



Contact: Jared Minski (jared@mastrocomm.com)
Mastro Communications, Inc. @ 732-469-5700

Marriott Golf Announces Annual Awards For Performance Excellence
La Iguana Golf Course Los Suenos Marriott Resort Named *Golf Property of the Year*;
Charles Sheppard of Toftrees Golf Club Named *Golf Professional of the Year*;
Aaron Thomas of JW Marriott Camelback Golf Club Named *Golf Grounds Manager of the Year*

ORLANDO, Fla., July 6, 2016...Marriott Golf, one of the world's premier golf operators, today announced its annual awards for golf excellence across the Company's portfolio of properties. **La Iguana Golf Course at Los Suenos Marriott Ocean & Golf Resort**, in Costa Rica, has been named *Golf Property of the Year*; **Charles Sheppard**, Director of Golf Operations at Toftrees Golf Club in State College, Pennsylvania, was named *Golf Professional of the Year* and **Aaron Thomas**, Director of Grounds Operations at JW Marriott Camelback Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona, was recognized as *Golf Grounds Manager of the Year*.

Highlighting the annual awards, **La Iguana Golf Course Los Suenos Marriott Ocean & Golf Resort**, in Costa Rica -- which achieved the highest golfer satisfaction scores of all properties within the Marriott Golf portfolio -- has been named *Golf Property of the Year*. In addition to its commitment to environmental sustainability programs, the property established a line-up of thriving player development programs, highlighted by a rehabilitative golf program designed for disabled men and women to enjoy the game of golf. Some of the many award criteria are: performance excellence for current and previous years in various categories including golf sales, round improvements, turf grass conditions, innovative program development, customer satisfaction, and personnel training & leadership.

"La Iguana Golf Course is committed to developing and implementing best practices that encompass all areas of golf operations," said Claye Atcheson, Vice President, Marriott Golf. "Aside of their environmental stewardship, golf programming and amazing diversity initiatives, which are unmatched, the staff at La Iguana has exceeded customer expectations and that is the ultimate benchmark."

Golf Professional of the Year, **Charles Sheppard** (Toftrees Golf Club), was recognized as an individual who consistently performs and exceeds in areas of sales and profit, supplier program compliance, rounds improvement, leadership in staff development, sales and marketing initiatives, and customer loyalty. Sheppard achieved the highest levels of customer and employee satisfaction, and was instrumental in reinvigorating the membership program at Toftrees, creating enhanced program offerings and engagement from men, ladies and juniors of all skill levels. Consideration for this prestigious award is based on performance excellence for current and previous years.

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“A passionate leader and mentor, Charles Sheppard is truly deserving of the Golf Professional of the Year recognition,” said Bill Nault, Vice President, Marriott Golf. “While PGA Professionals are not driven by awards, this honor certainly validates the hard work and dedication that has helped to define Charles’ career in the golf industry.”

Additionally, **Aaron Thomas**, Director of Grounds Operations at JW Marriott Camelback Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona, was recognized as *Golf Grounds Manager of the Year*. Thomas led the renovation and is responsible for sustaining the day to day maintenance program for the award winning Ambiente golf course at Camelback. Further, under Thomas’s leadership, and backed by a unique grassing plan to responsibly utilize natural resources, the property conserved more than 30 million gallons of water in 2015. Some of the criteria for this award include: overall turf grass condition, successful large scale renovation or construction projects, member and guest satisfaction scores, employee satisfaction scores, loss prevention efforts, staff development, financial management, and continuing education with active pursuit of certification from the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

“Aaron Thomas represents the best of Marriott Golf and is deserving of the Golf Grounds Manager of Year recognition,” said David Robinson, Senior Director, Grounds, Marriott Golf. “There are so many talented individuals working across our portfolio of properties and Aaron stands at the head of the class for his exceptional performance and commitment to excellence.”

About Marriott Golf

Marriott Golf manages 50 golf courses in 12 countries across four continents, offering nearly 1,000 holes of championship golf for Marriott International brands, including The Ritz-Carlton, JW Marriott, Marriott Hotels and Resorts, Gaylord Hotels, Renaissance Hotels, and Marriott Golf Academy. Marriott has managed golf operations since 1971 and is one of the world’s premier golf operators. Marriott provides golf development expertise, golf management, and consulting services to a unique variety of hospitality environments including resorts, private membership clubs, daily fee courses, golf schools, and franchises. For more information, visit www.marriottgolf.com.

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