

OnCourse

The News Magazine of The First Tee of Connecticut



Fairfield County Serves up Tasty Event



Photo: Bob Capazzo

L-R: Luke McGowan, Sandra Apfelroth, Honoree Bill Gray, Morgan McGowan and Aley Boyce

On October 4, we hosted “Taste of the Tee” at Fairview Country Club in Greenwich. The evening of “sipping and savoring” benefited the chapter’s youth programs throughout Fairfield County. Golf Digest’s Michael Breed and ESPN’s Trey Wingo, both Greenwich natives, served as “Iron Chefs” during the program, which also featured several First Tee participants. Bill Gray was honored for his many years of dedicated service on the Board of Directors and his instrumental work raising funds from donors across his network.

“In its fourth year, the unique Taste of the Tee event netted over \$65,000 to help increase the chapter’s presence across Fairfield County,” said Mark Moriarty, Executive Director.

The event featured tasting tables from area chefs and restaurants coordinated by Chef Jeff Perez of Fairview Country Club including Gallo Ristorante, Greenwich Country Club, Innis Arden Country Club, Jordan Paige Food Enterprises, Longford’s Ice Cream and Roger Sherman Inn. Refreshments were poured by Broken Shed Vodka, Rise Brewing Company, Two Roads Brewing Company and Val’s Wines & Liquors. Guests enjoyed a golf simulator and chipping and putting challenges from Golf Pro Delivered, and a Golden Tee arcade game.

The success of Taste of the Tee relies on the generosity of individuals and businesses within the community. Thank you to

our media sponsor Moffly Magazine for promotional support and to WGCH’s Kim Berns for the radio spot. Event photos can be viewed at www.greenwichmag.com.



Co-Chairs Matt and Holly Cassin and Karen and Eric Hopp with Chef Perez

Three-Point Play: Travelers, Scholarship Winners and HOF Ray Allen

The 12th Annual Patron’s Breakfast at the 2018 Travelers Championship was a real game winner with 2018 Basketball Hall of Famer Ray Allen as special guest speaker and the awarding of \$39,500 in scholarships.

The Patron’s Breakfast is held every year at the David and Geri Epstein Learning Center at The First Tee of Connecticut to thank donors for their continued support.

Allen, inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame this past

September, played 18 years in the NBA. Allen is a beloved former UConn Men’s Basketball star. Allen signed his new book, “From The Outside: A Journey Through Life and the Game I Love” at the event.

The First Tee of Connecticut has awarded over \$260,000 in scholarships to Connecticut youth since 2006. Scholarships are now awarded to young people of all grade levels who attend tuition-based schools and have been active with The First Tee of Connecticut for a minimum of one year.



Photo: Kay Bagwell

Ray Allen

Benefactor events support TFTCT

Benefactor or Third-party events help drive funds and awareness to The First Tee of Connecticut. These events are a tremendous help to us in keeping our program fees affordable for everyone (\$7-\$9 per lesson, in most locations).

The 4th Annual Gary Gatzen Memorial Golf Tournament held at Shuttle Meadow Country Club in Kensington on September 17th honored the memory of the late Gary Gatzen. Gary's children, Rebecca Ribeiro & Grant Gatzen lovingly run this event to honor their father and the game he loved so much. The Tournament donated \$8,737 to The First Tee of Connecticut in 2018. This brings their 4 year total to over \$25,000 donated in their father's memory. This year they had a field of 125 players, 24 volunteers, and some really amazing sponsors including Hardline Heat Treating, Industronics Service Company, United Service Company Inc., and Specialty Steel Treating. Mark your calendars for next year's event at Shuttle Meadow Country Club on September 16, 2019.

Continued Page 3



Siblings Rebecca Ribeiro & Grant Gatzen

Letter From Executive Director

Dear Friends,

While the 2018 outdoor golf season is winding down, this newsletter allows us to look back on all the great memories made at The First Tee of Connecticut this year. We had so many friends, patrons and supporters take part in our major events; the Walmart Charity Classic presented by Stanley Black & Decker, Patrons' Breakfast, Taste of the Tee, PwC Charity Classic and New Haven County Charity Classic. It is in large part thanks to the success of these events that we can conduct our programs across the state to impact young people beyond the course. Many of our participants and their families took part in our Parent Child Events at Lyman Orchards or Fairchild Wheeler and others took advantage of the Open Play Program on Sunday mornings in Cromwell. 2018 saw many participants succeed both on and off the course! Alex Cavaliere earned recognition as our chapter's first Ace Certified Participant, Elena Anderson represented our chapter at two First Tee National Opportunities (National Par-3 Championship & College Golf Prep Academy), alumnus Jason Liu was named the Ivy League Rookie of the Year for his performance on the Dartmouth Golf Team and in June 38 young people were awarded scholarships totaling nearly \$40,000 to support their ongoing education. Enjoy learning about these and other successes young people across our chapter achieved this year and know that everyone who supports



