

“Scholarship in Greenkeeping” -for Students & Community

Background

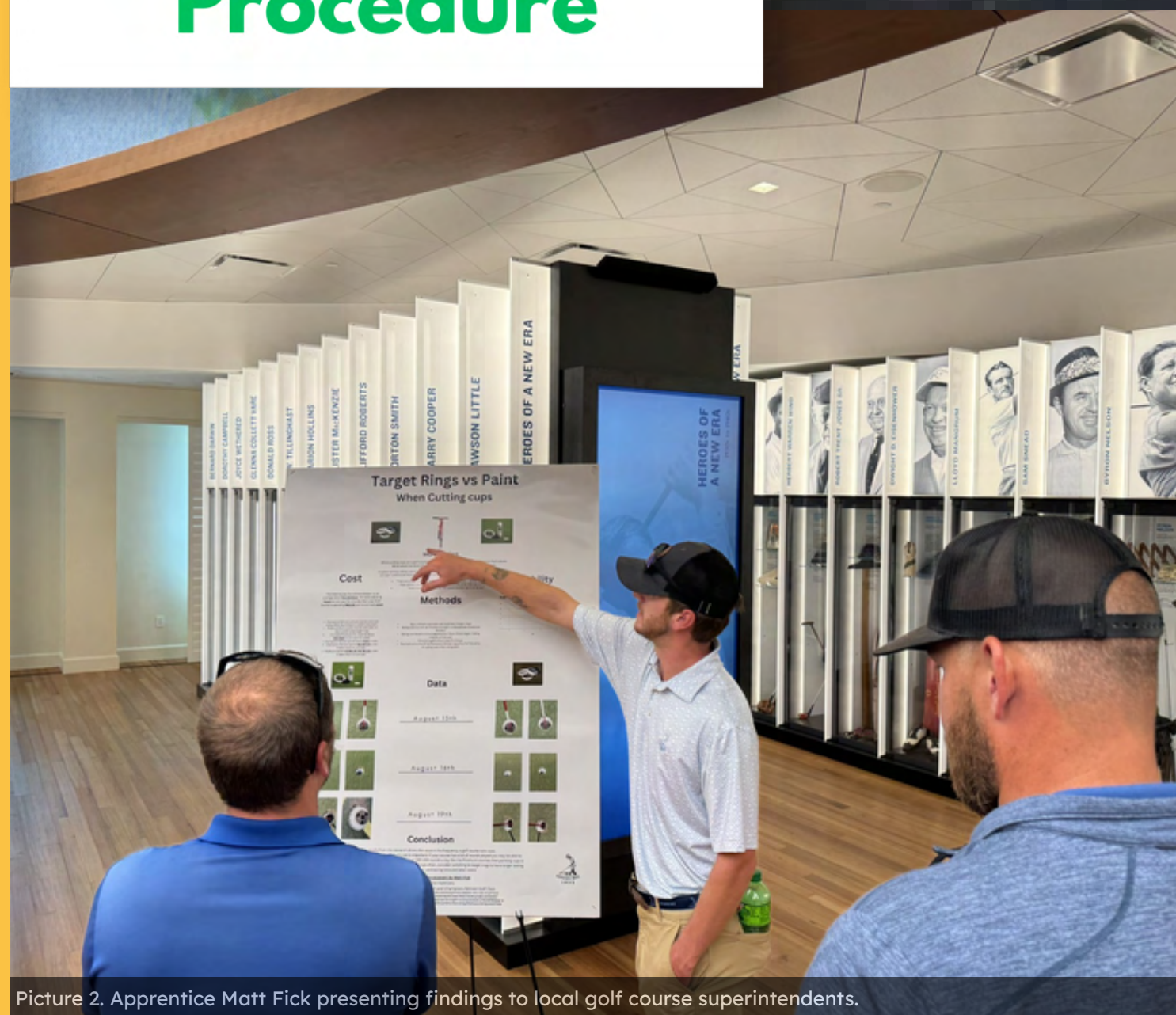


Picture 1. Apprentice Rick Shannon identifying an area of interest for his research project.

Student apprentices in the USGA Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Program (GAP) complete a year of study as part of their apprenticeship. They take a class during the spring and fall semesters, but do not engage in coursework over the summer. A need emerged to engage apprentices during the summer months in scholarship, as well as provide an opportunity for them to:

- (1) Take on an elevated role at their facility through scientific exploration
- (2) Gain an opportunity to practice public speaking in a low-stakes setting
- (3) Provide a space for community interface for continued support of GAP in Pinehurst

Procedure



Picture 2. Apprentice Matt Fick presenting findings to local golf course superintendents.

At the end of the spring semester, students are guided through an ideation session to choose a research project that they are personally invested in and will ultimately help their golf course.

Students carry out data collection and observations over the summer while they work at their facilities and communicate with mentors to assist in their studies.

At the start of the fall semester, students brought in their data and were guided through how to analyze it, refine it, and develop findings into a concise discussion that included pictures from the course and graphics to display the data.

Application



Picture 3. Apprentice Heather Davis talking with USGA Communications.

Posters were built in Canva using the instructor’s professional subscription and each student were added as a collaborator to a unique slide that ensured each had their own poster, and each had a space that could be monitored before downloading and printing.

Posters were printed at the college using state funds and were oriented in either landscape or portrait layout in 36" by 48" dimensions. Posters were affixed to foam posterboard with t-pins and easels are set up to display the finished poster mounts.

Students rehearsed their “two-minute” talks prior to the public’s entry into the space with peers.

Results



Picture 4. Apprentice Brooke Heikila presenting findings to an SCC Board Member.

Apprentices in the 3rd cohort of the USGA Greenkeeper Apprenticeship Program presented their summer research studies at the World Golf Hall of Fame.

Over 100 community members came out to engage with the students during a two-hour window. The apprentices spread out around the museum floor and attendees moved through at their own pace to talk with each presenter.

Presenting apprentices only had to talk with one to three observers at a time, thus significantly mitigating any public speaking phobias.

Contributions



Picture 5. Apprentice Graham Ring talking with SCC President Dr. Sandy Stewart.

Ewing Outdoor Supply, The Dedman Foundation, The Carolinas Golf Association, The Carolinas GCSA, The Sandhills GCSA, and The USGA Foundation serve as resource contributors for USGA GAP. The Sandhills Community College Foundation assisted in the sponsorship of snacks and refreshments at the event.

The USGA Museum staff donated the reservation of the space and a member of the security team signed guests in to keep a count of attendance and conduct enrollment in USGA Museum email updates. This provided a mutual benefit for both the program as well as the host.

Future Work



Picture 6. Apprentices conducting a group irrigation audit based on findings from an apprentices at SPGC.

Students reflected on the experience in class by sharing with their peers about both their experience at the symposium, as well as the possibility to continue their work. The class decided on which project they wanted to take a field trip to see; this years’ project of choice was irrigation auditing at Southern Pines Golf Club.

Research should be done on pre/post growth in apprentice self-efficacy as anecdotal evidence suggests measurable improvement in confidence to both carry out a study, as well as the ability to articulate findings to interested stakeholders in a public setting.



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in association with

