USGA Media Center

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (March 25, 2021) – In its continuing effort to increase opportunities for more women to play and embrace the game, the United States Golf Association (USGA) announces a collaboration with Fore the Ladies, Inc., a nonprofit female-based community that brings women together to participate in golf through accessibility and approachability.

Founded in 2019 by USGA staff member Abby Liebenthal, Fore the Ladies marries her two passions, engaging golf fans through the USGA and promoting women's golf. In addition to clinics, a fitness series and larger events, Fore the Ladies fosters inclusivity with its Ladies of Golf series on the "Fore the Ladies" podcast. The USGA will collaborate with Fore the Ladies to introduce its listeners to women who work in, play and love the sport across the USGA network – expanding its list of competitors, media, leaders, prominent recreational golfers and others who help to power the $84 billion industry.

"Women play a pivotal role in the game and in its future and it is our responsibility to do all we can to connect them with inspiring female role models and provide inspiration on how to get involved and stay involved," said Craig Annis, chief Brand officer of the USGA. "We look forward to working with Fore the Ladies as we strive together to elevate and expand the role that women play in golf."

The collaboration is the latest in a series of USGA initiatives to actively elevate and highlight the role that women play in the game, an effort that began in 1895 with the inception of the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship. It is one of the USGA's three oldest championships along with the U.S. Amateur and the U.S. Open, both of which were founded the same year.

Most recently, in cooperation with SheIs, the USGA launched the "Women Worth Watching" campaign, a long-term commitment by the association to use its championships and platforms to celebrate female athletes while promoting equality and diversity in sports and society.

Additionally, the USGA has been an active supporter of LPGA*USGA Girls Golf since 1991, providing more than $2.5 million in chapter grant funding over the last six years, while the USGA Golf Museum and Library serves as the world's leading institution for the collection and preservation of women's golf history.

"Our goal has always been to introduce more women to everything that golf has to offer," said Liebenthal, USGA employee and founder of Fore the Ladies. "The 'Fore the Ladies' podcast allows us to amplify voices of women in the game and encourage listeners to get involved at our events and clinics. This collaboration will allow us to reach more women interested in golf and hopefully keep them in the sport for a lifetime."

According to the USGA's Handicap Index® database, 21 percent of golf's most avid players are women. National Golf Foundation (NGF) statistics show that the number of female golfers increased by 450,000 in 2020 – the biggest gain since 2007, while on-course play among women was up approximately 25 percent. The number of girls playing golf is also expanding, as the percentage of junior golfers who are female stands at 34 percent, compared with 24 percent female among the entire golf population. In 2000, according to the NGF, just 15 percent of junior golfers were girls.

"I've seen firsthand how special Fore the Ladies and Abby Liebenthal are for women and the game of golf," said Lindsay Cauthen, director of marketing at Pinehurst Resort and Spa. "Recently Pinehurst Resort hosted our first Fore the Ladies weekend with nearly 70 women from across the country and it was incredibly successful. We look forward to seeing this collaboration between the USGA and Fore the Ladies flourish and are thrilled to be along for the ride."

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.

About Fore the Ladies, Inc.

Fore the Ladies, Inc., is a female-based community with the intent to introduce more women to the game and bring women together to play, watch and participate in everything golf has to offer. We hope to make golf more accessible and approachable, while removing traditional barriers. To learn more, visit foretheladies.net.

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