

Tilly Garfoot – 2021 Alumni

Last summer I finished my A-levels at Spalding High School, receiving pleasing results in maths, geography and PE. Having taken up golf at a very early age, it has been a huge part of my life and I have been lucky enough to visit some amazing places in the UK and beyond as part of competing. After leaving sixth form, I decided that I would work towards achieving my dream of studying and playing golf at an American University, and this dream has recently come true, having signed to attend the University of Memphis as of August 2022.

From the age of 14 to 18, I was part of the East Midlands Girls Regional Golf Squad, and this is where I first discovered the opportunities that American Universities offer within sport. So in March 2021, I decided to sign up with a recruitment agency, to help me find the right university for me. I spoke to more than 10 universities and this helped me to gain an idea of what my priorities were with regards to what I wanted a university to have to suit me. The University of Memphis was the last university I spoke to and having ticked so many boxes, I committed to attend there in December. I was also lucky enough to be offered a full scholarship and I will study there for 4 years. I intend to earn a degree in Health Studies – Exercise, Sport and Movement Concentration, and will also represent the university's women's golf team, who I will train with daily and compete across the country with.

Since leaving SHS in May 2021, I have spent my gap year working in a local golf pro shop, and playing lots of competitive golf, especially in the summer. In November 2021, I played in the Sky Sports Junior European Open Final in Spain, having qualified a year earlier. This was a great experience and I was very pleased to finish in 7th place out of 40 girls. Taking a gap year has enabled me to spend time on finding the right next steps for me and has allowed me to earn some money, which will help me out when I get to America!

I feel very grateful that I have been able to take such a great opportunity of studying abroad, and I hope that it will open some doors for me and my career path, as well as enriching my experiences from living in and learning a new culture.