

Green Financial Charity Golf Classic - A Legacy of Giving

By Julie Thompson

Giving. Everyone likes to be on the receiving end of it, but it takes a special kind of person to continually be the giver in such a relationship. Green Financial Resources LLC (GFR) has hosted seventeen golf events, with 15 of them designated as tournament to raise money for charity. These have been opportunities for their clients, friends, and community members to come out, have some fun and donate to local nonprofit organizations they have designated as the beneficiaries of each event.

“I love it because it’s pulls people together to do good for others,” said Roger Green, who founded his financial planning and investment firm almost 32 years ago in 1987. With the golf tournaments, he’s established a celebrated tradition with his clients, staff and family where they come out to support a local nonprofit. For the past few years that support has gone to support the Auditory-Verbal Center, Inc (AVChears.org) an entity that offers resources to help deaf children and adults to communicate without relying on lip-reading or sign language. The event also benefits Friends of Gwinnett Seniors, a 501©3 committed to ensuring seniors in Gwinnett have access to transportation, healthcare, and in-home assistance.

The 17th Charity Golf Classic was held September 17th, 2019 at the River Club in Suwanee. Eighteen teams signed up for the tournament, along with numerous sponsors, and together they were able to raise \$37,600 for AVC. Another \$2400 went to Friends of Gwinnett Seniors.

Green Financial initiated the charity aspect of its golf tournaments in 2004, and since then, the company has collected over \$510,000 for local charities. This is money that went directly to benefit the charities. Unlike the fund-raising events most charities organize themselves, these events didn’t require deductions for the cost of the event, the golf, or the staff hours to put on the event because Roger and Green Financial covered these expenses or partnered with sponsors like Chris Bruno of the Chick-fil-A Dwarf House in Duluth, to provide a sack meal to kick off the event.

GFR staff does most of the soliciting for donors and sponsors, again saving the charity the effort, and bringing them new sources of potentially ongoing donations. GFR’s advertising connections, such as the Gwinnett Citizen, have also helped to bring awareness of these wonderful non-profits and the services they provide. Over the years, Green Financial has had each participant in their tournaments make their donation checks payable directly to the charities, ensuring that 100 percent of the funds raised go to the designated organization.

Roger said. “It’s a nice shot in the arm for these organizations because they are small, local organizations, and we really move the needle for their budget.”

What breeds this spirit of generosity, some may wonder? For the Green family, it springs from hearts brimming with gratitude. They know, up close and personal, just how much these organizations offer for others in the community, every day. And they truly want to give back to the community in which they live and work.

Michael, Roger’s son, was diagnosed as being deaf as an infant. In 1991, Roger uprooted the family and his small but growing business from Houston to Atlanta where Michael could benefit from specialists at the AVC. Thanks to the individualized training he received for over five years, Michael’s speech is as clear as a bell. With the use of a cochlear implant, and the training he received, he doesn’t rely on lip-reading or sign-language to communicate.

Today, Michael works as a Client Service Manager and is being mentored by his dad to move into the financial advisor role in the family

business, along with his brother Andrew. He holds Bachelor’s in Accounting and Finance from Mercer University, and a Master’s in Finance from Georgia State. He enjoys a variety of activities, like spending time with his girlfriend, hanging out with his friends, and going to ball games when he has the chance.

But Michael doesn’t take any of it for granted. “If I didn’t speak as well as I did or if I had to rely on sign language, that would have created a sense of dependency,” Michael said. “There would have been many opportunities I could have missed out on if I was not able to speak . . . I wouldn’t be anywhere close to where I am now today.”

A loss of one of the five senses may be one of the most significant challenges human beings can experience, and yet, thanks to AVC, Michael has much to give others. He sits on AVC’s board and regularly volunteers, like his father.

“One of the things that really helped me, whether it was mentally, or spiritually, to overcome these challenges was to be grateful for what I have and not focus on the things that I did not have,” Michael continued. “That’s one of the key takeaways I would want people to learn from my situation.”

For Michael — and the entire Green Financial staff for that matter — The Golf Classic is always an anticipated event. Roger’s wife and COO Laura Green and Client Service Manager Kelly Schmidt have taken the lead on organizing and carrying out the planning details for all seventeen of these tournaments. This year, Roger’s niece, Taylor Sloss, who joined GFR in 2017 to support Laura as a Marketing Assistant, took on a lead role on coordinating the many details required to put on the event. The planning takes months, and countless paid company hours. But for the GFR staff, seeing it all come together, and participating in the actual event, is reward in itself.

The tournament started at 8:45 a.m. with a putting competition, and by the time the tournament officially began with a Shotgun Start at 10:00 a.m., the sun was in full heat, allowing the teams hours of uninterrupted sporting. At 3:00 p.m., guests enjoyed a buffet-style lunch, provided by Green Financial, at the lodge.

What makes the event a success year after year, is that each participant — winner or not — can go home with their head a little higher, knowing they contributed to a great cause. Even so, the 2019 winners played hard and will be recognized. The 2019 winners are: Kendall Cook for the Longest Drive; Gail Ainsworth for the Ladies’ Longest Drive - Adam Paul for Closest to the Pin and Philip Peters for the Putting Contest. The team winning first place consisted of the following players: Adam Paul, Russell Davis, Ricky McPhee and Jay Morris.

In the past fifteen years, the Green Financial Charity Golf Classic has provided funding for organizations including American Lung Association and Dream House for Medically Fragile Children. Over a seven-year past period, GFR raised over \$210K in support of The Gwinnett Children’s Shelter. For the past five years, Friends of Gwinnett Seniors has also been a recipient, in whole or in part, receiving over \$98,000. Last but not least, over \$172,000 has been raised in support of the Auditory-Verbal Center in just the past four years.

Roger hopes to see it, and Green Financial, continue for many years. He jokes that his planned retirement date is 2062, but in reality he loves what he does and at only age 52, his retirement is not planned for a decades. When the time does come, he trusts his sons, Michael and Andrew Green, and possibly even grandchildren, will carry on the family tradition — a legacy steeped in family, cherished clients, and most of all, a spirit of giving.