



Top News

Mark and Debi Rolfing named Co-Recipients of the PGA Distinguished Service Award

BY PGA of America, August 10th, 2017

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — NBC/Golf Channel analyst Mark Rolfing and his wife, Debi, whose shared passion for growth-of-the-game initiatives served as a platform to establish one of the country's most inspiring foster parent networks, have been named co-recipients of the PGA Distinguished Service Award.

The Rolfings will be honored on Nov. 2, at the Austin Hilton in Austin, Texas, in conjunction with the PGA of America's 101st Annual Meeting.

Begun in 1988, the PGA Distinguished Service Award honors outstanding individuals who display leadership and humanitarian qualities including integrity, sportsmanship and a passion for the game of golf. By their endeavors, they have given back to others and helped grow the game of a lifetime.

Following Mark's brief professional playing career, Debi and Mark moved to Maui, Hawaii in 1976 where Mark became the Director of Marketing at Kapalua Resort. Debi and Mark developed their own television marketing firm, Rolfing Productions, in 1985. It was the beginning of a career where Debi and Mark became ambassadors for Hawaiian golf.

As the Rolfings promoted golf within Hawaii, Mark joined the NBC Sports golf team as an on-course reporter in 1988 and quickly became one of the most respected announcers in the industry. Beginning in 1992, he spent six years with ESPN/ABC Sports, before rejoining NBC in 1998.

In 1990, The Mark and Debi Rolfing Charitable Foundation began with the aim of bettering the lives of high-risk, underserved children in need. In addition to supporting numerous other children's charities, the Rolfings have been licensed foster parents for 18 years. Through their Cradle Care Ministry, Debi and Mark have personally welcomed, loved and provided care in their Hawaii and Montana homes for 28 newborns, the majority being medically and often critically fragile at birth. The Rolfings' nurturing care in their homes provides valuable time while adoption attorneys and case managers assess if the children can be reunited with their birth parents or placed with adoptive families.

Mark Rolfing is a survivor of Stage 4 salivary gland cancer, a diagnosis he received in August 2015. It was during his post-surgery recovery at the University of Chicago Medical Center that his visits took him past Jackson Park, which spawned his family's most recent growth-of-the-game initiative: The Chicago Parks Golf Alliance, established with a mission to attract the next generation of golfers to Jackson Park by providing equipment, instruction and mentoring to youth on the city's South Side.

“Mark and Debi Rolfig’s combined energy and passion for their beloved Hawaii has spread across the country to help grow the game of golf, while balancing a selfless commitment to benefit the lives of children,” said PGA President Paul Levy. “Mark and Debi have touched the lives of many through golf, which is a powerful vehicle to better the lives of others. Because of their endeavors, the PGA of America is extremely proud to present them with the PGA Distinguished Service Award.”

“Debi and I feel incredibly honored to have been chosen to receive this prestigious award,” said Mark in reaction to the announcement during the PGA Championship. “We are extremely fortunate that our life in golf has provided us a platform to make a difference in so many young people’s lives.”

Said Debi, “Having shared a wonderful journey with Mark through golf, it was a blessing that we could use those experiences to move into another enriching chapter of our lives to help others.”

PGA DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

1988	Herb Graffis	2003	Vince Gill
1989	Bob Hope	2004	Pete Dye
1991	The Hon. Gerald R. Ford	2005	Wally Uihlein
1992	Gene Sarazen	2006	Fred Ridley
1993	Byron Nelson	2007	Jack Burke Jr.
1994	Arnold Palmer	2008	Dennis Walters
1995	Patty Berg	2009	William Powell
1996	Frank Chirkinian	2010	Billy Casper
1997	The Hon. George H.W. Bush	2011	Larry Nelson
1998	Paul Runyan	2012	Dave Stockton
1999	Bill Dickey	2013	Lee Trevino
2000	Jack Nicklaus	2014	The Hon. William J. Clinton
2001	Mark McCormack	2015	Deane Beman
2002	Tim Finchem	2017	Mark and Debi Rolfig