

## Family Play

**P**ersistence is a characteristic that we have been teaching our kids at First Tee – Connecticut for over 20 years. In 2020, we quickly realized that persistence was something our staff and all our coaches would **need** to overcome the various challenges that came our way! We had to pivot quickly and try to turn negatives into positives. The government mandates around COVID-19 prevented us from having a spring session of classes so our beautiful facility was going unused. As soon as the State of Connecticut slowly started to open, we decided that even though we couldn't have in-person lessons yet, we could put our four-hole golf course to great use! We expanded our Sunday only Open Play into what we are now calling "Family Play." With Open Play, our families could show up at the Karl Krapek Family Learning Links in Cromwell on Sundays between 8 AM and Noon and play our course (no reservations needed). With Family Play, tee times were required, so we could maintain social distancing between each foursome that signed up to play.

On May 20th, we opened our course and provided our First Tee families with the opportunity to book tee times five days a week! Despite the resumption of group lessons in the summer, along with our Summer Camp, we were still able to offer Family Play three days a week. Family Play has been a GREAT success. Since May, nearly 900 people have used our course and we won't be closing the Learning Links until the end of October. To this point in the year, our numbers reflect a nearly 100% increase in the use of our course in any of the past three years!

The feedback has been fantastic! **William Gilyard of Wethersfield** has been enjoying Family Play with his father-in-law, wife and their two



The Gilyard Family

sons. "We can play with our entire family which is great," Gilyard said. He continued, "It is a great way to get exercise with the kids and the course is perfect for us beginning golfers!" Gilyard went on to say that especially during this time of COVID they have really enjoyed the individual aspect of the game. He said that the mental aspect of the game is difficult, but he feels that it is helping their boys think about remaining disciplined, quieting their minds and improving their focus. Gilyard added, "the staff is amazingly friendly and helpful. They take the time to not only engage with the adults but most importantly engage with the kids."

**The Stevenson family of Glastonbury** have also loved participating in Family Play. "My boys Eli, Ollie and Charlie are 7, 5, and 3 and Sunday mornings have been a special time when we can all golf together," said Eric Stevenson. Stevenson continued, "it has been a great chance for us to do something together where the kids can learn and also encourage one another." Stevenson noticed that by going every week, his boys have been able to get more used to playing and it's spawned plenty of

practicing in their yard. "We have had some quite exciting moments - capped off by my 5-year old holing out from 15 yards off the green!" Stevenson said, "What I appreciate so much as a parent is how easy, convenient, and valuable the family play is. We get our money's worth and then some by being able to participate weekly. We all look forward to it every week!"



The Stevenson Family



# Wrapping up 2020

A message from Mark Moriarty, Executive Director

Like so many rounds of golf, 2020 has been filled with some missed putts, balls in the water and even a double or triple bogey. COVID-19 has impacted all of us, and First Tee – Connecticut is no exception. I first want to take this opportunity to wish everyone in our chapter community good health and to share how thankful we are for your continued support of and participation with us.

More than ever, I have found myself focusing on the positives in life and so let's recap the good that the 2020 golf season has provided to our First Tee – Connecticut family...

Virtual Learning allowed us to stay in touch with existing participants while also introducing new participants to our programs from the safety of their homes in April, May and June. Virtual Learning has even allowed us to continue partnerships with many of our community partners this summer and fall in places where camps and programs were not running like usual. These virtual lessons have over 6,000 views!

Family Play at the Karl Krapek Family Learning Links in Cromwell allowed us to engage participants and their families in a safe, outdoor activity beginning with Phase 1 reopening in late May. That program continues, through the end of October, three days per week and to date we have had nearly 900 rounds played by families from all across the state!

Programs in the summer and fall ran at capacity, albeit reduced from past years. Special thanks to our coaches, volunteers and facility operators for their extra effort to maintain social distance, ensure a safe environment and for going the extra mile to the benefit of the young people who attended.

We continue to be supported by our incredible donors during these difficult



times. Thank you for your belief in the work we do and for your willingness to be part of our community.

In September First Tee launched a refreshed brand. We believe the game of golf is the perfect platform for personal growth and are excited to continue creating experiences that build character to empower kids through a lifetime of new challenges and continuous learning.

With interest in golf on the rise, the National Golf Foundation suggests there is evidence the number of junior golfers (ages 6-17) could swell by as much as 20% (or a half a million kids!) this year. There is an incredible opportunity for First Tee – Connecticut to continue creating active learning experiences that build inner strength, self-confidence and resilience that kids can apply to everything they do.

