

## **BILL STRAUSBAUGH AWARD**

*This award bestows special recognition on a PGA Professional who has shown outstanding integrity, commitment to mentoring their fellow PGA Professionals in improving their employment situations, and involvement in community and charitable activities. The award is named in honor of the late “Coach” Bill Strausbaugh, former Head PGA Professional at Columbia Country Club in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and member of the MAPGA Hall of Fame Class of 1989.*

**Jason Epstein, PGA**  
Congressional Country Club  
Bethesda, MD

Giving back to the game and future generations of PGA Professionals has always been a passion for Jason. He learned the importance of this from his mentors, both his grandfather and his college coach, Herb Wimberly, who molded him into the Professional he is today. Herb is a positive force who always does things the right way, and always made you feel better about yourself when you spent time with him. His attitude and outlook on life, and others, was contagious.

Jason Epstein was born March 10, 1972 and was introduced to the game of golf by his grandfather, who he considers his hero. His grandfather lived on the second hole of Crooked Creek Golf Club in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Jason would play that hole repeatedly before dusk each summer night and it was there his grandfather stressed the importance of tradition, sportsmanship, and values. It wasn't how well you played the game that mattered to his grandfather, rather how you played and respected it; a foundation that has served Jason well in his career.

Jason's first golf related job was at Kendale Lakes CC (now Miccosukee GC) in Miami, Florida. He would pick-up range balls in the evening in exchange for free play during the day. He played college golf at the University of Cincinnati and New Mexico State University. He was a medalist at the US Amateur Qualifier in 1994 and was a part of the 1995 Big West Conference Championship team.

Jason became a golf professional in 1995, taking a position at The Biltmore GC in Coral Gables, FL. He served in many capacities there, eventually becoming the Director of Golf, overseeing all golf, Grounds and F&B activity. Jason then held the Director of Golf and Operations position at Tuckers Point Club (Bermuda) for three years and the Director of Golf Operations position at The Club at Las Campanas (NM), for five. While in New Mexico, Jason served on the Sections Board, winning the Sun Country Sections PGA Merchandiser of the Year three times and was the PGA's National Merchandiser of the Year in 2015. In 2016, he joined the staff at Congressional Country Club as Director of Athletics, where he has continued to be involved in programs such as PGA HOPE. Jason was the 2021 recipient of the MAPGA's Bill Strausbaugh Award, making him a two-time recipient of this prestigious honor.

Jason has had over 70 PGA Professionals achieve their PGA membership while working in his operation. He has mentored 24 Professionals into leadership roles such as GMs and Directors of Golf, and Assistants into leadership positions both at clubs (as Head Professionals and Teaching Professionals) and within the business. Jason has a unique ability to tap into fellow golf professionals' passions, helping them to achieve their goals and dreams. It is evident that Jason loves to coach on leadership, empowering others to make a difference, and understanding their value as professionals and as people. He is invested in others success, and as a member of the PGA of America's National Employment Committee, has begun to tackle some of the most pressing issues of the time – creating better opportunities for PGA Professionals and establishing a more balanced life.

Jason has been married to Tina for 18 years. They have three children: sons Sam (16) and Miles (14) and daughter Allister (12). The entire family plays a number of sports and golf together is their favorite.