



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Golfing great to visit Stetson University to discuss ‘Breaking Down Racial Barriers’**

**DeLand** – Golfing great Renee Powell, one of only three African-Americans to have played on the Ladies Professional Golf Association’s (LPGA) Tour, will share the story of her family’s role in making golf more accessible to people of all races in a forum at Stetson University on Monday, March 22.

“The Clearview Legacy: Breaking Down Racial Barriers Through Golf,” will focus on how Powell’s father, the late William Powell, quietly and successfully broke down racial barriers beginning in 1948 by building the Clearview Golf Club in East Canton, Ohio, and opening it to all, and how his legacy has been extended – both on and off the golf course – through the work of the Clearview Legacy Foundation.

The forum, which also will feature Clearview Legacy Foundation President Obie Bender, will be held 3 to 4:30 p.m. in the Rinker Auditorium of the Lynn Business Center, 345 N. Woodland Blvd. Sponsored by Stetson’s Sport Management program, it is free and open to the public.

As both an LPGA and PGA professional, Renee Powell was a pioneer for minorities in the game of golf. She grew up with the sport, serving as captain of the Ohio State University Ladies Golf Team before joining the LPGA Tour in 1967, in the midst of civil rights unrest in the United States.

Powell’s father had formed the first golf team at historically black Wilberforce University in 1937 and after college attempted to continue playing golf, but found it difficult to because most courses had an “all-white” policy. That led him to design and build his own course on the dairy farm he owned. Clearview Golf Club is still the only African-American designed, constructed and managed golf course in the nation.

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While Powell never won an LPGA tour event during her 13 years on the tour, she had a tremendous impact on the game of golf. By the time she played her final event, the 1980 Rail Charity Classic, where she recorded a hole-in-one on the second hole, Powell had been one of the top golfers on the tour and had won numerous tournaments outside of the league such as the Kelly Springfield Australian Open.

As a golf ambassador, she traveled the world, bringing golf to women in Africa and teaching the game to women in Japan, Australia, Morocco, Spain and England. Powell has received many honors from the world of golf. However, her achievements and awards transcend the world of golf and reflect, like her father, broader issues of human rights, racial and gender equality for all. She has promoted golf for women in historic black colleges and for youth. In 1995, the Renee Powell Youth Golf Camp Cadre Program was launched to give inner-city junior high school students an opportunity to learn to play the game of golf. Today, she is a site director for LPGA-USGA Girls Golf program at Clearview and continues to operate the Clearview Golf Club as head golf professional along with her brother Larry, who is the course superintendent.

In 2008, she became the first female professional golfer to be conferred with an honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland for her life's work as an ambassador of golf and building diversity in the game.

“William Powell, who passed away in December at 93, built and owned a golf course when there were incredible racial barriers in our country and in golf,” said Betsy Clark, former vice president of Professional Development for the LPGA, who teaches sport ethics in Stetson's Sport Management program, “He and Renee have given all of us a ‘clear view’ about life and inclusion on and off the golf course. Their work continues today through the Clearview Legacy Foundation. We are honored to have Renee Powell and the foundation's president, Obie Bender, visit Stetson University.”

*Founded in 1883, [Stetson University](#) in Central Florida is an independent university in the liberal arts tradition. The College of Arts & Sciences, School of Business Administration and School of Music are at the historic campus in DeLand, between Orlando and Daytona Beach. The Stetson [College of Law](#) is in Gulfport/St. Petersburg. The university also includes two satellite centers: the Stetson University [Center at Celebration](#), near Orlando, and the Tampa Law Center in downtown Tampa. Follow Stetson on [WordPress](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) and [YouTube](#). More information: [Office of Public Relations and Communications](#), 386-822-8920.*