As we continue working towards a more inclusive and welcoming future for all young people, I am particularly proud of one lesson that participants are introduced to at the PLAYer Level – Respect for Yourself, Respect for Others and Respect for Your Surroundings.

Here's to more pars and birdies, good health and more respect for one another in the future.

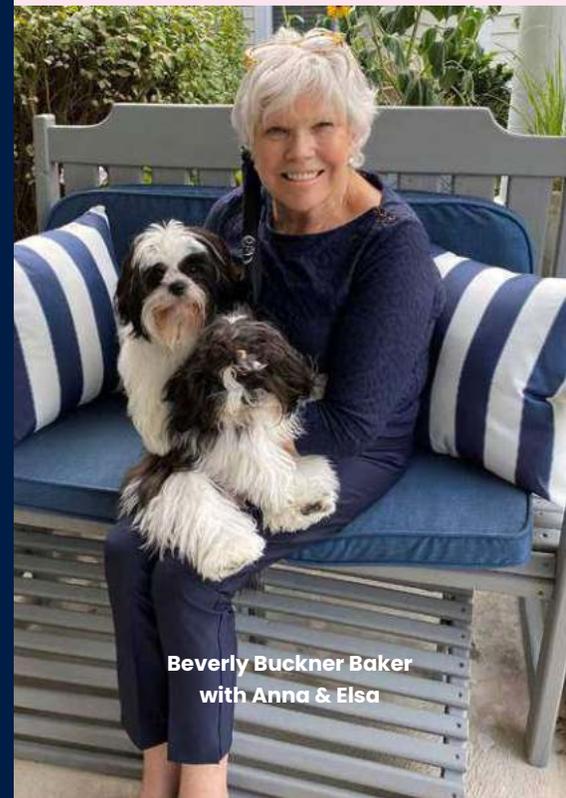
<https://www.thengfq.com/covid-19/#participation>

# A Lasting Legacy

Not being a golfer until later in life did not afford me a good golf game, but once introduced to the game I realized its many facets, along with my assets and my shortcomings (both physically and mentally) through this wonderful crazy game.

I don't know exactly when I first heard about First Tee – Connecticut, but I know that board members Gary Reynolds and David Polk were informative. Gary told me that children learned to look at each other in the eye, tip their cap and congratulated each other when they had a par on a hole. How unique, I thought. He told me they learned core values, and I am sure I just nodded, but he certainly gave me pause to find out more.

David Polk generously supplied the Women's Golf League with tickets and passes for the Travelers Championship Ladies Day, that included a luncheon and guest speaker and an invite to visit the Cromwell headquarters of the First Tee – Connecticut facility. A group of us, escorted by our then Head Golf Professional Joe Connerton attended



Beverly Buckner Baker  
with Anna & Elsa

the event. After our luncheon, we headed across the street where David met all of us and I was then formally introduced to First Tee – Connecticut. We met staff members and toured the facility. David and I talked for quite some time and during that conversation I learned that First Tee is not just about the game of golf for children from the ages of 5-18 but the development of life skills through 9 Core Values: Honesty, Integrity, Sportsmanship, Respect, Confidence, Responsibility, Perseverance and Judgment. I looked David in the eye and told him that I was never a mother and without missing a beat, his retort was that I could be a mother to many.

As we journey on our individual roads some things just do truly touch our inner being. I visited First Tee – Connecticut on Sunday's, saw the children in action, volunteered at a girl's event and I learned about real dedication and what it truly means to be involved. I have had the privilege of volunteering at the Travelers Championship Tournament with a First Tee – Connecticut group, thanking friends for being supportive and most of all I learned what my passion at this point of my life is.

In 2014, way before I became a board member, I chose to make First Tee part of my legacy. It had become that important and I want this organization to move forward and know that I could be part of its continuance. Since then I was invited and joined the board in 2018. This has brought me one of the greatest opportunities of my life in meeting the most compassionate, knowledgeable and caring Board of Directors with whom I proudly serve, and with a staff that is totally dedicated on every level. We are devoted to do our part in building good citizens, to reach out to schools and families, and to be part of each and every community. We enjoy, comfort, and care about each other and we do pass it forward. I was brought up to be helpful; my career in finance gave me the opportunity to be there for others and I want my legacy to reflect my life's values. **Thank you, First Tee – Connecticut.**

## Same Mission, New Look for First Tee – Connecticut

**W**e are revitalizing the brand to better serve kids in the world they live in today.

**First Tee – Connecticut** has updated its brand to better serve kids and address the growing pressures they face.

**First Tee – Connecticut** is part of a network of 150 chapters and is undergoing a brand refresh for the first time in the organization's 23-year history.

