

CANDIDATE PROFILE

General Manager / COO
Country Club of Darien
Darien, CT

www.ccdarien.org



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Organization

Nestled in Darien, Connecticut, the Country Club of Darien offers an exceptional year-round experience for its more than 700 members. Originally founded in 1957 by Edgar S. Auchincloss as a private retreat, the Club has evolved into a premier destination for families, blending tradition with modern amenities. The expansive 50,000-square-foot clubhouse serves as the heart of the Club, complemented by an 18-hole championship golf course, a dynamic caddie program, and some of the best practice facilities in the region, including two driving ranges, multiple short-game areas, and an indoor Golf Performance Studio for year-round instruction and swing analysis.

Beyond golf, the Club boasts a full spectrum of athletic and social offerings. Tennis enthusiasts enjoy eight Har-Tru courts, while paddle players benefit from six courts and a state-of-the-art Paddle Hut, complete with a cozy lounge and fire pit for winter gatherings. The aquatic complex features a six-lane pool with a diving well and a vibrant poolside bar, perfect for summer relaxation. The Club also hosts a well-equipped fitness center and a variety of dining venues that cater to both casual and fine dining experiences.

With a strong focus on families, the Club runs an extensive junior program, including summer camps, competitive swim, dive and water polo teams, and junior golf. CCD boasts one of the most active racquet programs in the State. Adults can take advantage of a thriving social calendar and competitive leagues, including Interclub Tennis, Pickleball Teams, and APTA Platform Tennis which are the center of many member social events. Whether on the course, courts, or poolside, the Country Club of Darien fosters an inviting and active community for members of all ages.

The clubhouse is open year-round, except on Mondays, ensuring members have continuous access to its amenities and services. With a diverse selection of casual and fine dining options, as well as a vibrant calendar of social and dining events, the Club offers an exceptional experience throughout the year. Over the past 12 years, it has invested more than \$20 million in capital improvements, enhancing facilities and elevating the overall member experience.

The Country Club of Darien Details

- Gross Dollar Volume: \$17m
- Dues Volume: \$9.4m
- F&B Volume: \$4.48m
- Memberships: 737
- Average Member Age: 50
- Initiation Fee: \$125,000
- Dues: \$18,594
- Board Members: 15
- Committees: 13
- Full-Time Staff: 97
- Seasonal Employees: 225

The General Manager / COO reports to the President. Direct reports include the Chief Financial Officer, Assistant GM, Executive Chef, Director of Food & Beverage, Director of Clubhouse Operations, Director of Sales & Catering, Head Golf Professional, Director of Racquet Sports, Grounds Superintendent, Director of Human Resources, Director of Buildings & Maintenance, Aquatics Director and Camp Director.

Position Overview

The General Manager / Chief Operating Officer (GM/COO) of the Country Club of Darien (CCD) will be a visible, hands-on, and approachable leader, dedicated to fostering meaningful connections with both members and staff while upholding the Club's long-standing values and traditions. This individual will oversee all Club operations, ensuring exceptional member experiences aligned with the priorities set by the Board of Directors and committees.

As the GM/COO, this leader will be responsible for managing all aspects of the Club, including its operations, financial oversight, and key relationships with the Board, members, guests, employees, and the broader community. They will implement and administer Club policies, develop operational strategies, lead department managers, and ensure financial and service excellence. Additionally, they will safeguard the Club's assets, including its facilities and equipment.

Success in this role requires a high level of sophistication, visibility, and a deep commitment to personalized service, setting the tone for the entire team. The GM/COO should genuinely engage with members and guests while embracing the values of the Darien community and the unique lifestyle of Fairfield County.

Responsibilities

Leadership & Club Culture

- Serve as a trusted partner to the Board of Directors, ensuring alignment with the Club's mission and strategic goals.
- Lead, mentor, and develop a high-performing team of department heads, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, and excellence.
- Engage with members across all demographics to understand their needs, reinforcing the Club's family-first culture.
- Promote a positive and professional work environment, emphasizing teamwork, performance excellence and ongoing professional development.

- Set clear goals, provide actionable feedback and inspire continuous improvement among team members.
- Prioritize team well-being by fostering a supportive and solution-oriented work environment.
- Hold oneself and others accountable for delivering operational excellence, superior member experiences and high-performance standards.
- Resolve conflicts with professionalism, empathy and a commitment to solutions that align with the Club's vision and values.
- Adapt leadership approaches to meet the evolving needs of members and staff, ensuring agility in a dynamic environment.

Operations Management

- Empower the senior leadership team through effective communication, collaboration and delegation.
- Ensure all departments adhere to the highest safety, quality and regulatory standards, following industry best practices.
- Streamline operations by coordinating efforts across departments, fostering synergy to create a seamless member experience.
- Address operational challenges with decisiveness and efficiency, balancing immediate priorities with long-term strategic solutions.

