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# USGA/Chevron Partnership Supports Field Trip Programs in Northern California

## First Green-Innovative STEM Program Brings Youth to the Golf Course

April 2, 2013. As people in the golf industry work to stem the decline in players, a group called First Green is bringing youth to golf courses, giving many of them a positive introduction to the game. The Pacific Northwest-based First Green is innovative in that it accomplishes this through science—by using golf courses as learning labs.

### How does it work?

First Green has created training and resources to assist golf superintendents in hosting schools on their local courses. Teachers and students make field trips to the course where they perform hands-on experiments and tests, all within the focus of their school's environmental science and/or horticulture curricula.

In these outdoor “labs” students test water quality, collect soil samples, identify plants, do math activities and work with local issues such as stream-bed or owl-nest restoration.

First Green also emphasizes the environmental and community benefits of golf courses, while introducing potential new golfers to

the game in a fun, educational manner.

The learning labs are based on what the superintendent does as part of his golf course management regimen. First Green has linked these activities to the curriculum in the classroom, allowing the learning labs to offer schools “real-world” learning experiences. These STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) labs enhance what the schools provide within the classroom.

### How Can You Get Started With Field Trips?

First Green has just been awarded a one-year STEM grant of \$100,000 by the United States Golf Association (USGA). The grant funds the development of informational training videos and field trip resource kits that will be made available to golf course superintendents who schedule field trips on their facilities.

The grant also funds First Green workshop programs in Northern California to review the field trip resources and talk about starting local golf course/school connections.

May 30 is the first opportunity for you to experience a First



Green field trip and start planning for your own local program. See the workshop information below.

A tax-exempt nonprofit, First Green was founded in the State of Washington in 1997 and is expanding nationally. For more information about First Green, see <http://thefirstgreen.org>. Be sure to take a look at the Power Point field trip overview.



### Registration Open for Free First Green Workshop

You can observe a field trip on May 30. This will be a fun event and a great way to see First Green in action. Superintendents, club members and association members are all invited. You will also be able to see the field trip resource kit and talk about the potential of a field trip at your own golf course.

#### Location:

Metropolitan Golf Links: 10051 Doolittle Dr., Oakland, CA 94603

#### When:

May 30 from 10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

The actual field trip will be from 10:30 to 12 noon. Afterwards, First Green will host a lunch and brief informational workshop (12:00–1:30 p.m.) that will explain how you can get started at your own golf course.

Register on the First Green website at <http://thefirstgreen.org>.



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## From the Field

By **JEFF JENSEN**, GCSAA Field Staff, Southwest Region

The 2013 Rounds 4 Research auction is right around the corner and we still are in need of donations from Northern California golf facilities. The first auction is scheduled for June 6-16 in conjunction with the U.S. Open and the second auction is scheduled for Aug. 1-11 revolving around the PGA Championship.

As you may be aware, the Rounds 4 Research program was designed to address a critical shortage in turfgrass research funding by auctioning donated rounds of golf online. The program is administered by the Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG) and presented in partnership with Toro. EIFG is the philanthropic organization of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Rounds 4 Research allows GCSAA chapters and turfgrass foundations to participate as fundraising partners with the 80% of proceeds from the auctioned rounds going back to those organizations. In this way, these organizations can direct the proceeds to specific projects that will have the most significant impact in their local areas. The remaining 20% of proceeds go to operating costs involved with the management and marketing of the program. In addition to research, chapters may use funds for advocacy, education, scholarships and environmental programs.

Biddingforgood.com is online auction platform assisting Rounds 4 Research. Biddingforgood.com has a database of 650,000 active users. In addition to the marketing assistance being provided by the USGA and PGA of America, Rounds 4 Research is being pro-

moted through social media, press releases and various allied golf organizations with a specific focus on state golf associations who have the most direct access to golfers.

To donate a round, please visit [www.rounds4research.com](http://www.rounds4research.com) and click on the donate button in the upper right hand corner. Fill out the facility, contact, donation information, description, redemption and proceeds blocks. Make sure to indicate the chapter or foundation you want the funds to go to. You may also put restrictions on the rounds in this area including days, times, attire, etc. Download a course photo and logo and then send in a certificate to EIFG or they can create one for you.

The entire process takes approximately 10 minutes and you will be assisting your chapter in raising funds for important research and education.



[www.rounds4research.com](http://www.rounds4research.com)

If you have any questions concerning the program, please don't hesitate to contact me at [jjensen@gcsaa.org](mailto:jjensen@gcsaa.org) or follow me on Twitter @GCSAA\_SW. Enjoy the great spring weather and I hope to see you at an upcoming event.

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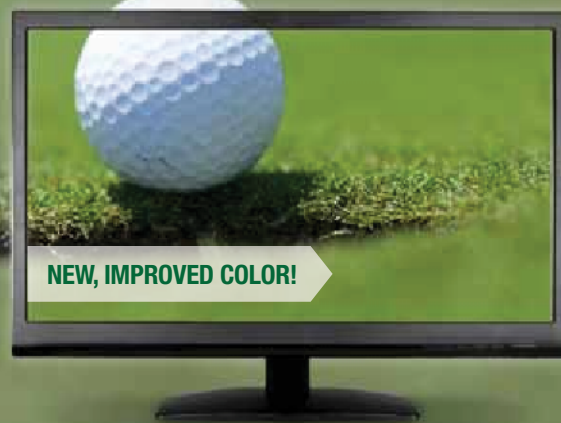
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