



Profiles *in* Excellence

Jim James, CCM, is senior director, club and hospitality operations, at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, GA.

Q: What was your background prior to Augusta National?

A: I served as the general manager of La Gorce Country Club on Miami Beach and club manager at Gulfstream Golf Club in Gulfstream, FL. I came here in 1995 as club manager.

Q: What are your main responsibilities?

A: I am responsible for the member operation, which includes lodging, golf, food and beverage, and transportation. I also oversee the Masters concession operation, player and member dining, sponsor services, and all on-site hospitality.

Q: What's the size of your staff?

A: Seasonal and year round, it is approximately 240, but during the tournament, it is more than 2,000.

Q: What life experiences best prepared you for your current job?

A: I have always tried to lead my life with an unwavering commitment to integrity and doing the right thing, no matter the circumstance or the pressure to do otherwise. I believe that those with integrity stand for something much larger than themselves. Professionally I surround myself with people who are incredibly talented and often smarter than I am. I look for people with drive, passion, loyalty, and a balanced ego. I want people who

are self-assured but are not overly impressed with themselves.

Q: What is one thing that your peers would be surprised to learn about Augusta National?

A: That we are more similar to them than they might think. We simply try every single day to be the absolute best we can at everything we do. We look at every single day as an opportunity to improve. When we find we are not the best, we are relentless and incredibly focused to make sure that we improve.

Q: What's the biggest challenge in serving an international membership such as yours?

A: Too often, I think, managers focus on things that have very little opportunity to move the needle from a quality or member satisfaction standpoint. If you focus the majority of your time on three things, your club will flourish and you will be successful. Those things are your people, the place, and the process.

Q: What's your world like during Masters Week?

A: I spend most of my time during the Masters, as I do every day, walking around, meeting with the team, mentoring, and most importantly making sure that all member, player, and patron needs are being met or exceeded. With more than 30 dining areas alone, I stay busy. The hours are long, but the reality is if we have not properly prepared well in advance, we will not be

successful. The event is simply too large and too complex for us to try and manage things once the gates are open.

Q: How much of your time is devoted to preparing for that one week of the year?

A: About 40 percent of my time is spent on planning and preparing for the Masters.

Q: What's your response when someone asks if you can hook them up with Masters badges?

A: A high school classmate I hadn't talked to since we graduated more than 30 years ago called last year. While I was cordial, I simply had to say no. ☹️



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