Financial & Strategic Management

- Oversee the Chief Financial Officer and senior leadership team in partnership with the Finance Committee to develop and manage the Club's annual budget, optimizing efficiency and cost savings.
- Lead financial forecasting and long-term capital planning to support the Club's infrastructure and future growth.
- Work closely with the Board of Directors to develop pricing strategies that ensure financial sustainability and a balanced budget.

Member Experience & Service Excellence

- Uphold the highest standards of quality, hospitality, and professionalism in all member interactions, fostering a culture of "understated elegance."
- Communicate proactively with members, addressing concerns and inquiries promptly and professionally.
- Continuously innovate and enhance the member experience to drive engagement and reinforce the Club's value proposition.

Strategic Planning & Growth

- Collaborate with the Board of Directors to develop and implement long-term strategies, including infrastructure enhancements and expanded service offerings.
- Clearly articulate the Club's mission and vision, inspiring staff and leadership to align their efforts with strategic objectives.

Marketing, Communications & Brand Management

- Oversee communication strategies to ensure consistent branding and messaging across all platforms and audiences.
- Identify opportunities to elevate the Club's brand through compelling marketing, PR and digital engagement.

- Build strategic partnerships within Fairfield County to enhance member value and strengthen community and industry relationships.

Governance & Reporting

- Maintain regular communication with the Board of Directors, providing key updates on financial performance, operations, member satisfaction and strategic initiatives.
- Partner closely with the Board President and Executive Committee to address high-priority strategic and operational matters.
- Foster a culture of continuous growth and adaptability, ensuring alignment between daily operations and long-term objectives.

Attributes

- An approachable, outgoing leader who naturally connects with members and staff, embracing the Club’s culture of “understated elegance.”
- A service-driven professional with a proven ability to develop and train staff, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and exceptional hospitality.
- Actively promotes the Club to members and their families, engaging with them daily to solicit feedback and enhance facilities and services.
- Works seamlessly across departments, promoting teamwork and synergy in all Club operations.
- Uses strong judgment to assess challenges from multiple angles, making thoughtful, well-informed decisions.
- Sets clear goals adapts as needed, and consistently delivers high-quality outcomes, demonstrating resilience in overcoming obstacles.
- Fosters a positive, collaborative team culture, supporting colleagues and addressing conflicts constructively.
- An articulate and intelligent communicator with excellent written and verbal skills, adept at conveying policies, procedures and expectations to staff, members and guests.
- Provides outstanding service with prompt, thoughtful follow-through, proactively identifying and responding to member needs with professionalism and care.
- Continuously seeks innovative ways to enhance the member experience and elevate the Club’s future.
- A leader with a warm personality, a good sense of humor and the ability to create an enjoyable and engaging atmosphere.

Requirements

- A Bachelor’s degree in Hotel/Restaurant Management, Business or a related field is preferred. Extensive club or hospitality experience may be considered in place of a degree.
- Minimum of five to seven years of experience as a General Manager / COO or in a similar leadership role at a private club. Exceptionally qualified Assistant General Managers with strong mentorship and training may also be considered.
- A Certified Club Manager (CCM) designation is highly desirable, with a Certified Chief Executive (CCE) or progress toward certification considered a plus.
- Strong financial acumen with experience in budgeting, financial reporting and fiscal management.

- Strong knowledge of Food & Beverage, Banquet & Catering, Club events, and wine knowledge.
- Excellent leadership, communication and interpersonal skills, fostering collaboration and engagement among staff and members.
- Strong organizational and multitasking abilities, with a track record of implementing performance measurement routines and continuous improvement initiatives across key member touchpoints.
- Familiarity with golf operations and a keen understanding of industry trends.
- A career marked by stability, professional growth and notable accomplishments in club management.
- A person of exceptional character—motivated, energetic, friendly and deeply committed to the profession.
- A warm, approachable personality with high visibility and strong communication skills.
- Advanced proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, email, internet and other relevant software programs.
- Impeccable professional references are required; all candidates will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

Competitive Compensation

- Competitive compensation/salary and an annual performance bonus
- Great Healthcare, Medical and Life Insurance
- Long-Term Disability
- Paid time off and work/life balance
- Professional dues, educational allowance expenses and other expenses in accordance with the annual budget
- Relocation assistance (if from outside the area)

To be considered for this outstanding opportunity all cover letters and resumes should be received as quickly as possible but no later than April 25, 2025. All information received will be kept in the strictness of confidence.


Professionals who meet or exceed the established criteria are encouraged to send a compelling cover letter addressed to Steph Jordan, Search Chair outlining their qualifications, experience, interests, and why the Country Club of Darien and the Fairfield County area of Connecticut will be beneficial for you, your family, and your career along with their resume to:



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