More than $1.7 million raised during U.S. Venture Open charity golf outing
By Ricardo Arguello

HOLLANDTOWN — More than 200 volunteers helped organize the U.S. Venture Open charity golf event held Wednesday.

There also were more than 350 corporate, family and foundation partners contributing, as well as 720 golfers hitting various courses throughout northeast Wisconsin.

But the biggest number was also the most vital: the $1.7 million that was raised to provide funds for the Basic Needs Giving Partnership.

The charity golf event, now in its 26th year, was played at Oneida Golf and Country Club (Green Bay), Fox Valley Golf Club (Kaukauna), Mid Vallee Golf Course (De Pere), North Shore Golf Club (Menasha) and Wander Springs (Greenleaf).

"We're absolutely thrilled," U.S. Venture Open director Sarah Schmidt said. "We just want to thank everybody that came out for the event."

A banquet at Van Abel's was attended by more than 800 late Wednesday evening.

Guest speaker Lance Armstrong, a seven-time winner at the Tour de France, kept the crowd captivated with his inspirational story of overcoming testicular cancer.

"I think that it adds a buzz and a people focus on it and pays attention to a guy like Lance Armstrong, who has done such incredible things with his life and is so charitably inclined," Schmidt said.

Armstrong's perseverance struck a chord with Green Bay's Mark Koenig.

"I think Lance kind of stands for overcoming adversity," Koenig said. "And once you achieve that, it's about giving back to the people that have helped you out."

Another banner day for U.S. Venture Open

Funds raised in the past 10 years
2011: $1,785,000
2010: $2,127,800
2009: $1,452,000
2008: $1,253,000
2007: $1,000,000
2006: $744,600
2005: $622,000
2004: $542,425
2003: $468,442
2002: $486,623