"**First Tee – Connecticut** has always been about helping kids navigate challenges, and to grow stronger as they move through them," said Director of Development, Christy Miller. "We still believe the game of golf is the perfect platform for personal growth. We are excited to bring forward a powerful mission and a modern look and feel to everything we do."

The brand evolution is grounded in research and insights from key stakeholders and is an updated reflection of First Tee's promise to help empower kids to build their strength of character.

The brand evolution includes a new logo, which is a metaphor for the

growth guidance at the heart of First Tee. The changes include removing "The" from the organization's name, updated colors and patterns, and a refreshed brand story. First Tee released a new PSA on Sept. 4, which brings to life the new brand and reignites interest in its mission. (You can view this PSA on all our social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.)

For 21 years, **First Tee – Connecticut** has been creating experiences that build character to empower kids through a lifetime of new challenges and continuous personal growth. By seamlessly integrating the game of golf with a life skills curriculum, **First Tee – Connecticut** creates active learning experiences that build inner strength, self-confidence and resilience that kids can carry to everything they do. These character education programs are offered at 22 golf courses, 162 schools and 15 youth centers across the state.

**For more information on First Tee – Connecticut, visit [firstteeconnecticut.org](http://firstteeconnecticut.org).**

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

We recently invited Dr. Michael Cooper, a member of the We Are Golf Diversity Task Force, to host a Virtual Town Hall for our chapter's board, staff, coaches and volunteers to engage in discussion about social injustice and how our organization can play a role in creating positive change.

Our programs bring together young people all over the state, and we aim to empower them as "game changers" when they apply the life lessons they learn during their golf experiences.

We appreciate Dr. Cooper's



insights, as he has served the golf industry for over 30 years, advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion in the game and the broader golf industry. We also thank our local leaders of this session: Henry Moniz (Board Member), Jon Wilson (Coach) and Sadie

Martinez (Alumna and Coach). We encourage you to explore these helpful resources on related topics:

- [WeAreGolf.org](http://WeAreGolf.org)
- [RiseToWin.org](http://RiseToWin.org) (Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality)

# Making the News

As Beyoncé once sang – “Who runs the world? **Girls!!**” This segment of “Making the News” features three of our First Tee – Connecticut female rock stars who are making a difference in their communities and leading the way for the girls who come next.

**Selam Olson of New Haven, CT** was a grand prize winner in the LPGA-USGA Girl’s Golf / Diamond Resorts national essay contest which was open to Girls Golf members across the nation. Selam was asked to write an essay on “What Drives You?” tying in with the LPGA’s new Drive On Campaign. Selam wrote that she is driven by anyone who tells her she “can’t” do something. At only 13, Selam has dealt with and overcome many obstacles already in life including being adopted from Ethiopia, needing to learn English and fighting an immune disorder. Selam’s work ethic

and determination separate her from the rest; she’s already become a great skater and serious golfer and she’s just getting started. She recently began her Freshman year at Choate Rosemary Hall in Wallingford.

As a grand prize winner, Selam was flown to Orlando, Florida in January 2020 for the Diamond Resorts Tournament of Champions. The prize included a two night’s stay for Selam and a guest. Selam got to participate in a Girls Golf Clinic and she got to go inside-the-ropes during the event.

“The experience I had at Diamond Resorts Drive On For The Future is one I will remember for a long time,” Selam said. “From going inside-the-ropes with LPGA professional Jasmine Suwanpura and seeing up close how tournaments work to making some friends that I’m still in touch with, each moment was memorable.” Selam encouraged other girls, “If they provide this program

again, I strongly encourage girls to apply. Thank you, First Tee for providing Girls Golf!”

