



Powered by the Nexstar Legacy Foundation



Guide to Hosting a Successful  
Golf Tournament

## Play a Part. Make a Difference.

Founded in 2005, the **Nexstar Legacy Foundation** is dedicated to attracting talented individuals to the heating, air conditioning, plumbing and electrical industries, by inspiring these people to discover the prestige, earning power and stability of careers in these fields.

The Nexstar Legacy Foundation provides comprehensive career information for those interested in pursuing the field of PHCE, as well as scholarships and training grants for those beginning their educational journey at trade and technical programs.

The **Troops To Trades** program offers scholarships and training grants to veterans, National Guard and Reserve members who are pursuing careers in the skilled trades.

By organizing a Troops to Trades golf tournament in your area you're raising money for a great cause and it's fun!

Thank you for choosing to host a golf tournament to benefit Troops To Trades. This guide will help steer your planning team through a series of timelines and checklists, guiding the event process from start to finish. Let's get started.

### ***Make below as a table of contents***

#### **Kit Contents & Checklist**

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## Creating a Tournament Committee

Assembling a solid event committee will help you organize and implement all phases of the tournament. While there isn't a definitive answer for your committee size, a recommended group would be six to eight people.

Committee assignments may include the following areas:

- Course Liaison
  - Serving as the main contact between the committee and the golf course
- Marketing
  - Promoting the tournament to sponsors, golfers and the community
- Event Day Volunteers
  - Set-up, registration, helping with various tasks throughout the day
- Sponsorships
  - Connecting with local businesses and vendors to ask for their support of the event
  - Connecting with local civic groups to promote the tournament

You know your community and have a wealth of knowledge within your social circle and business contacts. Ask people to be involved whom you know will have passion for the cause, the time to dedicate to the event and are ready to have fun.



## Acknowledging the Military

Because the tournament directly benefits the Troops To Trades program, acknowledging the military cause is important at the event; however, that can look different depending on your location.

In some cases, holding the tournament close to a military installation may allow you the privilege of hosting service personnel at your event. At previous Troops To Trades golf tournaments, the event host has invited local veterans to play in the tournament free of charge as a way to thank them for their service.

You may also consider reaching out to like-minded veteran and/or military organizations to tell them about the tournament. This may be a great way to jump start a connection and awareness about Troops To Trades.



## Securing Sponsorships

Sponsors are local businesses, companies and vendors passionate about the mission of Troops To Trades, and/or they are interested in supporting the efforts of your company.

Securing sponsorships is the most important thing you can do to assure the success of your tournament. Approach sponsors with confidence and pride. Troops To Trades is a worthwhile cause that many in the community and your network of connections will want to support. In fact, many companies have budget dollars set aside for occasions such as this.

Sponsorships can be more than just financial contributions to the event. For example, sponsors can donate food, beverages, prizes and services. When approaching a sponsor, be prepared with some ideas for specific donations. For example, identify local restaurants that would be interested in donating either breakfast or lunch for the tournament. Not only will you save money, but you'll be able to provide great visibility to the donor. If you're in need of big prizes, ask for donations of products or services. In many cases, companies can provide these valuable prizes at cost.

For many charitable organizations, offering sponsorship packages is a simple way of showing the potential sponsor the benefits of participating in an event. For example, in exchange for their financial donation, a company may receive various benefits like acknowledgement in the local newspaper or their logo on a giveaway item at the event.

Sponsorship packages will vary for each event and course depending on your community. When creating sponsorship packages, be thoughtful about the benefits offered with each level. Don't over promise and under deliver.

Below are examples of sponsorship packages you may consider.

### Sample Sponsor Packages

|   | \$5,000<br>Five Star<br>General     | \$2,500<br>Four Star<br>General     | \$1,250<br>Three Star<br>General    | \$750<br>Two Star<br>General        |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Four foursomes  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |                                     |                                     |
| Three Foursomes   |                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |                                     |
| Two Foursomes   |                                     |                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |
| One Foursome  |                                     |                                     |                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Company logo on event giveaway                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |                                     |                                     |
| Provide promotional items for golfer goody bags (if interested) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                     |                                     |
| Event Signage, Hole Signs, Banners, Carts                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Company Logo on Tournament Website                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Company Name and Logo in all Promotional Material               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

We recommend sponsorship opportunities for those businesses and individuals who may not have huge budgets. Below are some ideas that provide marketing visibility to the sponsors and are other avenues for financial support.

- ✓ Longest Drive Contest - \$500
- ✓ Closest To The Pin Contest - \$500
- ✓ Refreshment Cart - \$500
- ✓ Hole Sponsor - \$250

Sponsors, whether businesses or individuals making contributions, will ask for receipts recognizing their donations. Please contact Kate Cinnamo, Executive Director of the Nexstar Legacy Foundation, for assistance with this process. She can be contacted at (651) 789-8518 or [katec@nexstarfoundation.org](mailto:katec@nexstarfoundation.org).



