

Child Advocacy Award Winner

Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida recently awarded John Ritrosky, Jr., MD, a pediatrician with Physician's Primary Care, the 2017 Prendergast Family Child Advocacy Award. This award recognizes his passion and commitment to keeping children safe through many years of service in the care of children in Southwest Florida. Dr. Ritrosky received the award at the Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida Annual Pediatric Conference at Sanibel Harbour Marriot Resort & Spa on April 29.

Every year, in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, Golisano Children's Hospital and the Prendergast Family Endowment Fund host a lecture on child abuse and recognize a special individual in the community for their commitment to prevention and advocacy.

Dr. Ritrosky made Southwest Florida his home in 1967. He has been instrumental in creating and maintaining many programs designed to protect children in the region. He helped establish the Children's Medical Services Child Protection Team in Lee County,



Dr. John Ritrosky and Emad Salman

photo provided

was the co-director from 1984-2000, and has served as the medical director since 2007. Children's Medical Services establishes a medical home for children

with special and complex medical needs, and through this program, Dr. Ritrosky has led the cleft palate team. He has served on the board of the Island Coast

Primary Care Project for many years.

Dr. Ritrosky has a passion for education and has been the medical director for the annual Golisano Children's Hospital Pediatric Conference since 2005. The annual conference is designed to bring both regional and national speakers to Southwest Florida to share the latest in the care of the pediatric patient.

"The decision to nominate Dr. Ritrosky for the Prendergast Award was easy and there is no one more deserving," said Emad Salman, MD, regional medical officer at Golisano Children's Hospital.

In 2005, Mrs. Eileen Prendergast and her family gave the community "a million reasons" to help children in Southwest Florida when they made a \$1 million gift to establish the Prendergast Endowment Fund for the Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida's Child Advocacy Program and the annual Prendergast Child Advocate of the Year recognition. The program features free parenting classes taught in partnership with the Children's Advocacy Center of Southwest Florida to prevent child abuse. These classes have touched the lives of more than 7,000 parents in the Southwest Florida region.✱