee. I have worked across the country in the Midwest, Southeast, Southwest, and even in the Hawaiian Islands. These experiences allow me to have empathy and sympathy with the challenges that face our members across many different regions. It also allows me to participate in any room and provide meaningful input on avenues to consider in resolving challenges or positively impacting change.

The strength that I bring to the leadership team, outside of fantastic listening skills, is my ability to extract meaningful ideas and outcomes from a group of diverse people and backgrounds. I can accomplish this at a level that the group would not be able to do on their own through extensive experience in showcasing these strengths with staffs that I have managed, ranging from

### PGA Annual Meeting update

**D**ue to the general well-being of all PGA constituents, and the Hartford Convention Center closing until 2021, the PGA Board of Directors voted to hold the 104th PGA Annual Meeting virtually.

Details will continue to be posted to PGA.org, but in the meantime, delegates should plan for the formal business session and PGA Secretary election of the Annual Meeting to be held virtually on the afternoon of Thursday, Oct. 29, as was previously scheduled.

More information can be found at <https://resources.pga.org/my-membership/association-meetings-and-events/104th-pga-annual-meeting>.

For more on each of the Secretary candidates, log-in to your PGA.org account to see Q&As and video from the latest Super Regionals. The videos can also be found by visiting <https://resources.pga.org/my-membership/governance/2020-candidate-videos/>.

10–260 employees. I bring this same skill set to the boards that I have led throughout my career.

The PGA has done so much for me and my family. It would be my privilege to share the benefits of my experience and strengths as your next PGA Secretary.

**Williams:** I lead from a combination of a democratic- and servant-style approach. I really enjoy hearing the opinions of others and then serving them. My goal is always to enhance and enrich the lives of others through my actions.

While we won't always agree on everything, including other stakeholders gives more ownership in the process, which equals greater buy-in for a decision. During my term as Kentucky PGA President, we dealt with many challenges, most notably a fractured relationship with our partners at the Kentucky Golf Association. I listened to all sides of the issues we faced and brought both sides back together to remain partners for years to come.

Communication has always been one of my greatest strengths and the ability to be a strong communicator is born from being a great listener. One of my favorite sayings is that I have two ears and one mouth for a reason, because we should listen twice as much as we speak. I find that most challenges can be overcome if we are willing to listen to others and then have open dialogue reach a solution.

My even-tempered and stoic demeanor will bring a sense of trust and calmness in times of difficulty – a style that I believe will be extremely successful in the board room as a future Officer of our Association.

**Henderson:** Benjamin Franklin once said, "Experience is the best teacher."

I've been playing this great game for 50 years and have been a PGA Member for 37 years. My governance experience began locally with the Metropolitan PGA, where I served on multiple committees and sat in every chair, including Section President from 2007–09.

On the national front, I have served on the Player Development Committee (I was the first PGA Professional in the country to become certified in Player Development in 2013) and have served on the Teaching and Coaching Committee multiple years (co-chair of the PGA Teaching & Coaching Summit on two separate occasions).

I was also appointed to and served on the Board of Control from 2014–16 (I am the only candidate with Board of Control experience) and I am presently finishing my final year as District 2 representative on the PGA Board of Directors. Finally, in 2015, I was selected as the PGA Golf Professional of the Year.

So what makes me the right candidate? It's that I've worked effectively with and served with each of the current Officers. I am a pragmatic thinker: one who gathers all the information before speaking and deciding. I'm passionate about our game and the next generation of PGA Members. I look forward to serving my fellow PGA Professionals and the opportunity to share my experiences for the betterment of our profession and the game.

Thank you for your support and consideration. God bless you, your family, and the PGA of America. ■