**Meghna Mazumdar of South Windsor** was recently named a Semi-Finalist in First Tee’s Coca-Cola America’s Future participant event. Coca-Cola has partnered with First Tee to offer an exciting program for First Tee participants to explore the inner workings of the beverage industry and the academic and career fields associated with its world-wide business. The five semi-finalists will engage in a customized guided tour at Coca-Cola Headquarters in Atlanta, GA, experience networking opportunities with a young professional panel, receive a VIP experience at the PGA TOUR Championship and have a chance to visit attractions in the heart of downtown Atlanta. (Due to COVID-19, the visit is postponed until 2021). The winner will receive a \$5,000 scholarship and the four remaining runners up will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

As part of the application process Meghna had to answer several questions. One question asked Meghna to address how First Tee has equipped her to take on new experiences and challenges. Here is a part of her answer to this question:

“I always refer to First Tee as my extended family because it truly is. Having been a participant of First Tee for more than half my life, the people I continue to interact with have seen me grow from a waist-high, shy girl who had no idea about the sport, to a confident young woman well equipped with the skills to “take on the world”! Through First Tee, I’ve not only learned the rules of the game of golf and developed my skills as a player, but I have also learned much about the rules of life and how many of the skills that can help me on the course, translate into the “real world”. I learned how to “meet and greet” people by approaching them with a smile, strong handshake, and good eye contact. I also learned how the Nine Core Values permeated the sport but also how those same values and concepts help you to be a better

**SELAM OLSON, 13**

LPGA\*USGA Girls Golf of Cromwell, CT @ The First Tee

**Favorite LPGA Player:**  
*Brooke Henderson*

**Favorite Celebrity:**  
*Alfonso Ribeiro*

Girls GOLF  
LPGA \* USGA

#DIAMONDLPGA

CARIBBEAN SOL  
NATURAL SUN & SKIN CARE



Meghna Mazumdar

person in everyday life.”

As she enters her Senior year at South Windsor High School, make sure you watch out for Meghna. This young woman is a trail blazer!

**Sadie Martinez of Hartford, CT** has done it all at First Tee – Connecticut! She started off as her brother's younger sidekick, tagging along with him to lessons before she was old enough to officially participate. Then she became a participant for many, many years. Next, she transitioned to be a volunteer and finally a coach. She's worn many different hats for First Tee – including as a spokesperson and one of the most amazing examples of what our nine core values are all about! But Sadie didn't stop there. Sadie and one of her high school friends (Alejandro Tobon) created a golf league called The Millennial Slicers of Greater Hartford. One a long-time golfer, the other new to the game – the purpose of the league was to target a diverse group of millennials in the Greater Hartford area through the game of golf. Their inaugural rounds took place on May 5th, 2020 with 16 players. They now have over 60 league members and have just completed the third round of the fall season.

Sadie went on to explain in her

own words: “The past few years I have always wanted to start a golf league for young professionals. I knew I did not want it to be just “any kind of golf league.” I wanted a league that was inclusive and welcoming to all skill levels. As with most things in life it was all about timing. Last year I barely picked up a golf club and part of the reason why was because I was tired of not having anyone to play with. I would arrive at a course and could never find someone around my demographic/age to play with. This is where a lot of the inspiration came from.

A small group of friends and I started playing a lot of golf at the beginning of quarantine when one night it hit me, “I want to start a golf league.” Quickly I called my friend Alejandro who I helped get into the game and who is now **hooked**. He encouraged me right away and four days later we had 16 players show up for our first round at Keney Park!

What I think makes this league so special are the members. We are educators, coaches, entrepreneurs, physical therapists, engineers, and so much more. We have players from over 18 different Connecticut towns and players from countries such as Colombia and Nigeria. We have introduced the game to many women and just had our first league championship. The biggest accomplishment of the league so far is being able to gather people (who had never met before) from so many different backgrounds and seeing how enthusiastically they are willing to

play golf with each other. We have had players that have played golf for years that will play with new players and help them navigate the golf course for the first time. It is also turning into a bit of a great networking experience.

As many people know we are not living in the best of times right now and it is extremely difficult to meet new people. Thanks to The Millennial Slicers of Greater Hartford our members now have a new community to lean on, one where they can reach out to people to play golf with or even go hang out with on a weekend. We have also now added women's practice sessions, and clinics with the help of PGA golf professional George Connor.

My First Tee background has a lot to do with this. For starters, without First Tee I would have never picked up a golf club. My family is from South America where soccer is very popular. First Tee introduced me to so many people growing up and taught me the art of a good handshake and eye contact. These simple but essential communication skills have helped me become the open minded and confident individual I am today.”

