

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla., and LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (May 29, 2019) – LPGA*USGA Girls Golf, the only national junior golf program devoted to providing girl-friendly environments for juniors to learn the game, will help the USGA welcome golf's next generation of golfers and fans to the 74th U.S. Women's Open Championship in Charleston, S.C., from May 28-June 2 with a weeklong schedule of family-friendly on-site activities.

The enhanced Junior Experience presented by MUSC Children's Health is part of a series of initiatives conducted throughout the year by LPGA*USGA Girls Golf through a longstanding commitment by the USGA to introduce girls to golf and provide them with exciting opportunities to both learn and enjoy the game. The USGA's investment and impact in the program has been realized through an extensive annual grant program, which has totaled nearly \$2.5 million since 2015 and has helped increase participation in girls' golf in nearly every state.

As LPGA*USGA Girls Golf this year celebrates its 30th anniversary, the Junior Experience has been significantly broadened for the U.S. Women's Open and will feature a dedicated interactive area for kids and their families to enjoy throughout the week. Juniors age 18 and under will receive complimentary admission to the championship if they are accompanied by a ticketed adult.

The Junior Experience includes a shaded tent and will be located adjacent to the 16th fairway. Activities will range from arts and crafts and an interactive exercise station to chipping and putting games, with several prizes awarded.

"We are proud to serve as a key driver of the important work that LPGA*USGA Girls Golf has been able to do in fostering a love of golf with girls across the country," said USGA CEO Mike Davis. "Being able to collaborate with them on interactive programming during our most significant women's championship will greatly enhance our fan experience on-site."

The LPGA*USGA Girls Golf program began in Phoenix, Ariz., in 1989 and has expanded to more than 500 sites across the United States, with over 80 being added just last year. More than 80,000 girls were engaged by the program in 2018 and the goal is to increase that number to 100,000 by 2020.

The USGA has positively impacted many LPGA*USGA Girls Golf sites in the Carolinas, specifically in South Carolina, where 16 Girls Golf sites have attracted 2,158 members and the association has granted \$17,500 in funds since 2015. Girls Golf of Whispering Pines in Pinehurst, N.C., run by LPGA Teaching Professional Charlaine Hirst, has also benefited from USGA funding since it was established in 2014.

More than 45 members of the LPGA and Symetra Tours kickstarted their golf careers at a Girls Golf program, including Cheyenne Woods, Brittany Lincicome, Morgan Pressel, Mariah Stackhouse, Vicky Hurst, Jacqui Concolino and Kristen Gillman.

In addition, more than 130 past or present program participants competed in a USGA national championship in 2018, including the U.S. Women's Open (16), U.S. Girls' Junior (49), U.S. Women's Amateur (34), U.S. Women's Mid-Amateur (10) and the U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball (29). Six program alumni have won the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship, including two-time champion Gillman (2014 and 2018).

This investment in programs to increase participation among women in golf is the latest example of the USGA's longstanding commitment to make golf more inclusive and welcoming. That effort began with its first national championship for female golfers, the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship, which was conducted in 1895, the same year that the U.S. Open and U.S. Amateur debuted. The USGA currently conducts seven national championships for female golfers, from the U.S. Girls' Junior to the U.S. Senior Women's Amateur and U.S. Senior Women's Open, for every age group and open to amateurs and professionals worldwide.

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"When I became president of the LPGA Foundation, it didn't take long for me to realize how important LPGA*USGA Girls Golf is to the LPGA and to the future of the game of golf," said LPGA Foundation President Nancy Henderson. "What our LPGA players and teachers are doing in inspiring young girls is a testament to their dedication and passion for the game of golf. Together, we are truly making a difference in the lives of girls and helping to change the face of golf."

Girls are responding to the message that golf can be both welcoming and fun. Over the last 25 years, the growth of girls' golf in the U.S. has far outpaced that of boys. In 1995, girls made up only 17 percent of all juniors ages 6-17 – today that has climbed to 36 percent, according to the latest data from the National Golf Foundation.

LPGA*USGA Girls Golf was founded in 1989 by Sandy LaBauve, a passionate LPGA Teaching Professional and mother of two daughters. She was introduced to golf by her parents, Jack and Sherry Lumpkin, who taught LaBauve by infusing fun drills and games into her golf lessons as a child. She used these childhood experiences to create the LPGA*USGA Girls Golf program. The USGA first provided support of Girls Golf in 1991 to help kickstart local programming.

Beginning with just 10 programs, Girls Golf became an initiative of The LPGA Foundation in 1994. In 1996, Judy Bell was elected the USGA's first female president and that same year she helped support Girls Golf through the USGA's grants program. Since that time, the USGA has provided more than \$5 million in grants to the program. Thanks to LaBauve's vision, more than half a million girls have been introduced to the game since the program's inception.

About the USGA

The USGA celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment and amateur status rules. Our operating jurisdiction for these governance functions is the United States, its territories and Mexico. The USGA Handicap System is utilized in more than 40 countries and our Course Rating System covers 95 percent of the world's golf courses, enabling all golfers to play on an equitable basis. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association's Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit www.usga.org.

About the LPGA

The LPGA is the world's leading professional golf organization for women. Founded in 1950 and headquartered in Daytona Beach, Fla., the association celebrates a diverse and storied membership with more than 2,300 members representing more than 30 countries. With a vision to inspire, empower, educate and entertain by showcasing the very best of women's golf, LPGA Tour Professionals compete across the globe, while the Symetra Tour, the official qualifying tour of the LPGA, consistently produces a pipeline of talent ready for the world stage. Additionally, LPGA Teaching and Club Professionals directly impact the game through teaching, coaching and management.

The LPGA demonstrates its dedication to the development of the game through The LPGA Foundation. Since 1991, this charitable organization has been committed to empowering and supporting girls and women through developmental, humanitarian and golf community initiatives, including LPGA*USGA Girls Golf, the LPGA Women's Network and the LPGA Amateur Golf Association.

Follow the LPGA on its television home, Golf Channel, and on the web via www.LPGA.com. Join the social conversation at www.facebook.com/lpga, www.twitter.com/lpga and www.youtube.com/lpgavideo, and on Instagram at @lpga_tour.

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