



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POKAGON BAND OF POTAWATOMI AND ITS FOUR WINDS CASINOS HOST A MEDIA DAY FOR THE 2026 FOUR WINDS INVITATIONAL

Beacon Children's Hospital announced how the tournament proceeds will be used

SOUTH BEND, Ind. – May 20, 2026 – The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and its Four Winds® Casinos are pleased to announce that they hosted a media day today at Blackthorn Golf Club as part of the build up to the 2026 Four Winds Invitational. During the press conference Beacon Children's Hospital announced its plans to use proceeds from the tournament to implement the AngelEye MilkTracker system which utilizes an end-to-end feed management app for clinicians and parents, further strengthening its commitment to the safest possible care for infants and children.

"The Pokagon Band and our Four Winds Casinos are very proud of our longtime sponsorship of the Four Winds Invitational, which has generated close to \$1.2 million in proceeds for Beacon Health System and Beacon Children's Hospital over the last 14 years," said Matthew Wesaw, Chairman of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians of Michigan and Indiana. "We are looking forward to the 15th edition of the tournament this year and appreciate the continued support from the South Bend community."

Mary Smith, President and CEO of Four Winds Casinos added, "Including this year's purse of \$225,000, we have offered over \$2.1 million in prize money since we began hosting the Four Winds Invitational in 2012. Having the tournament proceeds go to Beacon Children's Hospital has made the Four Winds Invitational extra special not only for the players, but also everyone involved in supporting the tournament. We would like to thank the City of South Bend, our sponsors, vendors, volunteers, team members, as well as our partners, the LPGA's Epson Tour, and Blackthorn Golf Club."

City of South Bend Mayor James Mueller said, "The City of South Bend is grateful for the government-to-government partnership with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi in advancing our regional economy and supporting important community resources like Beacon Children's Hospital, which ensures families and children get access to the care they need. Our community looks forward to hosting another great Four Winds Invitational this year."

Tim Firestone, CEO of Blackthorn Operating Group added, "Blackthorn Golf Club is excited for the return of the Four Winds Invitational to our award-winning golf course, which has been consistently awarded as the best in the area. We were the original host of the tournament at its inception fifteen years ago and are ready to challenge the incoming field of talented Epson Tour players with our par 72, 7136-yard layout."

Jen Tonkovich, Director of Women and Children's Services for Beacon Health System said, "We would like to thank the Pokagon Band, its Four Winds Casinos, Blackthorn Golf Club, as well as all the sponsors and donors from the South Bend community for their continued generous support over the years. This year's contribution will further enhance our portfolio of life saving and maternal care equipment. The AngelEye MilkTracker system helps clinicians manage human milk and formula with the peace of mind while engaging parents in the feeding process and supporting their breastfeeding goals."

The Four Winds Invitational is part of the Epson Tour, which entered its 46th year of structured competition in 2026 and is the most established women's qualifying tour in the world as the one "Road to the LPGA." The tournament will take place from Friday, July 10 through Sunday, July 12 at Blackthorn Golf Club. Volunteers are needed to fill a variety of roles including assisting with scoring duties and serving as building attendants, caddies, cart drivers, driving range attendants, food and beverage servers, marshals and spotters, parking attendants, standard bearers, shuttle drivers, and more. For more information and to complete the volunteer application, please visit <http://fourwindsinvitational.com/volunteer/>.

For questions regarding volunteer opportunities, please contact Cathy Wallisch, Four Winds Invitational Volunteer Coordinator at cathy@blackthorngolf.com.

About the Four Winds Invitational

The Four Winds® Invitational was established in 2012 as part of the Road to the LPGA® and is sponsored by the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and its Four Winds® Casinos. The tournament features a field of professional women golfers from around the world. More information is available at: <http://fourwindsinvitational.com/>.

About The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians of Michigan and Indiana

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi's sovereignty was reaffirmed under legislation signed into law by President Clinton in September of 1994. The Pokagon Band is dedicated to providing community development initiatives such as housing, education, family services, medical care, and cultural preservation for its more than 6,400 citizens. The Pokagon Band's ten-county service area includes four counties in Southwestern Michigan and six in Northern Indiana. Its main administrative offices are located in Dowagiac, Mich., with a satellite office in South Bend, Ind. In 2007, it opened Four Winds Casino Resort in New Buffalo, Mich., followed by Four Winds Hartford in 2011, Four Winds Dowagiac in 2013 and Four Winds South Bend in 2018. The Pokagon Band operates a variety of non-gaming businesses through its investment enterprises, Mno-Bmadsen and the Pokagon Development Authority. More information is available at www.pokagonband-nsn.gov, www.fourwindscasino.com and www.mno-bmadsen.com.

About the Epson Tour

The Epson Tour is the Official Qualifying Tour of the LPGA and enters its 46th competitive season in 2026. With the support of entitlement partner [Seiko Epson Corporation](http://SeikoEpsonCorporation), the Tour's mission is to prepare the world's best female professional golfers for a successful career on the LPGA Tour. In the last decade, the Epson Tour has grown from 15 tournaments and \$1.6 million in prize money to \$5 million awarded across 20 events in 2025. In all, over 400 LPGA Tour titles have been won by Epson Tour

alumni, including over 50 major championships. Follow the Epson Tour at www.epsontour.com, as well as [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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