

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. & PONTE VEDRA BEACH, FLA. (OCTOBER 15, 2024) – Reflecting a continued commitment to ensure the game of golf empowers the next generation, the United States Golf Association (USGA) has awarded its latest round of IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility) grant funding to 28 First Tee chapters across the country.

As a founding partner of First Tee, the USGA directs \$200,000 annually toward local programs that help build up young people and address the barriers that many face at this critical entry point into the game.

Since the grant program's inception in 2021, the USGA has awarded 100 grants to more than 50 chapters, supporting initiatives that strengthen inclusion among participants, coaches and volunteers. In total, \$810,000 has been awarded to date, with several chapters receiving funding year-over-year to sustain the growth that has been generated from grant activities.

"The work that so many First Tee chapters have done – and will continue to do – as a result of IDEA grant funding is inspiring and goes well beyond the golf course," said USGA CEO Mike Whan. "It's important that we not let up on these efforts and continue to deliver resources toward the programs that help eliminate financial, language or accessibility barriers so that even more kids can enjoy our game."

"Our chapters are reaching young people from underrepresented and underserved backgrounds, offering not only direct access to the game of golf but empowering them to become future leaders," said First Tee CEO Greg McLaughlin. "Our network is stronger because of the USGA's continued investment in our mission."

The National Golf Foundation reports that 3.5 million youth currently play golf, marking a 40% increase in participation from 2019-23. Additionally, the junior segment is more diverse than the overall golf population, with higher percentages of females, people of color and adaptive golfers than ever before.

The means by which young people connect with the game varies greatly from community to community. First Tee chapters utilize funding to meet specific needs of the populations they currently serve, as well as hope to invite into the experience.

In 2024, chapters selected received up to \$15,000. Notable activities supported by USGA funding include:

- Launch of adaptive golf programs by **First Tee – Greater Richmond** and **First Tee – Central Ohio**, who are working with community partners to host clinics and weekly sessions for disabled individuals and those on the autism spectrum.
- Removing cost as a barrier to entry by offering programming completely free of charge to all participants, a tactic **First Tee – Tulsa** and **First Tee – Oakland** have implemented.
- Increasing the number of participants in early career mentorship and workforce preparation programs, including **First Tee – Pittsburgh's** Ready-to-Work mentorship program for high school students and **First Tee – Central Carolina's** internship for students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Connecting youth from indigenous communities to the game through **First Tee – South Dakota's** direct outreach on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, and **First Tee – Four Corners** hosting field trips at golf courses for students attending Title I schools on the Navajo Reservation.
- Onboarding additional schools to provide First Tee curriculum either during physical education classes or after school, allowing **First Tee – Greater Seattle**, **First Tee – Triangle**, **First Tee – Connecticut**, and **First Tee – Southeast Wisconsin** to bring the game directly to kids.
- **First Tee – Greater Philadelphia** transporting youths from schools in the city's most underserved zip code to green-grass facilities.
- Recruiting Spanish-language instructors and volunteers to assist with programming in the predominantly Hispanic communities that **First Tee – Washington D.C.** and **First Tee – Silicon Valley** serve.

IDEA Grant applications were open to all First Tee chapters in the United States, with preference given to those affiliated with one of the USGA's 57 Allied Golf Associations (AGAs). Located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, AGAs provide USGA resources and services at the community level – helping to increase engagement and participation and improving the

golfer experience.

The full list of chapters awarded funding in 2024 includes:

First Tee – Central Carolina (N.C.)	First Tee – Minnesota
First Tee – Central Mississippi	First Tee – Monterey County (Calif.)
First Tee – Central Ohio	First Tee – Oakland (Calif.)
First Tee – Connecticut	First Tee – Pittsburgh (Pa.)
First Tee – Eastern Michigan	First Tee – Rhode Island
First Tee – Four Corners (N.M., Colo.)	First Tee – Sandhills (N.C.)
First Tee – Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky	First Tee – Silicon Valley (Calif.)
First Tee — Greater Philadelphia (Pa.)	First Tee – Southeast Wisconsin
First Tee — Greater Richmond (Va.)	First Tee — South Dakota
First Tee – Greater Seattle (Wash.)	First Tee — Southern Colorado
First Tee – Greater Washington D.C.	First Tee – Triangle (N.C.)
First Tee – Greater Wichita (Kan.)	First Tee – Tulsa (Okla.)
First Tee – Los Angeles (Calif.)	First Tee – Virginia Blue Ridge
First Tee – Massachusetts	First Tee – West Michigan

About the USGA

The USGA is a mission-based golf organization whose purpose is to unify the golf community through handicapping and grassroots programs; to showcase the game's best talent through the U.S. Open, U.S. Women's Open Presented by Ally and 13 other national championships and our museum; to provide unbiased global governance with The R&A through the playing, equipment and Amateur Status rules; and to advance issues important to golf's future, with a focus on driving sustainability, accessibility and inclusion. As a nonprofit association, our work and our team are driven to act for the good of the game. For more, visit usga.org.

About PGA TOUR First Tee Foundation ("First Tee")

First Tee (www.firsttee.org) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit youth development organization that is supported by the PGA TOUR. Its mission is to impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character and instill life-enhancing values through the game of golf. Since 1997, First Tee has expanded to reach millions of kids annually through its network of 150 chapters, 11,450 schools and 2,000 youth centers. Headquartered in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA, programs are delivered in all 50 United States and select international locations. President George W. Bush serves as Honorary Chair.

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