

A Caring Community Makes a Difference

Golfers, baseball players, musicians and more joined caring individuals from the Orlando area for the inaugural Give Kids The World Hope In One Celebrity Golf Classic this past May. The tournament was held at The Golden Bear Club at Keene's Pointe in Windermere, FL and included nearly 160 players who enjoyed a fun-filled day of golf, food and games.

The event, which was led, planned and executed by Keene's Pointe resident Stacey Sutherland—a Give Kids The World Board Member and Vice President of Corporate Communications and Brand Services for Holiday Inn Club Vacations® (the tournament's presenting sponsor)—raised \$236,000.

Stacey was proud to host the tournament at The Golden Bear Club, not only because it's a fantastic golf club within her very own neighborhood, but also because she had an entire community of caring neighbors willing to pitch in and make a difference for a great cause. A few of the celebrity golfers and a number of the event volunteers also call Keene's Pointe home.

The dedication of these committed volunteers was recognized by Give Kids The World President and CEO Pamela Landwirth, who hosted the group at the Village over the summer.

"The response to this very first tournament was incredible," Pamela said. "Stacey certainly set the bar high. And you all created the most amazing experience for those who played. It's events like this and people like you who make what we do every day possible."

Whether the volunteers had been to Give Kids The World before or were first-time visitors, they were grateful for the opportunity to witness families spending quality time together—and see how funds raised at events like Hope In One bring so much joy to others.

"Seeing the Village first-hand blew me away," Halima Stevenson said. "I'm so happy to have been part of an event that will help create wonderful experiences and bring some happiness to families."

Ericka Lankford, whose husband Ray is a former professional baseball player and was a celebrity golfer in the tournament, agrees.

"I've been to fundraising galas for Give Kids The World and provided other support, but today was my first visit," Ericka said. "Seeing the children truly enjoying themselves in such a special place was amazing. Being here makes me even more proud of the volunteers and community members who came together for this wonderful organization."

Giving back comes naturally to the Keene's Pointe volunteers. Many are involved in several charitable efforts—volunteering their time, donating funds and advocating for different causes. So when Stacey approached them with an opportunity to help, they jumped at the chance.

“As a mom and substitute teacher, I can't imagine anything I wouldn't do to help children,” Michelle Long said. “I've volunteered at the Village in the past and am just amazed at the spirit that exists here.”

Another one of the volunteers, Kat Papa, had previously helped with birthday parties at the Village. Having that connection, she was thrilled when Stacey asked her to volunteer for Hope In One. In fact, she's already thinking of “what more the community can do next year to help support the Village.”

And Kat's not the only one looking forward to next year. Kate Foley and her husband Sean, a PGA Tour coach and another of the celebrity golfers, were proud to help with this year's event and are excited for year two.

“I'm overwhelmed seeing families spending time together in a place they love,” Kate said. “And we want to help make more of those moments possible.”

That same sentiment was shared among those who supported the tournament, from local and national businesses to players and other extraordinary volunteers. And it's that level of commitment from all involved that will drive continued success.

“We had an overwhelming response to this cause and our first tournament,” Stacey said. “And with such a committed community behind us, we'll work to make this one of the premier celebrity golf events in Orlando.”

It's because of a caring community that next year's event is set to be a success and enable Give Kids The World to fulfill dreams for even more families.

Special thanks to the ladies of Hope In One:

Amy Ayela
Angela Derruthy
Anne Lovelock
Annette Songy-Castro
Ericka Lankford
Halima Stevenson
Jennifer Watson
Jennifer Wheeler
Joanna Tadich
Karla Gegg
Kat Papa
Kate Foley
Katya Demarigny
Kim Beattie
Kristen Larson
Lisa Milar
Mary Thayer
Mary-Ann DiSerafino
Melissa Setsma
Michelle Long
Pat Cohen
Rosa Saleta
Sharon Ainsley
Stacey Sutherland
Stella Freeman
Tiffany Homan
Tina Myers
Tracy Croft
Violet Rosenblit
Vonny Collison