Warriors' Curry inspires others to donate

Rusty Simmons

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Seth Curry awoke before the sun rose Monday and braved rush-hour traffic crossing the Bay Bridge - just so he could volunteer on one of his final vacation days before the NBA season hijacks his schedule for seven or eight months.

Playing in the third annual ThanksUSA Golf Tournament at the Presidio Golf Course in San Francisco was part of Curry's living arrangements with his brother, Stephen, but a bigger message wasn't lost on the bleary-eyed rookie.

"I was around a lot of NBA teams growing up with my dad, but this team gets along and works like a college team, and it makes for a great environment," Seth Curry said. "It starts with the best player and how he acts, and it carries down to everybody else."

Seven Warriors either played in the event or made a donation to the national nonprofit that provides need-based scholarships to the children and spouses of active-duty military personnel. A score of the franchise's front-office personnel took part, and even owner Joe Lacob took a rare Monday morning off to support his prized player.

The event included more than 100 participants and, for the first time, organizers had to turn away others.

Other than his little brother, everyone involved had an option about how to spend the morning, but Stephen Curry makes the correct option seem obvious.

"Everybody knows how great a guy Steph is and how much he tries to give back," said Warriors swingman Andre Iguodala, who despises early mornings but was one of the first to arrive on the course's driving range. "This is just a small part of what a great guy he is, so it was easy for me to wake up early and come out and help."

Curry received the Joe Dumars Trophy as the 2010-11 NBA Sportsmanship Award winner; the winner is determined by a vote of NBA players. He has been honored with the Warriors Foundation Community Service Award for a variety of efforts.

He co-sponsored an event that distributed food boxes to 800 local families for Thanksgiving, surprised Lucky Supermarket shoppers by providing gift cards around the holidays, encouraged local residents to take public transportation by passing out prepaid BART cards, donated tickets to various children's groups, and has been the main attraction at a number of youth camps.
While making 272 three-pointers last season, he donated three mosquito nets for each of his record-setting shots to an anti-malaria program. In August, he flew 8,000 miles to Tanzania and met the net recipients while helping to hang some of the nets himself.

"We had a very specific plan when we bought the team. We wanted to bring in great people and change the culture, people who care about the community and care about their teammates," Lacob said. "We're very fortunate to have a leader like Steph Curry, who is willing to get out into the community and contribute in any way he can."

As Curry's star has risen, so has the number of celebrities involved in the event. This year, NBA sharpshooters Jimmer Fredette and J.J. Redick, Olympic gold medalist Ken Flex, former tennis pro Paul Goldstein, retired Army Gen. Peet Proctor and professional golfers Will Lowery and Corey Nagy all contributed.

"I know he's busy, so it's neat to see him take time out of his schedule to do this in two hometowns," said Nagy, who shares Curry's other hometown of Charlotte, N.C. "It's cool to see someone at such a young age who understands the importance of giving back. There are a lot of professional athletes at his age who are still so into their selves, but he's not like that. He's pretty awesome."

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