And a big **shout out** to Sadie for donating the proceeds from the raffle at The Millennial Slicers Golf Championship to First Tee – Connecticut to the tune of \$560! We are so GLAD Sadie is on our team.

**For those of you who may be interested in joining the Slicers – please visit [millennialslicersgreaterhfd@gmail.com](mailto:millennialslicersgreaterhfd@gmail.com) for more information.**



Sadie Martinez and Alejandro Tobon

# 2020 Program Wrap-Up and Winter Preview

Despite cancelling spring programming due to COVID-19, we were able to re-open our facility to First Tee families on May 20, with Family Play, June 30 for Summer Camp and July 7 for summer group lessons all across the state. It was great to welcome back our families and offer safe, socially distanced programming after a couple of months in quarantine!

We have hosted nearly 900 golfers during our Family Play this season, and over 1,600 young people participated in Summer Camp, Group Lessons and Teams on course play at 20 facilities across the state.

Although most of our youth organization partners did not operate this summer (or did not allow us to participate due to COVID-19 restrictions), we did see a few other bright spots: Stratford Recreation Department conducted two weeks of golf camp (using First Tee curriculum) at Short Beach on their own, after our

training and support in 2019. Waterbury PAL operated with summer and fall sessions in Prospect, and we hosted PAL at The Learning Links in Cromwell at the end of both summer and fall sessions. It continues to be a great opportunity for our Waterbury area families to learn golf and life skills, and have a safe, fun day at our flagship facility!

Our "Girls Only" events were limited in 2020 but Coach Taylor was able to host a successful Solheim Cup in August and we conducted our traditional two weeks of Girls Only Camp (one in July and one in August) at The Learning Links in Cromwell.

Those are just a few examples of First Tee's "Activity Based" approach to seamlessly incorporating important Life Skills within golf activities. The Life Skills Experience is at the heart of what First Tee is all about. Our trained coaches teach young people aged 5-17, Nine Core Values: Honesty,

Integrity, Respect, Courtesy, Judgment, Perseverance, Sportsmanship, Confidence and Responsibility, and Nine Healthy Habits such as staying hydrated and being part of a community. The Life Skills Experience would not be as effective (and at the same time fun) as it is without our fine coaching staff and volunteers, many of whom are PGA members. We are extremely proud of and thankful to our over 80 coaches who are currently making an impact on the young people within our program. Particularly this year, we are grateful for our coaches who dedicated their time in various virtual meetings with staff this spring and summer in preparation for a season unlike any other. These dedicated individuals continue to deliver safe, socially distanced programming for our participants. Their commitment to keeping themselves and the children safe allows us to continue to teach golf's lessons and impact children across the state. Among those coaches are 9 individuals who are a part of First Tee's National Coach Program: Warren Beardow, Jackie Beck, Phil Blonski, George Claffey, Coleman Davis, Taylor Januario, Mark Moriarty, Mark Murnane, and Bobby Powell.

## Golf Around the World

Would you like to play at St. Andrews without having to board a plane? Keep an eye on our website for an announcement later this year about how to reserve your tee time on our new Trackman simulator on select Saturdays/Sundays and school holidays at the David & Geri Epstein Learning Center in Cromwell.

## Small Group Swing Classes

We expect that Coach Lindsey's Swing Classes will be offered again this winter for Par, Birdie and Eagle Level participants ages 10+ who would like



Coach Estella Segarra teaching Aleka Kirton of Bloomfield at Keney Park Golf Course in Hartford.



**Brooklyn Davis of Avon is all smiles at Prospect Driving Range.**

to work on their golf fundamentals in January, February or March (provided there are no significant changes to COVID-19 policies in the state).

Days and times for the three 1-hour long sessions will be announced in December.

## **In-School Programs**

As the “unique” 2020 season ends and kids are settled back in at school (physically or virtually), we hope to transition First Tee’s Life Skills Experience from our green grass locations into warmer spaces in 2021. This is dependent on COVID-19 policies and guidance from the state and various school districts. But if allowed, many of our coaches will be instrumental in bringing the Life Skills Experience curriculum inside during Physical Education classes this winter through a partnership with over 160 schools in districts such as Bridgeport, Cromwell, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Stamford and Waterbury.

These school-based programs, along with our Outreach Programs conducted during the summer months, are an important part of First Tee – Connecticut’s mission to impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values and promote healthy choices through the game of golf.



