

# Their effort is tennis' gain

Awards showcase teachers' exceptional giving, learning



*USPTA Professional of the Year Rick Macci shares a favorite story with awards show emcee Jack Groppel, Ph.D.*

When Rick Macci first met young Venus and Serena Williams, their potential was not obvious. It was a series of gymnastic moves performed by one of the girls as she left the tennis court that convinced him to rethink his initial impression, Macci told the crowd at an awards presentation during the USPTA World Conference on Tennis last month.

Macci, who has coached several top world players, shared the lesson he learned in recognizing human potential as he accepted the Alex Gordon Award for the USPTA Professional of the Year. Macci was among a number of tennis professionals honored, including USPTA

Stars John J. "Jack" Foster and Robert Reed, recognized for making indelible marks on their communities through tennis.

With stories about connecting with children, overcoming disabilities and learning to see people from different perspectives, the honorees shared their knowledge and experience working with players of all levels.

Macci, president of Rick Macci Tennis Academy, is best known for coaching some of the world's best players, including Maria Sharapova and Andy Roddick. The USPTA Master Professional, a resident of Deerfield Beach, Fla., has been a frequent guest instructor for "On Court with USPTA™," an original instructional series produced by USPTA for The Tennis Channel. He also writes for publications including *Tennis* and *Florida Tennis*.

Foster's enthusiasm is appreciated by students of all ages, and many consider him inspirational, partly because of what he accomplishes in tennis despite decreased mobility due to cerebral palsy. He arrives first at the courts, leaves last, and spends his days making sure people enjoy tennis. The Sugar Land, Texas, resident is director of tennis at Club Sienna and senior tennis professional for Fort Bend Tennis Services.

Seven days a week, Reed travels across Lane County, Ore., running group and private lessons for players of all ages and abilities. He has created programs at eight county park sites, and offers scholarships to all programs. In 2004 he founded Inspire, a nonprofit organization, to provide low-cost programming for all ages. He also provides academic tutoring. Reed is manager of the Lane County parks tennis program and Springfield High School tennis coach.



*With exceptional effort and enthusiasm, USPTA Stars Jack Foster (left) and Robert Reed make it possible for more and more people to play and learn from tennis.*



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