



## TRAVELERS CHAMPIONSHIP

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### **GEORGE LOPEZ, DONNIE WAHLBERG, KEVIN OLLIE, JIM CALHOUN AND CHRIS BERMAN JOIN THE 2014 TRAVELERS CELEBRITY PRO-AM**

**HARTFORD, Conn., June 9, 2014** – Stars in sports and entertainment will come to TPC River Highlands, Wednesday, June 18, for the 2014 Travelers Celebrity Pro-Am. This highly anticipated event will include actors George Lopez, Donnie Wahlberg and James Naughton; 2014 NCAA Champion UConn Huskies Men's Basketball head coach Kevin Ollie; three-time NCAA Champion, former UConn Men's Basketball head coach and Hall of Famer Jim Calhoun; UConn Women's Basketball associate head coach Chris Dailey; popular sports personalities Chris Berman and Ahmad Rashad; famed chef Ming Tsai; former Red Sox pitcher Tim Wakefield; and sports icons Doug Flutie and Andre Tippett.

"Our celebrity pro-am has become a staple and fan-favorite at our tournament each year," said Travelers Championship Tournament Director Nathan Grube. "Our field of celebrities this year includes stars like George and Donnie, as well as personalities our fans love to see like Kevin, Jim, and Chris. This field should ensure we have another exciting and fun pro-am Wednesday."

George Lopez's multi-faceted career encompasses television, film, standup comedy and late-night television. Lopez is best known for television's groundbreaking hit sitcom *George Lopez*, which ran for six seasons on ABC. Lopez currently stars in the multi-camera ensemble comedy *Saint George*. The show revolves around the chaotic life of a recently divorced working class Mexican-American (Lopez) turned successful entrepreneur. Co-created by Lopez, *Saint George* airs on FX and is produced by Lionsgate Television. Lopez has also voiced animated characters in a string of animated blockbuster films including *Rio* and *Rio 2*, *Escape from Planet Earth*, *The Smurfs 1 and 2*, and *The Beverly Hills Chihuahua 1, 2, and 3*. His other most recent film credits include the box-office hit *Valentine's Day*, *Swing Vote*, *Henry Poole Is Here* and *Balls of Fury*. In 2006, Lopez received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In addition, Time magazine named him one of the 25 Most Influential Hispanics in America, and the Harris Poll named him one of the Top 10 Favorite Television Personalities.

2014 NCAA Men's Basketball Championship winning coach Kevin Ollie returns to TPC River Highlands, having led his UConn Huskies to the title in just his second year as head coach of the team. Playing at UConn from 1991 to 1995, Ollie racked up 619 assists, good for third on UConn's all-time list. He enjoyed a 13-year NBA career playing for 12 different teams, before joining the UConn staff in 2010. He'll be joined by his former coach, Hall of Famer Jim Calhoun, who has 866 career wins.

Many consider Chris Berman the most beloved sportscaster in America. He has been with ESPN since its inception, and has been honored with several awards for his work, including winning six National Sportscaster of the Year awards and 10 Emmy Awards. He hosts some of ESPN's most highly regarded programming, including Sunday NFL Countdown, the NFL Draft, the U.S. Open, and more.

Emmy Award-Winning sportscaster, Ahmad Rashad is an Executive Producer and host at Back9Network and is currently working on his new show "Ahmad Rashad" which is in production. He is also the host of a series of NBA TV specials, "One on One with Ahmad Rashad." Rashad, is a former college All-American and All-Pro football star who was enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame in 2007 and was also named one of the 50 Greatest Minnesota Vikings of all-time. He was also host, executive producer and managing editor of the Emmy-nominated show *NBA Inside Stuff* for 16 seasons. Rashad has become a staple at TPC River Highlands, having played the celebrity pro-am for several years.



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Ming Tsai is a James Beard Award-winning chef and television personality. He stars in *Simply Ming* on American Public Television, now in its 11th season. Tsai owns two popular Boston-area restaurants, Blue Ginger and Blue Dragon, and has also authored five cookbooks. Ming has appeared on popular television Food Network shows *The Next Iron Chef* and *Iron Chef America* (where he defeated Bobby Flay). Ming has also had many appearances on *The Chew*, *The Today Show* and *The View*. Along with participating in the celebrity pro-am, he'll also be a featured speaker at Women's Day presented by Travelers.

Doug Flutie is a legendary quarterback who played in the NFL and CFL. His professional football career spanned over two decades. He was part of one of the most famous plays in the history of college football throwing a Hail Mary touchdown pass in the 1984 Orange Bowl against Miami. His spectacular collegiate career earned him a Heisman Trophy in 1984 and an induction into the College Football Hall of Fame. In 2006, he successfully completed a dropkick for an extra point with the New England Patriots, something that had not been done since 1941. Flutie is currently a college football analyst for NBC Sports and is the founder of the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism. Andre Tippett is a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, a member of the 1980s All-Decade Team, and a five-time Pro Bowl selection. He was a linebacker for the New England Patriots for 12 seasons. He's currently the Patriots' Executive Director of Community Affairs.

Tim Wakefield is a former Red Sox pitcher who played in Major League Baseball for 21 years. Most known for his knuckleball, Wakefield retired in 2012 after helping the Red Sox win the World Series in 2004 and 2007. Throughout his 17-year career with the Red Sox, Wakefield split time between starting pitching and pitching out of the bullpen earning respect from his teammates as an unselfish player. Wakefield finished his career with 200 wins and has the third most wins of any Red Sox pitcher. Wakefield currently works for NESN as a Red Sox Studio Analyst.

"We're grateful to have such tremendous talent as George Lopez, Donnie Wahlberg and all the other celebrities who volunteer their time to play in our pro-am to help raise funds and awareness for the tournament charities, such as The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp," said Andy Bessette, Travelers executive vice president and chief administrative officer. "There's always a lot of excitement on Wednesday when fans get to see some of their favorite Hollywood and sports stars play with the PGA TOUR pros, which has been an important tradition for this tournament through the years."

Tickets for the 2014 Travelers Celebrity Pro-Am are on sale now at [TravelersChampionship.com](http://TravelersChampionship.com). This year's [Travelers Championship field](http://TravelersChampionship.com) already includes top players such as Bubba Watson, Jason Day, Matt Kuchar, Keegan Bradley, Dustin Johnson, Brandt Snedeker, Zach Johnson, Hunter Mahan, Patrick Reed, Jonas Blixt, Marc Leishman, Louis Oosthuizen, Sergio Garcia, Graham DeLaet, Ryan Moore, Stewart Cink, Retief Goosen, Angel Cabrera and reigning champion Ken Duke. The Travelers Championship will be held June 16 to 22 at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Conn.

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### **About the Travelers Championship**

As the only PGA TOUR event in the Northeast in early summer, the Travelers Championship is one of the region's premier sporting events. The tournament proudly supports the PGA TOUR's Tradition of Giving Back by donating 100 percent of net proceeds to charities. The title sponsor of the event is Travelers, a leading provider of property casualty insurance for home, auto and business. Travelers has been doing business in the community for more than 150 years and today has more than 7,000 employees in Connecticut. The Official Property Casualty Insurance Provider of the PGA TOUR, Travelers has been a corporate sponsor of this event each year since its inception in 1952, becoming title sponsor in 2007. Complete details are available on [www.TravelersChampionship.com](http://www.TravelersChampionship.com).



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