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Emma Lower & Mitchell McGuire head to Pebble Beach week of Sept. 21

**LOCAL TEENS SELECTED TO PLAY IN
NATURE VALLEY FIRST TEE OPEN AT PEBBLE BEACH**

PHOENIX – The First Tee of Phoenix is sending members Emma Lower of Chandler, Arizona and Mitchell McGuire of Payson, Arizona to compete in the [2015 Nature Valley First Tee Open at Pebble Beach](#). The official Champions Tour event will be held September 25-27 and internationally televised on The Golf Channel. Lower and McGuire will join 80 other participants from local The First Tee chapters for the annual event, which is in its 12th year.

“At Nature Valley we have great admiration for the mission of The First Tee,” said Carla Vernón at General Mills. “The program has such a meaningful impact in the lives of young people by strengthening important values like responsibility, judgement and perseverance. The opportunity for these teenagers to be selected as a part of The First Tee has the power to transform lives. The teenagers selected to play in the Nature Valley First Tee Open, including Emma and Mitchell, have worked hard to prepare for this opportunity, and we are immensely proud to welcome them to this year’s tournament.”

Lower and McGuire were selected by a national panel of judges who evaluated playing ability and comprehension of the life skills and character education learned through their involvement with The First Tee.

Champions Tour players committed to the event include last year's Nature Valley First Tee Open champion John Cook, Charles Schwab Cup contender and World Golf Hall of Fame member Colin Montgomerie, as well as two-time U.S. Open winner Lee Janzen. Janzen claimed the pro-junior competition last year when his junior partner, Christopher Meyers from The First Tee of Tucson, holed a 4-iron from the fairway for a final-hole albatross to secure the title.

McGuire has been involved with The First Tee of Phoenix for over 10 years and is currently an Ace Class member. McGuire is an honor roll student, involved in National Honor society and Link Crew – a high school peer mentoring program.

“It means the world to me to be selected for the chance to play in such a prestigious event,” said McGuire. “I have always had the dream to work my way to the top and believe that it has really optimized my First Tee experience.”

Lower has been a part of The First Tee of Phoenix for 7 years and currently a member of the Ace Class. She has been a part of the Ping Junior Interclub team for 4 years. She is a sophomore at Corona Del Sol High School in Tempe and competes on her Varsity High School golf team. Lower was the recipient of the 2014 Player of the Year Award for The First Tee of Phoenix and the 2014 Sportsmanship Award for The Junior Golf Association of Arizona. She is an active member of the Key Club, Spanish Club and the Library Club.

“I am excited to be invited to play this year and am grateful for the opportunity,” said Lower. “This has been a goal of mine over the past seven years and I can’t wait to play at Pebble Beach and represent The First Tee of Phoenix.”

Lower and McGuire and the other juniors will be teamed with 81 Champions Tour players and 162 amateurs as they compete for the pro-junior title at Pebble Beach Golf Links and Poppy Hills Golf Course. Play will be conducted on these courses on Friday and Saturday, and the final round will be played on Pebble Beach Sunday.

“We are thrilled for both Emma and Mitchell to be selected to participate in this year’s Nature Valley First Tee Open” said The First Tee of Phoenix Executive Director Kevin Terry. “They both are well deserving of this honor, are outstanding members of our chapter and will represent us with enthusiasm and integrity.”

For more information on Emma Lower or Mitchell McGuire, to request an interview or photos, please contact Jonathan Crist jcrist@commlinks.com or call 480-348-7540.

About The First Tee of Phoenix

First Tee of Phoenix is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created by The Thunderbirds in 2003 for the purpose of providing affordable access to golf and golf learning facilities for young people in Maricopa County from all walks of life, particularly those who otherwise might not have an opportunity to play. As one of the largest chapters in The First Tee Network impacting more than 100,000 youth annually, The First Tee of Phoenix offers classes, special monthly family events and tournaments as part of its programming. Additionally, The First Tee National School Program is now in eight Valley school districts which brings The First Tee Nine Core Values: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy, and judgment to local schools as well as The First Tee programming locations. Now with 13 locations in the Valley –

Legacy, Talking Stick, Desert Mirage, Papago, Falcon Dunes, Longbow, Lone Tree, Cave Creek, Encanto, Maryvale, Augila, Palm Valley and Augusta Ranch – The First Tee of Phoenix programming sites serve as conveniently located places for participants to learn valuable life skills and character-building lessons through creative activities and instructional programs that incorporate the fundamental teachings of golf. For more information on The First Tee of Phoenix call 602-305-7655, or log on to their website at www.thefirstteeofphoenix.org.

About The Thunderbirds

The Thunderbirds were founded in 1937 with the mission of promoting the Valley of the Sun through sports. Consisting of 55 “active” members and more than 250 “life” members, The Thunderbirds host the Waste Management Phoenix Open; the best-attended golf tournament in the world, which to date has raised more than \$100 million for Valley charities, including The First Tee of Phoenix. With its unmatched fan participation and rich history dating back more than 80 years, the Waste Management Phoenix Open has gained legendary status for being a unique stop on the PGA. To learn more about The Thunderbirds or Thunderbirds Charities visit <http://thunderbirdscharities.org/>