

Fifth year Meijer LPGA Classic opens tournament to collegiate athletes

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – For the fifth consecutive year, the Meijer LPGA Classic for *Simply Give* will open its tournament to collegiate athletes as sponsor exemptions, representing Meijer and their respective universities in the professional tournament.

This year, three exemptions were awarded to Sarah Burnham and Allyson Geer, of Michigan State University; and Jaclyn Lee, of Ohio State University.

The exemptions were announced Friday during a press conference at the Lasch Family Golf Center in East Lansing.

“We love being able to give these young women the opportunity to compete with the best golfers in the world,” Meijer LPGA Classic Executive Director Cathy Cooper said. “It is a great opportunity for these athletes to show their talent while supporting the Meijer brand.”

Sarah Burnham, an MSU senior from Maple Grove, Minn., will also join the Meijer LPGA Classic field. Burnham is a two-time Big Ten Player of the Year during her junior and senior seasons, and holds the MSU season scoring record at 70.68 (1.32 under par), which is the lowest in the Big Ten in the past 12 years. Last summer, Burnham competed in the U.S. Amateur Championship and advanced to the Round of 32. She was also the runner-up in the Minnesota Women’s State Open with a six-under-par 138 (68-70) at Deer Run Golf Club. At age 16, Burnham was named the Minnesota Golf Association Women’s Player of the Year, becoming the first junior to do so since 1997. To view her full bio, please visit: http://www.msuspartans.com/sports/w-golf/mtt/sarah_burnham_912020.html.

Jaclyn Lee, a Calgary, Alberta native from Ohio State University will join the Meijer LPGA Classic field for the first time. Lee was the 2014 Alberta Ladies Amateur Championship winner at 17 years old, becoming the youngest to seize the title in the tournament’s 79-year history. In addition to being the All-Big Ten Second Team in 2017, Lee was also a WGCA All-American Scholar (2016 and 2017), Big Ten Distinguished Scholar (2017), Academic All-Big Ten (2017) and an OSU Scholar-Athlete (2016 and 2017). To view her full bio, please visit: http://www.ohiostatebuckeyes.com/sports/w-golf/mtt/jaclyn_lee_970829.html.

Allyson Geer, an upcoming junior at MSU from Brighton, Mich., will return for her second year as a Meijer sponsor exemption for the tournament. In the 2017 Meijer LPGA Classic, she shot 7-over-par 149 (75-74). Last summer, Geer also competed in the Symetra Tour Tullymore Classic and finished in a tie for 33rd, recording a 3-under-par 213 (68-73-72). During her freshman year at MSU, Geer was named Big Ten Freshman of the Year, First Team All-Big Ten, had two Top 5 finishes and two Top 20 finishes in appearing in all eight tournaments after joining the team in January and finished the season with a 74.08 average, ranking second on the team. To view her full bio, please visit: http://www.msuspartans.com/sports/w-golf/mtt/allyson_geer_1035263.html.

The 2018 Meijer LPGA Classic will host a full field of 144 of the best women golfers for 72 holes of stroke play over four days of competition. Proceeds from the tournament – and each of the week’s festivities – will once again benefit the Meijer *Simply Give* program that stocks the shelves of food pantries across the Midwest. The 2017 tournament raised \$1 million for local food pantries through *Simply Give*. In total, the four tournaments have generated more than \$3.1 million for the Meijer *Simply Give* program.

To follow the Meijer LPGA Classic before, during and after tournament week, please post about your experience and share your pictures on social media using the hashtags #forehunger, #SimplyGive and #MeijerGives.

For more information on the Meijer LPGA Classic for *Simply Give* or to purchase tickets, please visit meijerLPGAclassic.com.

To view a video featuring the 2017 Meijer LPGA Classic, please visit <https://youtu.be/XLMIQZWp78c>.

About Meijer:

Meijer is a Grand Rapids, Mich.-based retailer that operates 235 supercenters and grocery stores throughout Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Wisconsin. A privately-owned and family-operated company since

1934, Meijer has a fundamental philosophy aimed at strengthening the communities it serves and proudly donates more than 6 percent of its net profit each year to charities throughout the Midwest. With hunger as a corporate philanthropic focus, Meijer partners with hundreds of food banks and pantries through its *Simply Give* and food rescue programs. Meijer also supports education, disaster relief, and health and wellness initiatives. For additional information on Meijer philanthropy, please visit www.meijercommunity.com. Follow Meijer on Twitter [@twitter.com/Meijer](https://twitter.com/Meijer) and [@twitter.com/MeijerPR](https://twitter.com/MeijerPR) or become a fan at www.facebook.com/meijer.

About Blythefield Country Club:

Located just north of Grand Rapids, Blythefield has been providing families the best golf and social experience in West Michigan since 1928. With the Rogue River flowing through, Blythefield boasts one of the most beautiful championship layouts in Michigan. Previously, Blythefield has hosted the 1953 Western Amateur, the 1961 Western Open, won by Arnold Palmer, and the 2005 Western Junior won by Rickie Fowler. Beginning in 2014, Blythefield is honored to host the Meijer LPGA Classic. Learn more about Blythefield Country Club at www.blythefieldcc.org.

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