

Leonard Smoot

Coach Leonard Smoot Jr. is a retired U.S. Marine Corps Chief Warrant Officer whose more than 24 years of honorable service established the foundation for a career defined by discipline, leadership, and excellence. A trailblazer in golf, Smoot became only the third African American golfer selected to the United States Marine Corps Golf Team and competed in the prestigious All-Service Golf Championships.

In 2013, Smoot accepted the challenge of building the Miles College men's golf program from the ground up. Under his leadership, the Golden Bears became one of the premier programs in the SIAC, capturing conference championships in **2016, 2024, and 2026** and earning five runner-up finishes. His teams also qualified for three NCAA Division II South/Southeast Regional Tournaments and captured the **2021 PGA WORKS National Championship**, finishing runner-up in 2022.

Smoot's coaching excellence has earned him **seven SIAC Golf Coach of the Year honors**, while his student-athletes have achieved All-Conference, All-American, All-Academic, and other conference honors.

Beyond Miles College, Smoot has been a national leader in collegiate golf. He served as President of the Black College Golf Coaches Association from 2023–2026 and continues to serve on the PGA WORKS Collegiate Championship Advisory Council. His contributions have earned numerous honors, including the NAACP Men of Distinction Award, induction into the African American Golf Hall of Fame, and the National Association of Black Journalists Pioneer Award.

For more than 25 years, Smoot has competed, coached, mentored, and advocated for golf. His greatest legacy is measured not only in championships, but in the student-athletes and future leaders whose lives he has transformed through his commitment to excellence, leadership, and service.