



University of Idaho

PGA Golf Management



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Many exciting things are happening with the University of Idaho's PGA Golf Management program (PGM). Students are completing PGA's updated education requirements; internship requests are surging; and Andrew Elaimy, program alumni, is the new PGA Head Professional at U of I's golf course.

Finishing the updated education requirements, PGM's first 3.0 cohort are completing their internships and business degrees. It's never easy being a pilot project, but this group of students took it in stride and we're proud to call them Vandals. We wish them the best as they start their careers.

Golf is experiencing an incredible boom in popularity, putting our interns and graduates in high demand. PGM received more than 800 internship requests for the 2021 golf season, nearly double what we've seen in previous years. Luke Nickodemus also hosted two virtual PGA specific career fairs with guest speakers from nearly 20 golf facilities. With a record number of internship and career opportunities, PGM student and graduate placements continue to be strong.

We are happy to welcome Andrew Elaimy, PGM alumni, back to the Palouse as PGA Head Professional at U of I's golf course. Those who went to school with Andrew know his passions for golf and the university are second to none. In his new role, Andrew is taking an active role in teaching and mentoring our students.

PGM staff and students plan to attend the 2022 PGA Merchandise Show in person and host an alumni social hour. Let us know if you plan to attend the show and we'll make sure you get an invitation. Until then, if you are interested in participating in our next career fair or hosting an intern, please reach out to us directly or submit your facility profile on our website in the Employers section.

Thank you for your support,

Cole Mize,
Director

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT MEET SAMUEL SLUSSER

MAJOR
FINANCE

ANTICIPATED
GRADUATION
SPRING 2023

HOMETOWN
RUPERT



After completing an internship at Sand Valley Golf Resort in Nekoosa, Wisconsin, Slusser discussed his experience with the U of I's College of Business and Economics (CBE).

CBE: Explain the process of getting your internship.

Slusser: Getting an internship can be as easy or as difficult as you make it. There are more golf courses looking for interns than there are interns available which makes it a market in the students favor. There are a few different ways to get an internship. The first is to reach out to a course or facility you're interested in and let them know you would love to work for them. The next is to ask Cole, Luke

or other classmates if they could help reach out for you, to get your foot in the door and start some dialogue. Finally, our internship coordinator Luke sends us internship options. It is easy to pick any of those great options and apply that way. I recommend shooting high for these internships, there are a lot of great places to go.

CBE: Are there benefits to having a business degree alongside your PGA education?

Samuel: Having a business degree alongside a PGA education is a huge bonus. Not only is much of the PGA work focused on business, but most of the work as a Head Professional & Director of Golf is very business oriented. Compared to other interns I worked with, I had a much better understanding of the work experience portfolio as well as how the course all worked together. Having a finance degree also opens a lot of doors inside the golf world that are not in green grass facilities. If I want to have any corporate golf role having a business degree is a huge bonus.

CBE: How was your experience interning at Sand Valley?

Slusser: Sand Valley does internships right. The entire management staff really cares about each individual working for them. They do their best to make sure everyone is learning and building their careers up. They have set up the Sand Valley Profession Development Academy, where a few times each month they will hold mini seminars about an area of golf. It might be teaching, finance, management or retail, but all the courses are taught by various professionals around Wisconsin. That is also a great way to increase your network with the other PGA pros they bring in to talk to the group. There is affordable housing on-site and the ability to make good money by being a caddie on your days off. Jonathan Stuart works hard to make sure that every staff member looking for winter employment gets it. He has a great network across the country and a great course community in Florida for winter employment. Overall, my experience at Sand Valley was fantastic and I would recommend it to anyone looking to work hard and learn a lot. They are a fantastic example of how a golf resort should be run and how a well-designed internship experience is made.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

GREG WAGNER, '13

Moonlight Basin Prospers with Rocky Mountain Boom



It's no secret that a move west, particularly to states with wide open spaces and outdoor adventure, has led to tremendous growth for golf club communities in and around the Rocky Mountains. One of the most prosperous mountain clubs may very well be Moonlight Basin, a private year-round playground of summer and winter activity in Big Sky, Montana. Leading the charge at The Reserve, a Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course at Moonlight Basin, are four University of Idaho PGA Golf Management graduates. Greg Wagner – PGA Director of Golf & Club Operations, Nick Berasi – PGA Head Professional, Austin LeFave – PGA 1st Assistant, and Taylor Dixon – PGA Assistant, all call Big Sky home.

As the number two ranked course in the state of Montana by Golf Digest, The Reserve at Moonlight Basin has flown relatively under the radar. It wasn't

until July of this summer when they hosted The Match on TNT Network, that the world of golf saw the incredible beauty of the course. Phil Mickelson and Tom Brady were defeated by Bryson DeChambeau and Aaron Rodgers on the 16th hole of The Match, but the true winner of The Match was the state of Montana and the Club at Moonlight Basin. Hundreds of thousands of visits to Moonlight's website led to countless real estate leads and membership inquiries. In September, the club released 15 National Memberships for non-homeowners at \$250,000 each. Within a week they were all sold.

"When I started at Moonlight Basin in 2014, we were just a nine-hole course with a temporary trailer for a clubhouse, and 96 members. Today we have 535 member families, adding 71 new memberships so far in 2021. Real estate prices have doubled or tripled in some cases, and we can't develop new properties



LeFave (left) and Payton (right) at The Match



fast enough. It's amazing to see the transformation at Moonlight and in the Big Sky community. The best part has been sharing the journey at Moonlight with over a dozen PGA interns and having many work here as professionals after graduating the program. Having Nick, Austin, and Taylor here as fellow UI grads for something as big as The Match, was very special", said Wagner.

In addition to golf, Moonlight has a 15 station sporting clays course, a 3D archery range, and large network of mountain biking and hiking trails, just to name a few summer amenities. Winter boasts miles of Nordic ski and snowshoe trails, ice skating, a tubing hill, and direct alpine ski access to Big Sky Resort from their ski-in-ski-out residences and two Club lodges. In July, a new 60,000 square foot Lake Lodge opened, which includes a basketball court, Trackman golf simulator, outdoor pool/spa, restaurant, and more. "Getting involved at Moonlight Basin has expanded my knowledge beyond golf more than I could ever imagine. I think the new

country club model includes so much more than golf, and we've really seen a lot of traction from young families to this expanded outdoor lifestyle", said Berasi.

Moonlight Basin shows no signs of slowing down, with an ultra-luxury international One & Only Resort, the first in the United States, currently under development within the private community. There are also rumors of another 18 hole golf course and a par 3 course in the not too distant future. 1st Assistant Austin LeFave said, "I can see the growth opportunities here with the developments and growth of the Club. I am learning a great deal from Moonlight to further my career here, or somewhere similar in the future." Moonlight hosts three to four interns each summer and provides free housing. Greg mentions, "We've had seven University of Idaho graduates work here after college. All of them have furthered their careers here or moved onto a larger role at another facility. We hope this is just the start of a long list of alumni that make Moonlight part of their career path."

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