**Alexander Laskin of Cheshire ready to strike the ball at Prospect Driving Range.**



# Coaching in the Covid Era at Fairchild Wheeler

In what has been a strange and challenging summer for so many people, we are grateful that we have been able to run our First Tee youth golf programs as a great way for kids to be outdoors, exercising, and socializing with other kids safely. As coaches, we enjoy our time with the participants and want them to know we are looking out for them—not just in our small group lessons, but also in helping them apply our Nine Core Values to this year's circumstances. Respect and Perseverance are particularly notable, especially in preparing to go back to school in its various formats this fall.

To run our programs this year, we deployed a number of operational adjustments that worked well:

- With smaller class sizes this year, we doubled the number of class offerings in order to be able to accommodate a similar number of participants as last year.
- More streamlined drop-off and pick-up procedures have made the transitions between classes more efficient.
- Adjustments to the class format maximized instruction time while also adding an assistant to attend to equipment sanitizing.
- For the Teams programs, utilizing the Golf Genius app instead of manual paper processes facilitated weekly tee time assignments, score submissions for each round, and visibility for the whole season's rounds.

## Many thanks to our team at Fairchild Wheeler:

Director of Instruction:  
Coleman Davis

Coaches: Matt Allan, Jaquon Allen,  
Geoff Gelderman

Assistant: Matt Reilly

Participant Volunteers:  
Jane Freiler, Chloe Juthnas,  
Michael Patafio



Coach Coleman Davis  
instructing at Fairchild Wheeler  
Golf Course in Bridgeport.



Marnie Guadagno of Fairfield  
having fun at Fairchild Wheeler  
in Bridgeport.



Coach Jaquon Allen demonstrating putting  
at Fairchild Wheeler in Bridgeport.

# Staying Connected

The programs that we run in partnership with the Yale African American Affinity Group and New Haven Parks and Rec are typically held at the Yale Golf Course – but this year, we went virtual! Coach Tim Swensen recorded weekly Lesson and Game videos from his home, thoughtfully utilizing household items and limited space to encourage participants' ongoing engagement with golf, even from their own homes. Each week, Tim introduced a Core Value in the video while also providing real-life examples through short reading excerpts or videos, like Kwame Alexander's *The Undeclared*, or how to identify animal tracks you might find at a golf course. And each lesson finished with a "Yale Golf Course Fun Fact" provided by Men's Coach Colin Sheehan. We hope that when the participants do return to the course – whether Yale, another venue, or even life situations – they can apply these sparks of creativity and curiosity as they persevere through changing situations.



Coach Tim Swensen during virtual instructions

## Clubs for a Cause

We are so grateful to Greenwich Country Club for holding a club drive for First Tee – Connecticut! The club drive was a BIG success thanks to the efforts of Head Golf Professional, Andrew Gruss and First Tee – Connecticut Board Member, Karen Hopp. If your club would like to support First Tee via a club drive, email Program Director, Mark Murnane at [mmurnane@firstteect.org](mailto:mmurnane@firstteect.org).



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# Event Wrap Up

Most would agree that 2020 has been a year like no other. We started off strong with our first event on January 9th, but quickly realized that we would need to do our part to keep our community safe and cancelled our spring and summer events. Fortunately, we've been able to reschedule two of our events. Our PwC First Tee Charity Classic at Country Club of Fairfield is due to happen on October 8th (which is after this publication will be sent to print). We are very excited that event is **sold out**, especially considering the restrictions in place. We've had to limit our playing fields to 100 people and will not be offering our traditional post-event reception in order to abide by state government regulations. Our First Tee Charity Classic in Association with Travelers Championship at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell is scheduled for October 19th. We are extremely grateful to our event sponsors and individual supporters who have continued to support First Tee – Connecticut during this challenging time. We are also thankful to the golf committees who make these events the successes that they are! We'd like to shout out the individuals on our golf committees for their dedication to making these events successful. Thank you: Beverly Buckner Baker, Ken Baldwin, Teddy Bobroske, Tim Bunt, Jeff Calhoun, Rick Carbray, Dave Corrado, Dr. Jeff Cohen, David Dixon, Ted May, Tom Panczner and David Polk.

