

Culverhouse's Challenge Results In More Than \$1 Million In Support Of Crimson Tide Women's Golf Scholarships

In February, Hugh Culverhouse, Jr., donated \$250,000 to endow a women's golf scholarship at The University of Alabama in honor of his mother, Joy McCann Culverhouse, who starred at Alabama in the early 1940s. But Culverhouse's generosity did not stop there. At the time of his original pledge, Culverhouse issued a challenge to other supporters: he would double his donation to the program (an additional \$250,000) if others would respond to his gesture by donating gifts of their own totaling \$500,000.

Just six months later, Culverhouse's challenge has not only been met but exceeded. The resulting gifts and pledges total more than \$510,000 in support of scholarships for the Crimson Tide's women's golf program. Subsequent to Mr. Culverhouse's original \$250,000 donation, several Alabama supporters answered the call and accepted the challenge, providing those additional gifts and pledges.

"Every journey starts with the first step, and Hugh has certainly provided us with a big step," said Bill Battle, Director of Athletics at The University of Alabama. "Our journey to endow all of our athletics scholarships will be a long one, but we are off to a great start due to the generosity of these outstanding supporters of our athletics program. The tremendous commitment of our donors is proof positive that our larger goal of endowing all athletics scholarships is not only necessary, but also attainable."

"As a young boy, I learned so many good life lessons from shagging golf balls while my mother prepared for tournaments and watching her determination as she played," said Culverhouse. "Whether she won a match or lost, she was always a lady. Of course, if she lost, I spent a lot more time shagging those golf balls! Her work ethic was amazing, and it lives within me to this day. I can say, without any doubt, that work ethic has led to whatever personal success I have had. I would like Joy McCann Culverhouse to represent a high standard at the place that deserves it, and for a program that has earned it - the University of Alabama Women's Golf Team."

With the challenge met, Culverhouse matched his original gift with an additional \$250,000 donation, moving his personal contribution to \$500,000 and sending the total past the \$1 million mark. With these donations, the Crimson Tide Foundation has now raised more than \$25.6 million since 2010 specifically for endowed scholarships.

"I am very thankful for the opportunity to be able to honor my mother in this way," Culverhouse said. "In particular, I want to thank Bill Battle, Sam Branch (Sr. Associate Athletics Director for Development), Mic Potter (UA women's golf coach) and, especially, those who accepted the challenge and matched my original donation. It's a fitting way to honor Joy, and a tremendous example of the difference we can make."

Mr. Culverhouse's effort, and the corresponding generosity inspired by it, is the latest in a series of giving examples over the last several years that are part of a larger campaign to eventually endow every athletics scholarship at Alabama. The Crimson Tide Foundation has set a goal of raising \$100 million for endowed scholarships with the knowledge that the ultimate cost of fully endowing every athletics scholarship likely will exceed \$300 million.

"First of all, what has come to my attention throughout this process is what Joy McCann Culverhouse has meant to the women's golf program at the University of Alabama," said Mic Potter, Alabama head women's golf coach. "Clearly, she had a great career in amateur golf. I was somewhat aware of her accomplishments before but, since Hugh has come forward with such generosity, it has been nice to be able to trace

back that history and tradition by getting to know the Culverhouse family. I am also thankful for the other donations we have received. Nothing warms a coach's heart more than to get your program's scholarships fully endowed. Hugh had a vision, not only for athletics success, but academic success as well, and he has stepped forward with this program. I can't thank him enough for his loyalty and generosity."

The catalyst for the fundraising effort was the inspirational example set by Culverhouse's mother, Joy McCann Culverhouse, who claimed two Alabama women's state championships (1941 and 1947) and the 1961 Florida women's amateur title. McCann Culverhouse, who celebrated her 95th birthday in March of 2015, set a standard of excellence in competition that has served as the benchmark for achievement in Alabama's storied women's golf program, which won the NCAA Championship in 2012 under Potter's leadership.

McCann Culverhouse led the way for the Crimson Tide women's golf program to achieve full recognition as a varsity team prior to the 1974-75 season, creating opportunities for some of the game's greats to wear the crimson and white including Martha Jones Lang, Peggy Kirsch, Judi Schneider, Kathryn Cusick, Jenny Suh, Kathleen Ekey, Camilla Lennarth, Brooke Pancake, Jennifer Kirby, 2012 Ladies British Amateur champion Stephanie Meadow and current Crimson Tide golfer Emma Talley, the 2015 NCAA medalist and 2013 United States Amateur champion.

McCann Culverhouse began her collegiate career at LSU, becoming one of the first women granted a partial scholarship for athletics and playing as the ninth player on LSU's men's team. She transferred to Alabama to continue her golfing career, was a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority, secretary of the senior class and a member of Pan Hellenic. Finishing her coursework at the Capstone in 1942, earning a degree in arts and sciences, McCann Culverhouse went on to win 27 championships during her golfing career. In 1997, the Florida House of Representatives passed a resolution in recognition of her numerous contributions to the advancement of women.

Alabama women's golfer Lakareber Abe became the first recipient of the Joy McCann Culverhouse scholarship earlier this year. Abe had an outstanding rookie season as a freshman in 2015 as she earned Southeastern Conference All-Freshman team honors, becoming only the seventh player in program history to achieve the feat. She played in 10 tournaments throughout last season, five of which resulted in top-20 finishes. Abe finished the season second on the team with a 75.03 scoring average, while 27 of her 31 rounds counted toward the team score.

"Lakareber Abe is an outstanding person to represent our program with the first Culverhouse scholarship," Potter said. "She has been great in the classroom and great on the golf course, and is a terrific representative on what the Alabama women's golf program is all about."

The Athletic Department at the University of Alabama is self-sufficient. Private support through the Crimson Tide Foundation enables UA athletics to increase its standing, in both athletics and academics, over competing universities beyond what can be accomplished with annual revenue from ticket sales, media rights and other licensing agreements.

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