Mark Moriarty

The First Tee of Connecticut plays a part in that. One of the most vital groups of supporters in positively impacting young people at our chapter is our coaches. Dan Malarney has been working to do just that for nearly 20 years and this fall he will say goodbye to his regular coaching duties. I am personally thankful to "Coach" Dan for always being such a wonderful role model to us all and wish him the best in life's next chapter.

There is plenty to look forward to at The First Tee of Connecticut during the final months of this year and beyond! Please take this opportunity to read about indoor programs that will be offered this winter and take advantage of these opportunities to stay connected with our chapter all year long.

Mark Moriarty

Executive Director

The First Tee of Connecticut Participants Making News On and Off the Course

The First Tee of Connecticut transforms lives one swing at a time. Here are three transforming stories.

Alex Cavaliere – First ever ACE certified at TFTCT



Alex Cavaliere, 18, of Marlborough, CT, aced his First Tee assignment—achieving The First Tee Ace Certification, the highest level a participant can achieve nationally at chapters of The First Tee. Alex achieved the top level of The First Tee Life Skills Experience – remarkably less than 1% of The First Tee participants in the Network achieve Ace certified level.

Ace focuses on personal planning and reinforces skills such as self-management, goal setting, self-coaching, interpersonal communication, and resilience that were applied in earlier levels of the program. To achieve the Ace-certified level, Alex completed four projects in Community Service, Career, College and Golf that help build a foundation in higher education and for a career.

"Congrats, Alex. Becoming Ace certified is a testimony that The First Tee of Connecticut is about good golfers, better people," said Mark Moriarty, Executive Director.

Windsor teen comes out swinging at Par-3 National Championship, College Golf Prep Academy

Elena Anderson, 17, of Windsor came out swinging at two events this past summer — The First Tee's National Par-3 Championship and College Golf Prep Academy.

Held June 12 – 17 in Richmond, VA, the Par 3 Championship featured 32 teen participants from The First Tee selected to play in the 36-hole individual stroke play competition. At the College Golf Prep Academy, hosted July 10-16 in West Palm Beach, FL, Elena was among 24 junior golfers chosen to attend.

Both opportunities featured young people from The First Tee chapters nationwide, ages 15–18, selected by a national panel of judges and each offered a unique opportunity for participants to help improve their chances to compete at a higher level both athletically and academically.



Elena Anderson attending National Par 3 and College Golf Prep Academy

CT Teens Attend National Life Skills & Leadership Academy

What a twosome! Meghna Mazumdar, 15, of South Windsor and Matthew Luponio, 15, of Plantsville represented The First Tee of Connecticut at the Joe Louis Barrow, Jr. Life Skills and Leadership Academy this past July at the Michigan State University. Meghna



Matthew Luponio & Meghna Mazumdar

and Matthew joined more than 90 other junior golfers from The First Tee, ages 14-17, to participate in this national event.

"Yet another amazing experience at one of The First Tee opportunities! The JLB Jr. Life Skills and Leadership Academy taught me so much about myself and how I can better myself to become a better leader," Meghna said.

During the weeklong event, Meghna and Matthew had the opportunity to develop and hone skills to become leaders in their chapters, schools and communities while experiencing championship golf, career exploration and dorm living.

A Real Grassroots Operation

In 1999, the First Tee of Hartford (which later grew into The First Tee of Connecticut) was literally a grassroots operation with 100-150 kids in the program. Dan Malarney, a PGA professional and its first coach, was the entire staff. The program started growing from the get-go, so within one year, Bobby Powell was added to the one-person coaching staff. And now, after 19 years, Coach Dan has retired at the end of the fall season. "People said my green truck was our first office," Dan said, remembering that he would drive to where the kids were at the Boys & Girls Clubs in Hartford and New Britain. "Gyms and nearby fields were our practice facilities." Fast forward nearly 20 years to where The First Tee of Connecticut serves more than 74,000 young people annually across the state. "It's fantastic to see the growth and the professionals who picked up the ball from those that essentially created the program – Ian Baxter, Gary Reynolds, Ted May, Kent Scully, Skip Gengras and Dan," noted David Dixon, Board Chairman.

Dan's biggest takeaway from his 19 years: "How The First Tee of Connecticut has lasted and how it impacted youth to allow them to become better people. I met the kids when they were young and now I talk with them today as adults," Dan said.



