



Annual Report '25



Building Game Changers



First Tee – Greater St. Louis has so many things to celebrate! For the first time, enrollment in our on-course programs for ages 7 to 9 and ages 10 to 11 were at capacity all year, demonstrating that families recognize the important role our programs can play in their child's development.

Major donors also recognized our impact, awarding new grants from PGA TOUR Superstore, DICK's Sporting Goods, and Lenoir Charitable Trust. The Buddy Fund continued its support of our chapter and provided a grant to expand our school programs, allowing us to serve more schools.

And our many volunteers who gave their time enabled us to grow our annual Golf FORE! Kids Tournament and Auction, and bring back the 100 Hole Golf Marathon fundraiser.

I am so grateful for our board, staff, coaches, and young golfers. Their excitement is contagious as we continue to help more children tee off for the first time and embark on a path toward healthy lives.

– **Mary Swanson, LPGA, Executive Director**



We could not continue to reach our mission of empowering kids and teens through golf without board members giving generously of their time, expertise, and donations. I am thankful for the strong and active committees we formed, and the leaders who helped their committees reach their goals for the year.

We also saw new energy from the Young Ambassadors Council, a group of young professionals from across the St. Louis community who support the board and champion the life-changing mission of First Tee – Greater St. Louis. The council hosted several events in support of the chapter, including a trivia night, a summer evening golf league, and an 18-hole golf scramble. Through these efforts and their volunteer support at class sessions and events, they helped introduce new audiences to First Tee and expand our impact.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this work and its success. Because of you, thousands of area children will become more confident, healthy, and resilient, all while playing the game of golf.

– **Scott Mannis, Board Chair**

Mission

Through the game of golf, we will be recognized as a Game Changer in youth development in our region.





Who We Are

For nearly 20 years, First Tee – Greater St. Louis has been using the platform of golf to provide innovative and experiential learning opportunities for young people. Character education and long-term life skills are at the heart of our programs, which are delivered by coaches who have been trained in positive youth development. We offer character education programs at golf courses, elementary schools, middle schools, and youth centers throughout the St. Louis region.

Why We Are

First Tee is a youth development organization that enables kids to build the strength of character that empowers them through a lifetime of new challenges. By seamlessly integrating the game of golf with a life skills curriculum, we create active learning experiences that build inner strength, self-confidence, and resilience that kids can carry to everything they do. We're Building Game Changers through our junior golf programs.

Skills That Last a Lifetime

- Understanding and managing emotions
- Resolving conflicts
- Setting up step-by-step goals
- Planning for the future
- Appreciating diversity
- Golf fundamentals and advanced techniques

More Than Just a Sports Program

Programming

On-Course Program

Our on-course program seamlessly integrates learning the game of golf with character-building. We create opportunities that help kids uncover their inner strength, self-confidence, and resilience, giving them personal skills they can use for a lifetime.

School Program

We give P.E. teachers, who may not have the equipment or space to even contemplate a golf program, all the tools they need to get started. We provide training, equipment, and lesson plans that teach life skills and character-building values through the game of golf.

Community Program

We partner with youth centers like Marygrove to bring the program to life and introduce golf using games that are flexible to the ages and abilities of the kids involved.