## Connecting with the Community

The success of the Troops To Trades golf tournament is directly related to the connections you and your committee develop within your community. Creating interest and excitement around the event will bring awareness to the cause and highlight the work of your company.

Anyone who golfs is a potential player and golfers can be found anywhere. Marketing the tournament at the host course is a great place to start. We also recommend attending your local Chamber of Commerce and Rotary meetings. Depending on your community, consider spreading the word through other networking events.

Not everyone golfs, but everyone can support the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces. Selecting community organizations that have a connection to, or align with the Troops To Trades mission, will be beneficial to all who participate.



## Selecting the Golf Course

The golf course with which you work is probably in, or close to, your community. And given their familiarity with the community, the golf course staff will also be a valuable resource to help answer any questions you might have during the event process. The course you select must have availability on their calendar to accommodate the tournament. Because of the scheduling element, this is probably one of the first things to accomplish on your checklist.

Here are a few things to consider when choosing the course:

**Course Location** – Choose a course that isn't too far away from the majority of your potential golfers and sponsors and has availability to host the tournament.

**Course Amenities and Staff** – In general, the course manager or club pro will be your contact during the planning process. He/or she will be a great resource for your committee and will explain what services their team will provide at the event. For example, they may manage the scoring and golf carts for the day. Sometimes they will set-up signage on the tournament day. Each course is different so be ready with questions.

The course will also have policies in place about what you may (or may not) do when providing food and beverages. Golf courses will often require that food and beverages be purchased from their catering department. Because this event is for a charitable cause, they may be willing to work with you to either negotiate lower prices or allow you to bring in outside vendors who will donate the food and beverages. Check with the course manager for their policies.

**Pricing the Tournament:** The course manager can provide assistance if you're unsure about how to price the tournament. It's important to determine a price that covers the costs while also including a fair donation to Troops To Trades – that's why people are playing the tournament.



## Filling the Course

Golf tournaments have become a great way to raise significant money, in a relatively short amount of time, for a variety of organizations. How do you make your Troops To Trades tournament stand out? How do you fill the field? You need to provide a unique experience.

Here are some ideas:

**Promote, promote, promote!** – Once you have the event details secured, don't be afraid to start promoting the event. It's not uncommon to start social media promotions or send save-the-date cards six months before the actual event. As your technicians go out on service calls, give them some event brochures to pass out to customers.

You will find more detailed marketing ideas on page 9.

**Recognize Committed Sponsors** – As sponsors commit to the tournament, share the news. The earlier they are on board with the event, the more visibility they'll receive. If you have food and beverage donors lined up, let everyone know. Before, during and after the event are all appropriate times to recognize the support of the sponsors and individuals who have signed up to be a part of the tournament.

**Networking Opportunities** – Promote your tournament as a networking tool. The attendees will enjoy meeting new people and for sponsors, this means potential customers.



# Timeline Planner Checklist

Feeling overwhelmed? Don't be! The key to a successful Troops To Trades golf tournament is planning. The checklist below will help guide you and your committee through the process. The items listed in this checklist may vary depending on the ideas you have.

## 12 Months Prior To The Event

- Connect with Kate Cinnamo at the Nexstar Legacy Foundation (NLF) and let her know you're interested in hosting a tournament
- Set up a committee of key volunteers
- Start scouting possible course locations
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 9 Months Prior To Event

- Set the Troops to Trades tournament date
- Reserve the course and sign event contract (if applicable; will vary by location)
- Work with NLF to develop web presence and brochure
- Start compiling sponsor solicitation list
- Begin volunteer recruitment
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 Months Prior To Event

- Confirm volunteers and begin planning meetings
- Begin sponsor solicitation
- Begin promoting the tournament on social media, etc.
- Begin outreach efforts to recruit golfers (ex: have your technicians hand out brochures during service calls)
- Determine event giveaways and/or t-shirts (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 4 Months Prior To Event

- Email save-the-date announcement to potential golfers, sponsors and community organizations (Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Lions Club, etc.)
- Order trophies
- Gather auction and raffle prizes
- Continue regularly scheduled event promotions
- Add event information to your business website and social media pages
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**30 Days Prior To Event**

- Send final email blasts for last minute registrations
- Secure a photographer
- Finalize shirt and giveaway item orders (if applicable)
- Send event confirmation notice and event details to golfers
- Finalize sponsorships and begin signage preparation
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**7 Days Prior To Event**

- Finalize course arrangements
- Final meeting with course event director
- Confirm volunteer assignments for the event day
- Confirm food and beverage orders with vendors and/or golf course catering staff
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Troops to Trades Tournament Day**

- Arrive early to set up
- Confirm volunteers are in place for their assignments
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**After Troops to Trades Tournament**

