



## CBS Sports Special Showcases PGA of America National Award Recipients

***“My Golf Journey: A Celebration of PGA Professionals”  
to air Saturday, May 9***

### **Editor’s Note:**

- For a video preview of the CBS Sports Special “My Golf Journey: A Celebration of PGA Professionals,” [click here](#).
- For clip reels of the PGA Professionals featured in the broadcast, [click here](#).
- For photos of the 2019 PGA of America National Award recipients, [click here](#).

**PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla.** (May 6, 2020) - Fourteen PGA Members and one PGA Section—reflecting the best of the PGA of America as innovators, leaders and achievers—will be featured in a nationwide one-hour CBS Sports special, **“My Golf Journey: A Celebration of PGA Professionals,”** which airs on Saturday, May 9, at 2 p.m. ET.

Narrated by Jim Nantz, the program showcases the PGA Members, along with the South Florida PGA Section, that were honored during the 2019 season. Headlining the list are: **PGA Professional of the Year Eric Eshleman, PGA**, Director of Golf at the Country Club of Birmingham (Alabama); and **PGA Teacher of the Year Kevin Kirk, PGA**, Director of Golf Instruction at The Woodlands (Texas) Country Club.

“As the game of golf reopens across the country, we are proud to join with CBS Sports to highlight the impact our national award winners make on a daily basis,” said PGA President Suzy Whaley. “It is a point of pride on how they make a difference in the lives of people both on and off the course, from top Tour players to everyday golfers to our nation’s heroes.”

Eshleman, a 24-year PGA Member, earned the highest annual honor given to a PGA of America Professional. A former president of the Alabama-NW Florida PGA Section, Eshleman has both mentored and set benchmarks as a coach at the Country Club of Birmingham. He oversees one of the largest junior golf programs in the country. While he currently coaches former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and European Tour player Paul Dunne, his students over the years have also included Graeme McDowell and Patton Kizzire.

Kirk is a 26-year PGA Member and a PGA Master Professional, as well as a *GOLF Magazine* Top 100 Teacher in America. His student roster includes three-time United States Ryder Cup Team

Member and 2018 Masters Champion Patrick Reed; LPGA TOUR star and Major Champion Lexi Thompson; and three-time PGA TOUR winner Jhonattan Vegas. Kirk has coached five Olympians and is an advocate for the PGA of America in the advancement of the American Development Model.

Among the national award honorees featured in the broadcast are the inspiring stories of **Judy Alvarez, PGA/LPGA** and **Randy Jones, PGA**.

Alvarez is PGA Teaching Professional at Monarch Country Club in Palm City, Florida, and PGA Head Professional at Sunken Meadow Golf Course at Kings Park, New York. The 2019 PGA Patriot Award recipient, she began her career coaching the physically challenged and later expanded her work to include military veterans through PGA HOPE (Helping Our Patriots Everywhere). Alvarez is a member of the **South Florida PGA Section**, which in 2019 received its first Herb Graffis Award, recognizing a Section for extraordinary and exemplary contributions in Player Development.

Jones, the South Texas Territory Manager for Club Car in Richmond, Texas, was presented the 2019 Deacon Palmer Award for his courageous battle with Stage IV melanoma. Today, he is an inspirational spokesperson in creating public awareness for the dangers of skin cancer.

The **2019 Women's PGA Professional Player of the Year presented by OMEGA Joanna Coe, PGA**, of Baltimore Country Club, who played on the winning inaugural 2019 U.S. Women's PGA Cup Team and won the 2019 PGA Women's Stroke Play Championship is highlighted for her playing achievements. Similarly, both **2019 PGA Professional Player of the Year presented by OMEGA Ryan Vermeer, PGA**, of Happy Hollow Club, in Omaha, Nebraska, and **2019 Senior PGA Professional Player of the Year presented by OMEGA Bob Sowards, PGA**, of Kinsale Golf and Fitness Club, Powell, Ohio, are also featured for their playing accomplishments. Vermeer, the 2018 PGA Professional Champion; and Sowards, the 2018 PGA Senior Professional Champion, were both members of the victorious 2019 U.S. PGA Cup Team.

**2019 PGA National Award recipients appearing in "My Golf Journey: A Celebration of PGA Professionals":**

**PGA Golf Professional of the Year**

Eric Eshleman, PGA, Country Club of Birmingham (Ala.)

**PGA Teacher of the Year**

Kevin Kirk, PGA, The Woodlands (Texas) Golf Performance Center

**Bill Strausbaugh Award**

David Reasoner, PGA, The Ridgewood Country Club - Paramus, N.J.

**Horton Smith Award**

Todd Sones, PGA, Todd Sones Impact Golf - Vernon Hills, Ill.

**Deacon Palmer Award**

Randy Jones, PGA, Club Car - Richmond, Texas

**Patriot Award**

Judy Alvarez, PGA/LPGA, Monarch Country Club - Palm City, Fla. & Sunken Meadow Golf Course - Kings Park, NY

**PGA Player Development Award**

Liz Cooper, PGA/LPGA, Senior Director of Membership & Events, LPGA Amateur Golf Association - LPGA Headquarters - Daytona Beach, Fla.

**PGA Youth Player Development Award**

Scott Wilson, PGA, Bay Meadows Family Golf Course - Traverse City, Mich.

**Women's PGA Professional Player of the Year**

Joanna Coe, PGA, Baltimore Country Club

**PGA Professional Player of the Year**

Ryan Vermeer, PGA, Happy Hollow Club, Omaha, Neb.

**Senior PGA Professional Player of the Year**

Bob Sowards, PGA, Kinsale Golf and Fitness Club, Powell, Ohio

**PGA Merchandiser of the Year-Resort Category:**

Sara Muldoon, PGA, Hershey (Pa.) Country Club

**PGA Merchandiser of the Year-Public Category**

Duncan Simms, PGA, Oak Creek G.C. - Irvine, Calif.

**PGA Merchandiser of the Year-Private Category**

Scott Kirkwood, PGA, Ocean Reef Club - Key Largo, Fla.

**Herb Graffis Award**

South Florida PGA Section

**About the PGA of America**

The PGA of America is one of the world's largest sports organizations, composed of PGA Professionals who daily work to grow interest and participation in the game of golf. For more information about the PGA of America, visit [PGA.org](http://PGA.org), follow [@PGA](https://twitter.com/PGA) on Twitter and find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pgapga).

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