## First Tee – Connecticut Virtual Patrons' Happy Hour – June 24, 2020

Perseverance. It's a word that defines 2020. We've all been faced with so much uncertainty and have made adjustments in our daily lives for the safety of our families and our communities. We've had to make similar adjustments at First Tee – Connecticut and that's why our traditional Patron's Breakfast became a virtual Happy Hour event. Once it was announced that the Travelers

Championship would be played without fans, we decided that we still wanted to have an event to thank our donors as well as recognize our fantastic scholarship winners, but wanted to carry it out in a safe manner. We awarded 43 scholarships totalling over \$45,750 to participants in our programs who are attending any tuition-based school. Our Virtual Patrons' Happy Hour featured three of our scholarship winners – Joshua Raj, an 8th grader at St. Bridget's; Selam Olson, a freshman at Choate Rosemary Hall and Montana Andrea, a freshman at UConn.

**Nathan Grube**, Tournament Director at the Travelers Championship also joined us to give us the scoop on the tournament!



We used the Virtual Patrons' Happy Hour as a means to encourage our guests to make donations via Birdies for Charity and had our most successful Birdies campaign EVER! Birdies for Charity is a giving platform that utilizes the excitement around the Travelers Championship to help non-profits across the region raise awareness and funds to support their missions. Every dollar donated to First Tee – Connecticut was awarded a 15% bonus! We ended up raising more than any other non-profit in the program for a total of \$97,382 and it couldn't have come at a time where we needed the funds more – especially after having to cancel our spring session and cancel and postpone several events.

**Our staff and Board of Directors can't begin to express our gratitude to everyone who has helped us continue working on our mission and focus our efforts on the children we serve. Whether you are a corporate sponsor, a grantor, an individual donor or volunteer – we can't begin to thank you enough.**

## Scholarship Recipients:

**19 Iron Scholarship (Downey Family Foundation)**  
Mia Jones

**Aetna Retirees Scholarship in memory of H. Grant Thomas & Roger Lawson**  
Garrett Burke  
Daniel Doherty  
Joseph Kowalski  
Brandon Miller

**Andrew K. Dwyer Foundation Scholarship**  
Montana Andrea  
Peter Cavaliere  
Tyler Heidgerd  
Cameron Ledford

**Daniel Novarr Scholarship**  
Elicia Colon  
Victoria Phillips  
Jordan Walker

**Donald E. Vacheron Scholarship**  
Samay Govani

**Epstein Family Scholarship**  
Derek Adams  
Elena Anderson  
Daniel Asare  
Benjamin Banton  
Adison Banton  
Emma Banton  
Raphael Blocher  
Matthew Conelius  
Jake Dalton  
Peter Dalton  
Carson Delaney  
Patrick Doherty  
Prithvi Guddera  
Lily Heidgerd  
Zarya Hernandez-Salto  
Michael Kowalski  
Jason Liu  
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Selam Olson  
Malachi Pierre  
Gabriel Puskarz  
Joshua Raj  
Jon Kee Vose

**Mazumdar Family Scholarship**  
Montana Andrea

**William P. Lyons Scholarship**  
Michael Hamill  
Ashton Lewis



**Montana Andrea**  
Andrew K. Dwyer Foundation Scholarship  
Mazumdar Family Scholarship



**Joshua Raj**  
Epstein Family Scholarship



**Selam Olson**  
Epstein Family Scholarship



**Top row – our three celebrity guests: Caddie Joe LaCava, Musician Javier Colon and ESPN’s Jay Harris**  
**Bottom row – our presenting sponsors from Comcast – Paul Savas, Brian Ferney, Charlie Tzoumas and Dan Glanville**

## **Xfinity presents Inside the Ropes with LaCava and Harris – January 9, 2020**

We kicked off the year at First Tee of Connecticut’s David & Geri Epstein Learning Center in Cromwell with an event that featured Tiger Wood’s Hall of Fame caddie Joe LaCava and ESPN SportsCenter co-host Jay Harris. Jay and Joe entertained the sell-out crowd with very funny stories from “inside-the-ropes” on the tour. First Tee – Connecticut Honorary Board Member and amazingly talented musician Javier Colon warmed up the crowd with his silky-smooth voice! The perfect night was capped off with food provided by Dish Restaurant Group and beverages donated by Alvarium Beer Company and Links Drinks. This event would not have been possible without our Title Sponsor – Xfinity and our Presenting Sponsor – Beverly Buckner Baker!

# Life Lessons

## Nine Core Values

- Courtesy
- Honesty
- Respect
- Integrity
- Perseverance
- Responsibility
- Sportsmanship
- Judgment
- Confidence



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