- Send thank you letters to sponsors and volunteers
- Volunteer party (if applicable)
- Turn off event website
- Share event results on social media, local newspapers
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# Day Planner

What will your tournament day look like? Here's a sample day planner for you to use. Fill in the correct timeslots as you develop your tournament.

| ESTIMATED TIME                    | ACTUAL TIME | EVENT  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5:30 am  | _____       | Set-up Signs, Banners and Registration Area        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00 am  | _____       | Players Arrive                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00 am  | _____       | Registration                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7:00 am  | _____       | Breakfast and Pairings                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8:00 am  | _____       | Players are Positioned on Course for Shotgun Start |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12:30 pm | _____       | Golfers finish; lunch/social hour begins           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2:00 pm  | _____       | Tournament and Contest Winners Announced           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3:00 pm  | _____       | Event clean-up                                     |

## Finish Strong

After the golfers are finished for the day, create a casual and fun gathering time for the golfers, sponsors and your committee. This is the perfect time to (again) acknowledge the sponsors, the golfers and the committee. Talk about Troops To Trades and how everyone's support will benefit veterans as they pursue new careers in the trades.

Have fun announcing the winners and handing out prizes.

**NOTE:** Prizes can come from donations, sponsorships or you may choose to purchase them. For the common places of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and the Longest Drive Contest and Closest to the Pin, it's recommended to give them trophies. A trophy design template is included in this kit.



# Marketing Your Tournament

There are many different ways to promote your event. The key is creating and implementing a quality marketing campaign that presents your tournament as a first-class event and one that your sponsors will be proud to support.

## Marketing Essentials

**Website** – Your Troops To Trades tournament needs to have a web presence. It will be the primary place people learn more about your tournament, where you promote sponsors, and offer golfer registration and payment options. The Nexstar Legacy Foundation can help create a page for you. Contact Kate Cinnamo at (651) 789-8518 or [katec@nexstarfoundation.org](mailto:katec@nexstarfoundation.org).

**Brochure** – A tri-fold brochure is a great way to get your message in the hands of golfers. They can be distributed at courses, placed on car windshields at golf courses, given to consumers during service calls and sent electronically in email blasts.

**Email Blasts** – Use your customer and vendor database to promote your tournament. A well-crafted email blast can generate excitement and can be linked to the website for more information and registrations.

**Social Media** – Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn and YouTube can offer free exposure to reach friends, colleagues and business partners. Golfers know golfers. Ask them to share your posts to help get the word out.

## **Troops to Trades Customizable Marketing Kit Includes:**

- Troops to Trades Golf Logo
- Trifold Brochure
- Email Blast
- Truck Magnets/Stickers
- Press Release
- Sponsorship Letter
- Radio Copy
- Banner
- Trophy Design
- Troops to Trades Photo Op Background



*Image of 8' x 10' Photo Opportunity Background*

**If you're interested in adding additional marketing efforts to your outreach, consider some of the items below.**

**Social Media/Geofencing** – Geofencing allows you to buy ads on social media and traditional websites that are targeted to a specific geographic area. Consider geofencing golf courses in your area. For more information, contact Kate at the foundation.

**Public Service Announcements** - Distribute information about your tournament to local news organizations including newspapers and TV stations. This could result in live interviews, event announcements, golfer registrations and sponsorships.

**Grocery Bag Stuffers** – Ask the local grocery stores to include a tournament brochure at the checkouts.

**Connect with Civic Groups** – Groups like the Lions Club always need speakers. Troops To Trades is a great message.

**Radio Promotions** – Partner with a local radio station to negotiate free air time. The radio station would be recognized as a sponsor in exchange for their in-kind donation.

**Looking for unique and fun ways to promote the tournament? Below are some ideas!**

**Celebrity Participants** – Local celebrities can bring a lot to a tournament. Ask them to be the emcee at the post-tournament lunch or greet golfers at registration.

**Professional Golfer** – If you're fortunate to know a pro golfer, ask them for their services. He/she can hit the tee shot for each foursome on a designated hole.

**Putting Contest** - This contest is designed to give golfers a chance to test their putting skills for a prize. Each golfer takes the same shot and whoever sinks the putt will have their name entered into a drawing for a prize. You may choose to include this in the registration fee or charge a nominal amount for an entry.

**Hole-In-One Contest** – Through a pre-paid insurance policy, golfers get the chance to win prizes like \$1,000,000 or a new car if they successfully sink a hole-in-one. Work with a local car dealership to see if they would be willing to sponsor the contest. For more information about this type of policy, we recommend reaching out to your golf course contact.

**Game Changing Perks** - Give your golfers some unexpected surprises. Consider these game changers:

- ✓ Have message therapists stationed on the course to provide a five-minute shoulder massage
- ✓ Ask the club pro to be on hand to provide some tips to the golfers
- ✓ Set-up a complimentary phone charging station