

Contact :

LECOM Suncoast Classic – Justin Kristich 941-456-0734

NYI - SPCC Golf - Anthony Swinford 727-864-1595

NYI Publicity - Anthea Penrose 727-642-9123

Press Release :

April 30, 2024



LECOM Suncoast Classic Awards Exemption to St. Petersburg Country Club's 2025 New Year's Invitational Winner

Lakewood Ranch, FL - April 30, 2024 - The LECOM Suncoast Classic is proud to announce an exciting partnership with St. Petersburg Country Club's historic New Year's Invitational Golf Tournament. In a move aimed at fostering talent and rewarding excellence, the LECOM Suncoast Classic, a tournament on the Korn Ferry Tour, has awarded a highly sought-after exemption to the winner of The 99th New Year's Invitational, scheduled for play January 2 - 4, 2025 at St. Petersburg Country Club in St. Petersburg, Florida.

The prestigious New Year's Invitational Golf Tournament (NYI) is renowned for attracting top amateur golfers from around the globe. Former winners of this tournament include current PGA TOUR professionals Hayden Buckley, Brandt Snedeker, Luke List and JB Holmes; along with current Top-10 US ranked amateur Nick Gabrelcik. Recent winners in 2024 on the PGA TOUR are NYI alumni: Peter Malnati and Stephen Jaeger. Hayden Buckley won the NYI in both 2017 and 2018 before starting his professional career and winning the LECOM Suncoast Classic in 2021, touted as Buckley's first professional win.

Held for the last 98 consecutive years at the esteemed St. Petersburg Country Club, The New Year's Invitational showcases amateur golf's strongest talent. Now, in collaboration with the LECOM Suncoast Classic, the stakes are even higher for the victor: an opportunity to match skills with professional golfers on a Korn Ferry Tour stop. By granting an exemption to the winner of The NYI, the LECOM Suncoast Classic aims to recognize outstanding achievement in the amateur ranks and provides a pathway for deserving players to compete at the professional level. The recipient of the exemption will have the chance to compete alongside some of the best in the game of golf at the LECOM Suncoast Classic, scheduled to take place in April 2025, at Lakewood National Golf Club in Lakewood Ranch, Florida. This invaluable experience will not only allow the champion to showcase their skills on a professional stage but to also gain invaluable insights into the game of professional golf.

"The strength of our field has always been impressive," stated NYI Tournament Director Richard Hope, "but with this exemption and the chance as an amateur to tee it up against Korn Ferry tour professionals, will certainly add an incentive for many of the top college golfers to get their applications in early."

"This is an exciting new way to award an exemption to our tournament," stated LECOM Suncoast Classic Tournament Director Justin Kristich, "by having these players earn it through one of the longest standing and renowned amateur golf tournaments in the country. Miles Russell's performance this past week confirmed that up-and-coming amateurs are worthy competitors in our tournament. This also presents a great opportunity for the LECOM Suncoast Classic to increase its presence in the St. Petersburg and Tampa Bay area."

VISIT WWW.NEWEARSINVITATIONAL.COM TO LEARN MORE. TO APPLY FOR THE 2025 EVENT, PLAYERS SHOULD CONTACT SPCC HEAD GOLF PROFESSIONAL, ANTHONY SWINFORD AT ASWINFORD@STPETECOUNTRYCLUB.COM