Dan Malarney coaching at East Mountain Golf Course in Waterbury

Benefactor Events: *Continued*

The Hartford Business Journal's 40 Under Forty event raised more than \$7,000 for TFTCT with an unusual incentive – each winner paid TFTCT \$5 for every word over 3 words in their acceptance speech. Thank you to Honorary Board Member Javier Colon for his role in helping TFTCT being selected as a beneficiary.

The Final-Final Open, co-chaired by TFTCT Board Member Dr. Paul Bocciaelli held its 13th annual memorial golf tournament this past June 8th at Keney Park Golf Course in

Hartford to continue honoring the memory of late Hartford restaurateur Tom Altmann. The event raised over \$11,000 for TFTCT. This event has raised well over a quarter of a million dollars for The First Tee of Connecticut over the years!

The Lou Ferraro Golf Classic took place at Tamarack Country Club in Greenwich on June 18th. TFTCT and the Fairfield County Sports Commission are the co-beneficiaries of this event which celebrates the role a father plays in our lives and the legacies they leave behind.

This golf tournament raised over \$20,000 for TFTCT. *See page 8 for a complete list of Benefactor Events.*



TFTCT Foursome Coach Rick Hunt, Charlene Bego, Karen Hopp and staff member Ilona Emmerth at The Lou Ferraro Golf Classic

2018 WRAP-UP AND WINTER PROGRAM PREVIEW

It was an active and fun-filled season for The First Tee of Connecticut with over 2,500 young people participating in Group Lessons and Teams on-course play at 22 facilities across the state. We continued our integration of the Fairfield County chapter at Fairchild Wheeler, and rekindled our relationships with long time First Tee partners, Cardinal Shehan and McGivney Center in Bridgeport. The season was highlighted by our participants taking advantage of some great opportunities during Travelers Championship week: Eversource PGA Tour Player Experience for Junior Golfers, hosted at The Learning Links, where selected First Tee children played 4 holes on The Learning Links with a PGA Tour pro and Gameday, sponsored by The Fellowship of Christian Athletes Golf Ministry, where children walked the back nine with 3 PGA Tour pros, inside the ropes! We expanded our relationship with

the New Haven Parks & Rec, where Coach Tim Swensen delivered The First Tee curriculum to the Parks & Rec summer camps during July and early August.

Our veteran participants had several opportunities to excel in competitive golf this past season during the Nutmeg Games in July, our popular Parent-Child Open events and The East Mountain Junior Open. The season concludes with our well supported and fun "Girls Only" events, held in Cromwell as part of our LPGA/USGA Girls Golf Program. We hosted a Halloween themed event in October, staffed by Coach Jackie Beck and our friends from Quinnipiac University Women's Golf team, and will host a holiday themed event in December.

Those are just a few examples of The 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 The 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 or being part of a community. Speaking of a community, we enjoyed another exciting Summer Camp season with over 200 young people attending one of our eight, four day camps that included Girls Only sessions and half day sessions for our 5 and 6 year old friends. 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. Among those

coaches are 11 individuals who are a part of The First Tee's National Coach Program: Warren Beardow, Jackie Beck, Phil Blonski, George Claffey, Coleman Davis, Taylor Januario, Karen Michaels, Mark Moriarty, Mark Murnane, Patrick O'Connor and Bobby Powell.



Coach Jackie Beck at Alling Memorial Golf Course, New Haven



First Tee coaching staff at Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course, Bridgeport, L-R: Coleman Davis, Geoff Gelderman, Matt Allan, Jacob Henny

Golf Around the World

Would you like to play at Pebble Beach 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 golf simulator on select Saturdays/Sundays and school holidays at the David & Geri Epstein Learning Center in Cromwell.

Open Houses - Cromwell

- Hit shots in one of two indoor nets
- Practice your putting on the indoor putting green
- Play a hole at select courses around the world on the High Definition Golf™ Simulator
- Stop by for a visit with our coaches & staff
- Learn about 2019 programs & upcoming events
- Introduce family & friends to The First Tee of Connecticut

The dates and times of these Open Houses will be posted on our website toward the end of this year. There will be no cost to attend these Open House Events and advanced registration is not required.

Small Group Swing Classes

Coach Lindsey's Swing Classes will be offered again this winter for Par, Birdie and Eagle Level participants 10+ who would like to work on their golf fundamentals in January, February or March.

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

Think Spring - The Connecticut Golf Show

Although it's Fall, it's never too early to think Spring golf. The Connecticut Golf Show offers a welcomed preview of another great golf season. Circle March 22-24, 2019 to stop by The First Tee of Connecticut's booth at the Connecticut Convention Center.

