



# STEVEN BURGESS

## PROSPERITY WITH PURPOSE

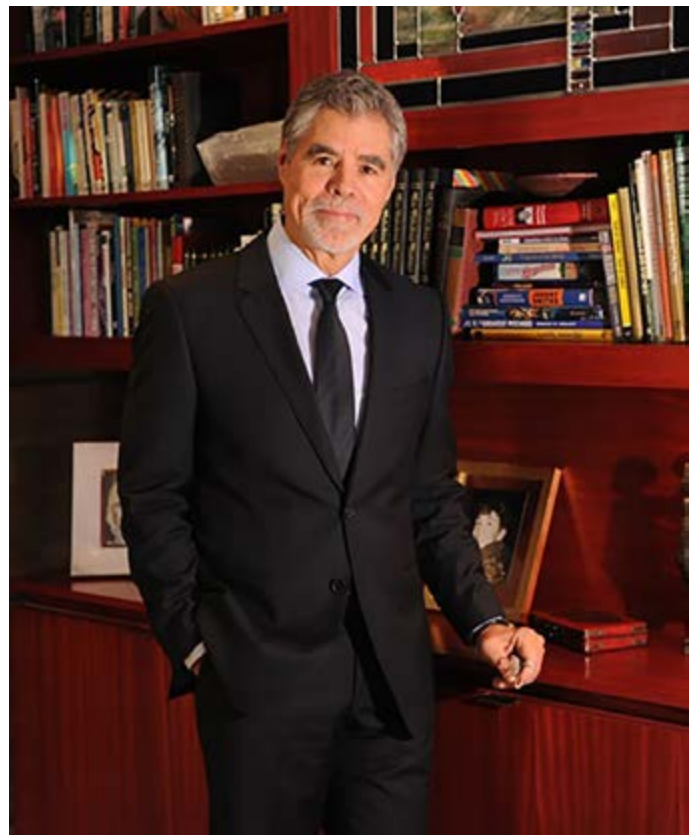
Preston Hotchkis  
Distinguished Achievement Award Winner

The Distinguished Achievement Award was created by Preston Hotchkis, a member of Pacific Life's Board of Directors from 1945-1970. The annual award recognizes the life insurance producer best personifying Pacific Life's standard of excellence through high sales production, dedication to the community, and overall achievement.

Steven Burgess is the founding principal and Executive Chair for The Burgess Group (TBG), an international firm specializing in wealth creation and wealth transfer strategies. Over the last 45 years, he has focused on providing tax-efficient solutions using life insurance to solve complex estate, succession, and philanthropic planning needs. Prosperity with Purpose™ is more than just his company's vision statement, it's also deeply rooted in Burgess's personal and professional beliefs. Get to know the winner of Pacific Life's 2021 Preston Hotchkis Distinguished Achievement Award.

### LAUNCHING A CAREER

After graduating from the University of Utah-David Eccles School of Business with a degree in Business Finance, Burgess set foot in the corporate world at a large national company that acquired health company chains. Burgess explains, "I left after only a year realizing



*Steven Burgess*



**PACIFIC LIFE**

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*Mark Pellicano and Scott Johnson with Pacific Life presenting Steven Burgess with the 2021 Preston Hotchkis Distinguished Achievement Award*



*Steven Burgess and his wife Liz attending a large charity event in New York*

I was not nurturing my entrepreneurial spirit. There wasn't any real incentive, and I wanted to do something more stimulating."

So, he and a college buddy decided to start their own non-food brokerage company. Although they had some early success, fostering a productive focus with a college-aged, part-time workforce was challenging. "We hit a roadblock and came to the realization that we did not have a sustainable model."

Now at a crossroads and wondering what direction to take next, Burgess was approached by another old college friend who told him about a business-planning agency with a very interesting entrepreneurial group model. His friend asked him if he had any interest in life insurance. "My initial response was not really," Burgess says with a laugh. But curiosity got the best of him, he met with the agency head and decided to give it a try. It did not take long for him to begin carving out his own niche using life insurance to provide solutions to businesses wanting to retain key employees and provide succession and legacy planning, in which he had immediate success. "The decision to take that job jump-started my career and later morphed into strategic planning to help clients expand their philanthropic endeavors."

Burgess continued to build his practice, later merging with Bob Stanworth. "As a senior partner with Stanworth-Burgess & Associates for over 20 years, I realized I had a deep passion for what this industry provides."

Over that time, "I recognized you can't be a jack of all trades in this business and maintain a 'best-in-class' product," said Burgess, so he created a specialty in using life insurance as a cost-efficient solution to complex estate, succession, and philanthropic needs. "Eventually, I left

Stanworth-Burgess & Associates and decided to start The Burgess Group (TBG) in 1999 and focus on the affluent market and its unique need for wealth transfer planning."

