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ARRIVAL PARTY: Quincy Slaughter (center) with Camp Sankaty Head Director Dave Hinman (left) and caddie Liam Flaherty.

The Plan from Nantucket

Solich Academy alumnus Quincy Slaughter blazes a new trail to an Evans Scholarship. By Erin Gangloff

ROUGHLY 2,000 miles east of Denver floats a green oasis surrounded by deep blue ocean, its beaming red-and-white lighthouse beckoning visitors to Sankaty Head Golf Club on Nantucket Island. For some, the opportunity to play this private course—which counts among its members such business titans as retired General Electric CEO Jack Welch—only results from the most exclusive of invitations. For Quincy Slaughter of Aurora, Colorado, this rarefied ground represents an isle of opportunity.

Three years ago, you would find Quincy talking about Jim Owens' *Cowboy Ethics* and the "Code of the West" during a leadership session of the Solich Caddie and Leadership Academy at CommonGround Golf Course. Quincy came to the Solich Academy, run by the Colorado Golf Association, through a recruitment effort with Boys Hope Girls Hope of Colorado, whose mission is to help academically capable and motivated children-in-need meet their full potential.

Quincy's star quickly rose as a caddie and as a leader within the program. "He was always willing to lead and share in our weekly leadership classes no matter the topic being discussed," said Emily Olson, CGA Manager of Caddie Programs. "Quincy is hardworking, and it shows by his drive and determination both on the course and in the classroom."

After his second year in the Solich Caddie and Leadership Academy, Quincy was ready to caddie at a private Denver-area club when a new opportunity arose. During a CGA caddie development meeting, committee member and renowned golf-course designer Jim Urbina brought up Sankaty Head, where he'd been consulting, and its time-honored caddie camp.

The camp has been in existence since 1930 and annually houses 60 young men from around the country for the summer. The kids work six days a week as caddies at the prestigious club, eat meals together, receive college prep courses and even listen to guest speakers such as Welch

talk about leadership. Urbina had already started talking to the camp director, Dave Hinman, about the Solich Academy and the idea of sending one of its caddies to Sankaty Head.

The caddie camp sounded very familiar to CGA Executive Director Ed Mate. He had read about it in a *Golfweek* magazine he'd received years earlier from George Solich with a note that read, "We should do this in Colorado." Thus began the process of creating the Solich Caddie and Leadership Academy.

"It was as though our program was coming full circle, back to where the original idea came from," Mate said. "The only thing left to do was select the right caddie from our program and connect them with Dave Hinman." The CGA did just that. Quincy would "ride for the brand" of the Solich Academy.

This would not only be a big opportunity for Quincy but also his first time on a plane by himself and the first time that he would see an ocean. Urbina agreed to meet Quincy at New York's JFK airport and fly with him the rest of the way to Nantucket.

Urbina recalls watching him on the flight. "Quincy was glued to the window when the deep

royal blue of the Atlantic Ocean appeared," the course architect recalled. "It was completely magical to watch him as he saw things for the first time. It was as though I was seeing them for the first time myself."

Quincy's summer was filled with new adventures, hard work, friendships and lasting memories. Upon his return home, he shared his stories and encouragement with the current Solich class at the year-end banquet. He told them he planned to return to Sankaty Head for the following summer, hopefully with another caddie from the Solich Academy, but first he would finish his senior year of high school and apply for the Chick Evans Caddie Scholarship.

In true Code of the West fashion, Quincy lived up to Code No. 6: "When you make a promise, keep it." Quincy applied for and received the Chick Evans Caddie Scholarship. After graduating with honors from Aurora Central High School last spring, he returned to Sankaty Head to caddie, this time with fellow Solich Caddie alumnus Kyle Arbuckle. In August, Quincy will begin his freshman year as an Evans Scholar at the University of Colorado to study physics and engineering.

At the final leadership class each year the Solich Academy caddies are asked to write their own personal "11th and 12th Code of the West" principles. Quincy's 11th principle was "Walk by faith and not by sight and love always because love never fails." His 12th principle was "Follow your heart, whether it be to the moon or the stars." Here's to following his heart no matter where it leads him!



ALL SMILES: Slaughter at CommonGround with fellow Solich Academy caddie Liyanos Abato.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF COLORADO GOLF ASSOCIATION

Erin Gangloff is Managing Director, CGA Programs. Never taken a caddie? Try it this fall at CommonGround Golf Course, the home course of the Colorado Golf Association, now through September. For more information about the Solich Caddie and Leadership Academy, contact Emily Olson at 303-974-2109 or eolson@coloradogolf.org.