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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**STRICT EMBARGO: 6 a.m. Wednesday, April 9, 2014**

*A news conference will be held Wednesday, April 9 at 10 a.m. at the Winagamie Golf Course clubhouse (3501 Winnegamie Drive, Neenah, Wis. 54956). A complete media kit can be found online: [www.appletoneducationfoundation.org/media-kit](http://www.appletoneducationfoundation.org/media-kit).*

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### **FOUNDATION RECEIVES GENEROUS GIFT OF GOLF COURSE**

Mary Beth Nienhaus, LPGA Master Lifetime Professional, has gifted Winagamie Golf Course, located in Town of Clayton, Wis., to the Appleton Education Foundation (AEF).

The gift of Winagamie, Inc., parent company of Winagamie Golf Course, finalized on Dec. 31, 2013, includes the 200-acre, 27-hole golf course, 35 acres of farmland and wetlands, the clubhouse, maintenance shed and other buildings, equipment, restaurant facilities and the course's liquid assets. The gift value is more than \$2.5 million.

Winagamie will continue to operate as a golf course as it has for more than 50 years. The driving range and 18 holes are open for the season. The remaining nine holes will open when weather permits.

The course was founded in 1962. Nienhaus has been the sole owner of Winagamie, Inc. since 1993 and a partner since 1972. Wisconsin's only LPGA Master Lifetime Professional, Nienhaus will continue to offer her time and talents at the course.

A graduate of Marquette University, Nienhaus was the school's first female student-athlete. She joined the men's golf team in 1965 after winning the Wisconsin Women's Public Links Golf Association Amateur Championship in 1963 and 1964. The first to represent Marquette in intercollegiate postseason play, she won two state amateur championships and was named Wisconsin Female Golfer of the Year in 1969.

A life-long resident of Appleton, Nienhaus taught physical education and coached for 28 years at Appleton West High School. During her tenure, Appleton West golf teams won four state championships. She is a member of numerous halls of fame and was named LPGA Coach of the Year in 1987 – the only high school coach to ever receive this honor.

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Giving back to others is nothing new for Nienhaus. Her off season is spent traveling the world for mission trips and volunteering locally for St. Elizabeth Hospital, Loaves and Fishes and her church.

She made one of the first major gifts to AEF in 1997 – \$200,000 – to renovate Goodland Field. Now named Nienhaus Sports Complex, it is home to the Appleton West High School Terrors baseball, softball and soccer teams. She also committed a matching gift of \$100,000 in 2011 to West’s Addition to Tradition campaign, which continues to raise funds to support improved physical education and sporting facilities at the school.

Winagamie Golf Course is home to one of the largest junior golf programs in the state. Funded by the Winagamie Golf Foundation, the Winagamie Junior Golf Academy teaches hundreds of students each summer and works in conjunction with nonprofits including the Boys and Girls Club, YMCA Fox Cities and others.

Nienhaus also has welcomed faculty and students in the golf course turf & equipment technician program at Fox Valley Technical College to use Winagamie Golf Course as a hands-on classroom.

“I made this gift to the AEF to give back to the community,” Nienhaus said. “I know the AEF board and staff share my vision of creating unique learning opportunities for generations to come. I am happy to continue my involvement at the course to see these educational collaborations take place.”

“The AEF is proud to be Mary Beth’s chosen organization to carry out her legacy,” said Julie Krause, AEF executive director. “A golf course owned by an education foundation to benefit local students is certainly a rarity, and we look forward to carrying out our mission of creatively enhancing education in our community through this gift.”

Winagamie Golf Course will continue to operate as a top-notch golf course, with a twist. True to Nienhaus’s life-long work in education, the course will be used as a hands-on, learning facility for hundreds of local students. The Appleton Area School District (AASD) and Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) both will build classes and curriculum that will be enhanced by real-life learning at the course. Disciplines that can be taught at the course include agriculture, hospitality, marketing, management and more. Some educators already have begun using Winagamie for educational endeavors. More classes will begin this summer and fall.

“This is a great opportunity for the school district to work with the AEF and Fox Valley Technical College to provide real-world learning experiences for our students. Winagamie will provide another opportunity for our students to extend learning beyond the classroom,” said Lee Allinger, superintendent of AASD.

“We know there is nothing more valuable than being able to apply the skills learned in our classrooms and labs in a real world setting. Students who participate in these programs will gain not only the technical skills necessary to succeed in a chosen career path, but will also gain valuable employability skills,” said Susan May, Fox Valley Technical College president.

Further educational opportunities with local school districts and higher ed institutions will be considered in the future. AEF, Winagamie, AASD and FVTC will work together to develop best practices before seeking additional partners.

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This announcement follows more than two years of discussion and preparation involving Nienhaus and Appleton Education Foundation board members, volunteers and staff. Countless hours have been invested to ensure the course's future success.

Winagamie Golf Course will operate as a separate taxable entity, owned by the AEF but governed by its own Board of Directors.

"The Board of Directors, which includes Mary Beth, will work with staff to continue the outstanding golf course operation and to develop extraordinary learning opportunities for the community. This is a new chapter for AEF and Winagamie Golf Course and we are excited to get started," Nancy Johnshoy, president of Winagamie, Inc., said. Johnshoy is also a board member of AEF and served on the special committee appointed by AEF to evaluate this opportunity.

Dan McGinn, an experienced PGA golf professional has been hired to manage the golf operations and to develop and coordinate the educational programming and activities at Winagamie.

McGinn has relocated to the Fox Valley from Muscatine, Iowa, where he served as the head golf professional for the Muscatine Municipal Golf Course.

"I appreciate this opportunity to be a part of the unique collaboration between Winagamie Golf Course and the educational community in the Fox Valley. Mary Beth has done an impressive job running Winagamie for many years, and I look forward to being a part of the organization," McGinn said.

Additional staff is in place for Winagamie to operate business-as-usual. A lease agreement with Sandy Shot Grill has also been arranged to continue the same food and beverage services offered for the last several seasons.

No funds from AEF will be used to operate Winagamie Golf Course. As the sole-shareholder, AEF expects to draw dividends from the course to support its mission and grant making opportunities.

The existing Winagamie Junior Golf Academy and Winagamie Golf Foundation will operate as they have since they began.

*The Appleton Education Foundation, a supporting organization of the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, has awarded more than \$3.2 million in grants since its founding in 1997. Grants provide accessible, flexible funding for creative and innovative programs not covered by the school budget. For more information or to make a gift, please call (920) 832-1517 or visit [www.appletoneducationfoundation.org](http://www.appletoneducationfoundation.org).*

*Founded in 1962, Winagamie Golf Course is considered one of the top courses in Wisconsin. It features an 18-hole championship course and 9-hole course perfect for juniors, seniors and beginners. Winagamie is home to the Winagamie Junior Golf Academy, which is supported by the Winagamie Golf Foundation. For more information or to schedule a tee time or book a golf outing, please call (920) 757-5453 or visit [www.winagamiegolf.com](http://www.winagamiegolf.com).*

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