2018 Outreach Partners:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford and New Haven
- Cardinal Shehan Center, Bridgeport
- Channel 3 Kids Camp
- Hartford's Camp Courant
- Horizons, Greens Farms Academy
- Horizons, Sacred Heart University
- McGivney Community Center, Bridgeport
- Waterbury, New Britain and Hartford PAL (Police Activity Leagues)

In-School Programs

As the 2018 season ends and kids are settled back in at school, it's time to transition The First Tee's Life Skills Experience from our green grass locations into warmer spaces. 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 The First Tee of 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.



In-School Program



A program lesson at Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course in Bridgeport



The David & Geri Epstein Learning Center is used year 'round - here the Trinity College team is heading for the Learning Center's golf simulator between snow flakes.



Annual Patrons' Breakfast

The First Tee of Connecticut's Annual Breakfast Tee, traditionally held the morning of Saturday's round during the Travelers Championship, again aced it. The Breakfast provides The First Tee of Connecticut Staff and Board of Directors the opportunity to say "Thank You" to donors and is the perfect setting to present 38 scholarships to participants who attend tuition-based schools. The 2018 Breakfast announced \$39,500 in 2018 Scholarships. Scholarship winners Caroline Bunt, Joseph and Troy Maxwell, Mia Jones, Matthew Romeo, Derek Engel, Cameron Hosack, Monique Anderson and Logan Colon attended the Breakfast. Basketball Hall of Famer Ray Allen presented keynote remarks.

2018 Scholarship Winners (with hometown and attending school)

**19 Iron Scholarship
(presented by the Downey Family Foundation)**
Veronica Diaz, Waterbury, Husson University (ME)
Mia Jones, Wethersfield, Mercy High School

Aetna Retirees Scholarship in memory of H. Grant Thomas & Roger Lawson
Alex Cavaliere, Marlborough, Penn State University
Ethan Jiang, South Windsor, UCONN

Andrew K. Dwyer Foundation Scholarship
Cameron Hosack, Glastonbury, UCONN (Hartford)
Andrew Maslar, Monroe, Florida Gulf Coast University
Matthew Romeo, Wolcott, UCONN (Waterbury)
Neel Sikka, Fairfield, Lehigh University

Daniel Novarr Scholarship
Monique Anderson, Bloomfield, Cornell University
Logan Colon, Bloomfield, Cornell University

Donald E. Vacheron Scholarship
Derek Engel, Norwalk, Coastal Carolina University

Epstein Family Scholarship
Elena Anderson, Windsor, Loomis Chaffee
Daniel Asare, Windsor, St. Thomas the Apostle
Peter Cavaliere, Marlborough, Xavier High School

Carson Delaney, Waterbury, Providence College
Prithvi Guddera, West Hartford, UCONN
Mark Joseph Hally, East Haddam, Franklin Academy
Taylor Januario, East Hartford, Manchester Community College
Jason Liu, Windsor, Dartmouth
Justin Mathew, Rocky Hill, Northwest Catholic
Joseph Maxwell, Bridgeport, St. Andrew Academy
Troy Maxwell, Bridgeport, St. Andrew Academy
Justin Mecca, Cromwell, Penn State University
Jax Murray, Waterford, Fishers Island
Sawyer Murray, Waterford, Fishers Island
Matthew O'Connor, Cromwell, Xavier High School
Ben Poulos, Colchester, Kingswood Oxford
Annabel Probolus, East Windsor, St. Timothy Middle School
James Probolus, East Windsor, St. Thomas the Apostle
Joshua Raj, Naugatuck, St. Bridget's
Sydney Rastkhane, North Haven, Choate
Aidan Shea, Beacon Falls, Notre Dame (West Haven)
Caleb Shea, Beacon Falls, Notre Dame (West Haven)
Nicholas Vieux, Trumbull, Roger Williams University

Mazumdar Family Scholarship
Caroline Bunt, Ridgefield, Boston College

Walking For Kids Foundation Scholarship
Corey Sturgis, Boynton Beach, Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College

William P. Lyons Scholarship
Demetre Carnot, Meriden, Miami (OH)
Patrick Doherty, Wallingford, UCONN



PwC First Tee Charity Classic at Country Club of Fairfield

The PwC First Tee Charity Classic at the Country Club of Fairfield originally scheduled for August 13th, but postponed due to rain to October 9th was a great success. The second time was a charm, as 92 players participated in this Best Ball of Four golf outing, ocean side at this spectacular course! This event raised more dollars than any previous golf outing in the history of The First Tee of

Connecticut, netting over \$125,000! TFTCT is grateful to Craig Watchmaker and PwC for their seventh consecutive year of the Title Sponsorship of the PwC First Tee Charity Classic. Kudos go to First Tee Board Member Tim Bunt who secured 15 of the 23 foursomes that participated on October 9th.