2025

Scorecard



50,031+

youth impacted annually



6

program locations



115

elementary & middle schools



29

nationally-trained coaches



71

volunteer coaches



357

program participants



58

life skills classes offered



102

sets of clubs provided



Locations

EAGLE SPRINGS
Golf Course
North County

ST. PETERS GOLF CLUB
St. Peters

SHILOH
Yorktown
Golf Course
Belleville

FAMILY GOLF AND LEARNING CENTER
Kirkwood

FOREST PARK HIGHLANDS
GOLF & TENNIS CENTER
Forest Park

STONEWOLF
Golf Club
Fairview Heights

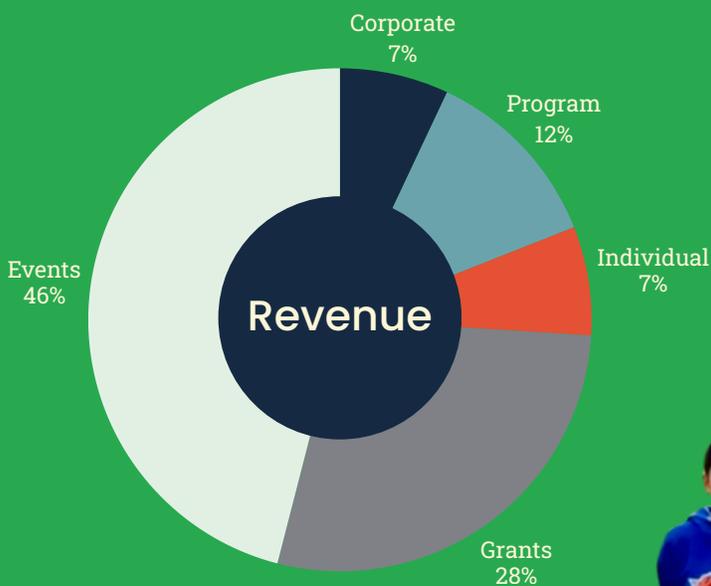
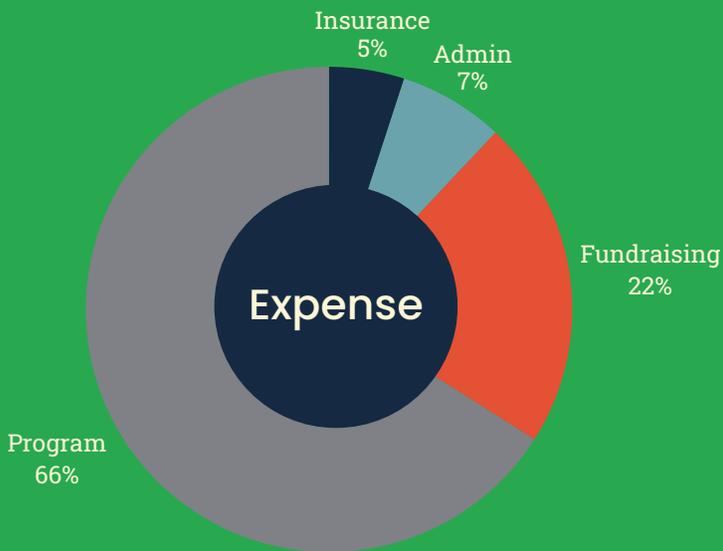
What Parents Are Saying

- “First Tee has been an incredible experience for my daughter. Through the program, she has grown as a leader, often helping younger and less experienced players in her group. When her coach asked her to step in and help two girls during a week he would be away, she was absolutely thrilled. She still talks about it and is eager for the day she can return as a junior volunteer coach.”
- “While he is naturally introverted and often reluctant to engage in social activities, the steady encouragement of his coaches has inspired him to step beyond his comfort zone and continue returning to First Tee year after year.”
- “I’ve watched my child grow in confidence in ways I never imagined. The coaches celebrate her progress, help her move past mistakes, and teach her patience and compassion. She simply loves being with them—and it shows in who she’s becoming.”
- “The connection he has formed with his coach has significantly shaped his behaviors and habits, both on and off the course.”

2025 Financials

Thank you to the individuals, grant funders, corporate partners, and other supporters who continue to support First Tee – Greater St Louis in our mission to empower youth.

We frame our decisions, strategies, staffing, programs, and community outreach with a single focus on what is best for our participants. Each chapter within the First Tee network is funded locally, with 100% of all contributions from our donors going toward funding First Tee – Greater St Louis. Every dollar helps ensure that the lives of kids and teens are positively affected within our region.





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Mannis Advisory

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2025 Leadership Team

Mary Swanson, LPGA
Executive Director

Romeze Lawson
Program Director

Tracy Lister
Program Coordinator

Theresa Beck
Outreach Coordinator