

## PGA MASTER PROFESSIONALS FEATURE



PGA Master Professionals Richard Brown III (left) and Hae-Yoon Jung-Kim (right).

## Masterful Mentoring

Mentor Richard Brown III helped guide Hae-Yoon Jung-Kim on her journey, now both are PGA Master Professionals in Teaching & Coaching

*The PGA Master Professional Program was established in 1969 to recognize PGA of America Members who make a significant effort to improve themselves as golf professionals and maintain the highest degree of excellence for themselves and their operations. As of press time, 478 individuals have achieved PGA Master Professional status since the program began. For more information about the program, log on to [PGA.org](http://PGA.org) or email [PGAMEMBEREDU@pgahq.com](mailto:PGAMEMBEREDU@pgahq.com), or call 866-866-3382 and select option 6.*

**T**he highest designation a PGA of America Golf Professional can achieve is PGA Master Professional status. The program was recently updated as part of the PGA Certified Professional Program to provide additional support to those hoping to reach this

rarified achievement. Pursuing this designation allows applicants to study in the career path they've chosen – Executive Management, Golf Operations or Teaching & Coaching – and, after being employed for 10 years, an individual can apply for the PGA Master Professional program through the PGA Education department.

Once in the program, candidates will serve as a mentor to five PGA Certified Professionals while being assigned a mentor of their own from the roster of current PGA Master Professionals. We recently talked with PGA Master Professional Hae-Yoon Jung-Kim and her mentor, PGA Master Professional Richard Brown III, about what it takes to complete the curriculum and how having a mentor helps the process.

Brown, the first African-American to earn PGA Master Professional status, became PGA Master Professional No. 418 when his Teaching & Coaching thesis on biomechanics was approved in 2018. Since then, Brown has joined the PGA of America Education team and works out of the Association's headquarters in Frisco, Texas.

“Becoming a PGA Master Professional has opened the door for me to work for the PGA of America,” Brown says. “Personally, it has stoked my fire to continue to seek knowledge regarding the game of golf – and how to become a better communicator of instruction.”

Brown has gone on to work with 26 mentees in the PGA Master Professional program, with five having successfully completed the program. One of those is Jung-Kim, who earned her PGA Master Professional status in 2025 in Teaching & Coaching.

“Hae-Yoon was assigned to me as a mentee, and I immediately called her,” Brown recalls. “From the outset she was ready to progress through the program. Her willingness to make the necessary adjustments and corrections to her project was inspiring.”

Jung-Kim, a PGA of America Golf Instructor at Pelican Hill Golf Club in Newport Coast, California, is a former collegiate golfer who has long focused on teaching and coaching since becoming a PGA of America Member in 2009.

“I have always believed that life is a continuous journey of growth and leadership,” Jung-Kim says. “Pursuing the PGA Master Professional designation was a natural step in my commitment to lifelong learning and striving to become better every day. As the game of golf and the way people learn continue to evolve, I believe it is important for PGA Professionals to grow alongside our students and stay aligned with those changes.”

Jung-Kim's PGA Master Professional project in Teaching & Coaching focused on business development and marketing strategy within golf instruction, while addressing the entire spectrum of the game of golf.

“One of my core beliefs is that golf is a unique sport where players of all ages and skill levels – from juniors to adults – can learn, compete and grow together,” Jung-Kim says. “I wanted my project to reflect that inclusiveness and the lifelong nature of the game.”

Hae-Yoon’s project focused on a structured teaching model that integrates fundamentals, biomechanics and data-driven feedback to create a personalized learning experience. It also tackled the business side of coaching, incorporating the process of opening and operating an indoor golf facility, including marketing strategies, promotional planning and client development. The project also included mentoring and developing PGA of America Associates to help them grow as instructors and leaders in the industry.

“Overall, the project was designed to reflect both my instructional philosophy and a comprehensive approach to growing the game, developing players and building a sustainable and impactful golf business in today’s environment,” she says.



Jung-Kim teaches at Pelican Hill Golf Club in California.

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— PGA Master Professional  
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Brown worked with Jung-Kim to bring structure to her thesis and clarify what started as a large and complex project. By narrowing the focus on the thesis and identifying the most meaningful areas to research, the project stayed aligned with Jung-Kim's teaching philosophy.

“During the research phase, Richard encouraged me to think deeper and support my ideas with both data and real-life application, and in the writing process his feedback was incredibly valuable,” Jung-Kim says. “When it came to presenting my thesis, Richard played a key role in organizing my thoughts and delivering it with confidence and purpose.



Brown is now a member of the PGA of America Education team.

“His mentorship throughout the entire process gave me direction, accountability and the confidence to complete the program at a high level.”

“We had constant conversations making sure she had the correct format and the required information,” Brown adds. “I just provided honest feedback and encouragement.”

Hae-Yoon's thesis was approved in 2025, and she became PGA of America Master Professional No. 472 – and just the 13th woman to earn the designation. She is now looking forward to helping others along the same path.

“The process of becoming a PGA Master Professional is time-consuming and requires a high level of commitment, but it is absolutely worth the time and effort,” Jung-Kim says. “I would encourage anyone considering the program to fully commit to the journey and embrace the process.”

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## Ryan Macey becomes 481st PGA Master Professional

**P**GA of America Golf Professional Ryan Macey, Director of Golf at River Strand Golf & Country Club in Bradenton, Florida, recently achieved PGA Master Professional status, the highest education designation available through the Association. Macey, a member of the North Florida PGA, joins a special group as the 481st PGA Member to earn the Master Professional designation. He achieved his designation in Teaching & Coaching.

“Becoming a PGA Master Professional is something I've spent my entire career wanting to do,” says Macey. “For me to be one of 481 is a big honor, and I couldn't be more proud. Earning PGA Master Professional status reflects my dedication to golf and my commitment to growing the game through junior golf, which motivates me to give back and help others improve.”

Macey has led private-club golf operations for more than 20 years in Florida. A PGA of America Member since 2013, he began his career as the Assistant Professional and then Associate Head Golf Professional at Grasslands Golf & Country Club in Lakeland. He moved to Bradenton Country Club in 2015, where he ascended to Head Professional and then Director of Instruction in 2019. In 2024 he was the Director of Golf at Palm Aire

Country Club in Sarasota and then moved to River Strand Golf & Country Club in 2025.