BRASELTON, Ga. – Ashley Yen of Houston, Texas, and Charlie Creamean of Winnetka, Illinois, were named recipients of the 2020 USGA-AJGA Presidents' Leadership Award, the USGA and American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) announced.

"Our greatest responsibility is to give back to the game in ways that meaningfully shape its future," said USGA President Stu Francis. "These two athletes have provided pathways for more people to love the game, to share its values of character and integrity, and to lead golf forward as both a competitive and recreational game. Their individual work inspires me, and should inspire all of us to do more."

The USGA-AJGA Presidents' Leadership Award honors one male and one female junior golfer annually who demonstrate leadership, character and community service through their involvement with the Leadership Links program, a joint initiative founded by the USGA and AJGA in 2005 to further develop junior golfers through volunteerism.

"I am so honored and grateful to be the recipient of this award," Yen said. "I would like to thank the AJGA and USGA for giving me the opportunity to participate in Leadership Links and for making service to our communities a priority. I hope that I can inspire others to find causes close to their heart and help their communities, especially during these challenging times."

"It's nice to know that what I have done is being recognized because it makes me feel like I have made a difference," Creamean said. "AJGA Leadership Links really opened my eyes to how generous people are in supporting two great organizations, Lurie Children's Hospital and Bunkers in Baghdad."

About Ashley Yen

One of Yen's greatest passions is helping to provide quality education to every child who needs it, regardless of background. That passion started with her younger brother, Christopher, who has learning disabilities. He attended the Joy School in Houston, a school designed to help young students with learning disabilities. Her offer to help led to raising more than $1,500 through the Leadership Links program for various programs at the school that provide opportunities to children who might not otherwise have them.

Yen's passion for education goes beyond fundraising. During one of her brother's doctor visits, she discovered a need for STEM education in underserved communities. This led to her putting together STEM education kits to distribute throughout her community. These kits provide a valuable educational tool to many organizations that serve the community, including girls clubs, children's hospitals and the YMCA. Yen's nonprofit organization, Kits 2 Kids, has distributed over 1,000 kits to organizations in the greater Houston area.

In addition to providing educational opportunities in the classroom, Yen also volunteers with The First Tee of Greater Houston as a junior coach and mentor to teach kids about the nine core values, bridging her interest in educating children with the game of golf.

"Golf is a game that requires integrity and discipline, qualities that I want to foster in children, whether they are on the course or in the classroom," said Yen. "I look forward to finding unique ways to teach children who aren't as fortunate as I am and making a positive and meaningful impact on my community."

About Charlie Creamean

As the founder of the Chicago North Shore Chapter of the Bunkers in Baghdad nonprofit organization, Cremean has logged over 150 volunteer hours. Through the charity and his local network, he and a group of friends have organized multiple fundraising events and golf ball collection drives that led to golf balls and golf equipment being delivered to troops overseas. As a result of Creamean's hard work, the North Shore Chapter was recently awarded the Dick Nelson Commitment to Service Award by the president of Bunkers in Baghdad for its dedication to service and the organization.

"It has been great to leverage a sport that I love so much to benefit the brave men and women serving our nation," said

Creamean about the project.

In addition to his efforts with the troops overseas, Creamean was inspired by the work of the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago, where his brother spent time receiving treatment for a rare gastrointestinal disease. Very little is known about these diseases and there is a lack of funding for research into the causes. Creamean hopes to change that through the efforts of the staff at Lurie Children's Hospital. Using the Leadership Links program, he has raised over $4,300 toward research and raising awareness about these rare but debilitating diseases.

“While this has been a scary experience for Alex and our family, it has been awe-inspiring to watch how brave Alex is and how amazing the doctors and facilities are at Lurie Children’s Hospital,” said Creamean. “It propelled me to become involved in Leadership Links, with the purpose to help support the incredible efforts taking place at Lurie Children’s.”

For more information on the USGA-AJGA Presidents’ Leadership Award, please contact Tim Jackman (tjackman@ajga.org) in the AJGA’s Communications Department.

About the AJGA

The American Junior Golf Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the overall growth and development of young men and women who aspire to earn college golf scholarships through competitive junior golf. The AJGA provides valuable exposure for college golf scholarships, and has an annual junior membership (boys and girls, ages 12-19) of more than 7,300 members from 50 states and 60 foreign countries. Through initiatives like the Achieving Competitive Excellence (ACE) Grant, a financial assistance program, and Leadership Links, a service-oriented platform that teaches juniors charitable-giving skills, the AJGA fosters the growth of golf’s next generation.

TaylorMade and adidas are the AJGA’s National Sponsors, supporting the AJGA for more than 25 years. TaylorMade has served as the Official Ball of the AJGA since 2016. adidas has been the Official Apparel and Footwear of the AJGA since 2017. Rolex, in its fourth decade of AJGA sponsorship, became the inaugural AJGA Premier Partner in 2004.

AJGA alumni have risen to the top of amateur, collegiate and professional golf. Former AJGA juniors have compiled more than 900 victories on the PGA and LPGA Tours. AJGA alumni include Rickie Fowler, Sergio Garcia, Dustin Johnson, Phil Mickelson, Patrick Reed, Jordan Spieth, Justin Thomas, Tiger Woods, Paula Creamer, Ariya Jutanugarn, Cristie Kerr, Stacy Lewis, Brittany Lincicome, Anna Nordqvist, Inbee Park and Lexi Thompson.

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that 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, handicapping and amateur status rules. 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 usga.org.

For further information: Danny Vohden, USGA Communications, dvohden@usga.org

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