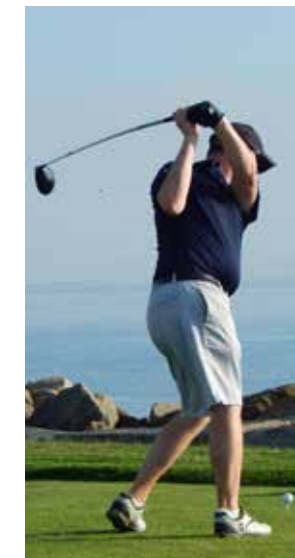
Walmart First Tee Charity Classic at TPC River Highlands Presented by Stanley Black & Decker

The Walmart Charity Classic, also known as the Kick-Off for the Travelers Championship at the TPC River Highlands was on June 10th. This is always a high energy and super fun event because our groups get paired with a local celebrity to make fivesomes. The format was a 5 Person Shamble. This event was extremely well supported by our friends at the Travelers Championship, an abundance of top notch volunteers and our First Tee participants who got involved in the

action at various contests on the course! The Walmart Charity Classic over performed this year netting just over \$82,000! Since 2003, the Central Connecticut Charity Classic has raised close to \$900,000 in support of programming in the central part of the state. A gigantic shout out to all our sponsors, with special emphasis on our top tier sponsors including our Title Sponsor, Walmart and our Presenting Sponsor, Stanley Black & Decker.

RAISING FUNDS, FRIENDS & AWARENESS

If our 2018 summer golf tournament season was one of our Nine Core Values, it would be – PERSEVERANCE! We persevered despite two of our three tournaments getting postponed due to rain. And despite the rescheduled dates, we only lost a couple of groups – which is quite an accomplishment in and of itself. We owe this success to our tournament committees, our loyal sponsors and supporters and our fantastic volunteers! Together, these three tournaments raised over \$240,000 for The First Tee of Connecticut. Because of the generosity of benefactors like you, we can maintain the high standards we have established in bringing The First Tee of Connecticut Life Skills Experience to more than 74,000 children state-wide.



Celebrity line-up at Walmart Classic



Bill Harrison, Frank Barrett and Board Members David Polk and Glen Rapoport

The First Tee Charity Classic at Madison Country Club

Our final golf outing of the season, due to take place September 18th, was also moved due to rain! But we finally got it in on October 15th, despite not having the best playing conditions (some compared it to playing in Scotland or Ireland), the sunny disposition of all 64 golfers made the weather a moot point! The event was played along the Connecticut coastline at the beautiful

Madison Country Club. The event culminated with a wonderful fall-style lobster bake. Over the past 15 years this event has raised more than \$785,000 to support programming in the Greater New Haven and Waterbury regions. Included in this number are this year's results – as we netted over \$33,000.

The First Tee of Connecticut would like to give a special “shout out” to the individual donors and corporate sponsors who supported us in 2018 by participating in the Travelers Championship Birdies for Charity, Brackets for Good, and/or the Super Bowl Raffle, run in partnership with the Connecticut Chapter of the NFL Alumni Association. We are grateful for your support!



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Ron Booth Memorial Golf Outing

BENEFACTOR EVENTS

We are grateful to the many individuals who dedicate a portion, or all, of the proceeds they raise through benefactor events (a/k/a third-party events) – their financial support is a real validation of The First Tee of Connecticut’s mission.

- Final Final Open in Memory of Thomas Altmann
- Lou Ferraro Golf Classic
- InterFaith Open
- Harry Nowobilski Memorial Celebrity Amateur Golf Tournament
- Max Classic
- Gary Gatzen Memorial Golf Outing
- Ron Booth Memorial Golf Outing
- Whitney Farms Men’s Club
- Orange Hills Country Club
- Walk-A-Thon Charity Event at Redding Country Club
- Branford Open
- Andrew K. Dwyer Foundation Scholarship
- Dogg Day ‘18
- Links at The Yard
- Judges Classic Golf Event
- Grassy Hill Men’s Association
- Hartford Business Journal 40 Under 40
- Mastercard Employee Outing
- 5th Annual Golf Marathon for Charity @ Sharon Country Club
- Orange Hills Country Club Men’s Golf Association
- Keney Park Players Club