Today, TBG works with family offices, law firms, accounting firms, private banks and financial advisors globally to provide planning for the ultra-high net worth. "I have always looked at the world as being flat and we have expanded our reach globally," explained Burgess. TBG has offices and affiliates in United States, Latin America and Asia, with a focus to continue expanding globally. Burgess is also a pioneer in the development of traditional premium finance.

One by one his family got involved in the business. "The first to jump was my wife Liz who was practicing law at the time. I still tease her about being a recovering litigator," laughs Burgess. Later his four adult children came aboard after graduating college. The first was Addie, then Nick, followed by Alex, and finally Zach. By 2008 they were all in the company, expressing a serious desire to build something special. "I realized then I needed to change my exit strategy and pivot to another long-term vision for the company, as TBG was now a family business." Burgess put on his mentoring hat and committed himself to teaching them the business from the ground up. "They've now taken the reins and are positioned to take the company to another level. I couldn't be more proud of each of them."

#### **FAMILY: BEYOND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS**

Burgess and Liz spend their time between in the foothills of Salt Lake City, Utah and Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. When not traveling to visit children and grandchildren, they enjoy hiking treks and have managed to explore parts of all seven continents. The whole family loves sports and



*Steven Burgess and his wife Liz relaxing on one of their European travel excursions*

outdoor recreation. They can frequently be found planning hiking, biking, or skiing excursions or engaged in fiercely competitive pickle ball, tennis, or golf matches. “Liz and I always thought we would wait and pick-up golf when we got old,” Burgess states, “But we looked at each other and realized okay, we’re old, so let’s pick it up. Now we’re addicted!”

However, perhaps the most competitive event in the Burgess family happens at Thanksgiving every year where everyone uses the family kitchen to create a specialty dish and then touts themselves as an accomplished chef. “As I get older, I’m finding myself more on the losing end of these best-chef competitions, but we have a lot of fun and the memories are priceless.”

### WORKING WITH PACIFIC LIFE

Through the Denver office, Burgess started what has now become a 22-year relationship with Pacific Life. He cites integrity as the deciding factor in choosing a carrier. “Working with a carrier like Pacific Life—one who is always willing to find a solution without compromising product integrity—is invaluable. I consider the Pacific Life brand to be an industry best,” says Burgess.

Since 2002, Burgess has qualified for ten Leaders Conferences, including nine prestigious Presidents Club level trips. “Over the years, getting to know Jim Morris, and other senior management has only continued to validate Pacific Life’s commitment to excellence. Liz and I have sure made a lot of good friends going on these trips. I believe we were labeled the most fun couple one year,” he laughs. Burgess is also a Pacific Life Vanguard member, inducted during the 2019 Leaders Conference in Amsterdam.

“I have had the pleasure of working directly with

Steve and The Burgess Group for 20 plus years and I’m aware of his excellent work and reputation in the marketplace,” said Scott Johnson, National Sales Manager, MO Channel. “I have a great appreciation for Steve’s experience, creativity, and passion for serving the estate and philanthropic planning needs of the ultra-affluent.”

### COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

Active in charity and his community, Burgess sits on several charitable organization boards and volunteers for many fundraising activities. Charitable giving is a key component of the plans The Burgess Group implements and as a consequence, has led to almost \$2 billion in endowment charitable gifts to universities, medical clinics, colleges and churches, both here and around the world. “These gifts are making a difference in advancing higher education and medical research just to name a few,” says Burgess. “This work also led to our company vision statement, ‘Prosperity with Purpose.’”

“In my 36 years in the life insurance industry, there is no one more focused on giving back to his community and preparing the next generation of his firm to continue the uniqueness of their planning approach and success,” said Johnson. “I’ve also enjoyed meeting Liz Burgess and discovering the beauty of her relationship with Steve and the success of their marriage and business. I appreciate their passion for spending quality time with their family and active outdoor lifestyle. It is an honor and pleasure to work with Steve and his entire firm. Steve’s ability to produce at an extremely high level of business over a long period of time, his quality relationships in the marketplace and passion to serve his clients makes Steve a perfect recipient for the 2021 Preston Hotchkis Distinguished Achievement Award.”

Burgess chose The Cleveland Clinic Foundation and designated the Caregiver Catalyst Grants to receive the foundation check for \$5,000. The Caregiver Catalyst Grants were created to help Cleveland Clinic’s caregivers implement their best and brightest ideas to positively impact their patients and communities through medical breakthroughs, wellness programs, and the expansion of patient support services.



*The Burgess family*



*Steven Burgess enjoying a hiking trek with his three sons*

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