



# Building Game Changers

2021 Annual Report



# Meet the Team

## Staff

Alicia Lawrence Yund,  
Executive Director  
Alex Hill  
Wendy Mockabee  
Jeanne Siegel  
Ben Walker  
Charmian Wilkinson

## Board of Trustees

Matt Davis  
Kit Duval  
Sarah Herron  
Amy Lantz  
Patrick Lynch  
Jim Muething (Board President)  
Steve Mullinger  
Blake Roe  
Ben Russert  
Tom Torre  
Phil Wehrman  
Erica Zoellner

## Community Council

Christopher Burger  
William Hawkins  
Ryan Holmes  
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Eric Johnson  
Michael Kessler Jr.  
Jeffrey Kroeger  
Simran Magowan  
Drew McDonald  
Andrew Mock  
Alex Rodger  
Collin Ryan  
Sally Schultz  
Lisa Thal  
Chris Virgulak (Chair)

**25 Head Coaches and  
Golf Instructors as  
well as over 124  
Volunteers invested  
their time mentoring  
kids on the golf  
courses in 2021!**



## Friends,

As our team gears up for another amazing year, our hearts are so full. It's hard to believe that another year has come and gone, and we have so much to be grateful for and proud of! 2021 was a year of tremendous growth and we are incredibly grateful to so many of you who invest your time and hearts into our continued work of Building Game Changers.

I know I'm not alone in saying that many days over the past couple years, life felt heavier than ever. So many days it's been hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel or pinpoint when normalcy will return. But I'm humbled by the work of our staff and coaches who made every effort to stretch and do what it takes to reach more kids and teens than ever before.

To our parents and families, thank you for lifting up and building up your kids, especially when life is heavy. Thank you for seeing the value of First Tee in their lives. Thank you for trusting us to support, encourage and teach your child. We hope we've done everything we can to support your efforts to raise them to be strong, to be ready for whatever life throws at them. We hope that we've made you proud to be part of our family.

I hope 2022 is a year where you all see the immense amount of good there really is around us.

Sincerely,

*Alicia*

Alicia Lawrence Yund  
Executive Director



# Growing to New Areas

We help kids write their growth story, and after 15 years, we're writing a new chapter of ours. In January 2021, we announced an expansion of our service area to include the kids and families of Butler and Warren counties.

Programming began last summer at four golf courses in Butler and Warren counties. As we continue to develop relationships in these counties, we will continue to grow our programs. In the first year, we served nearly 140 kids and teens at five courses. We also continued serving seventeen school program partnerships in the new part of our service area.

"Providing the youth of Butler and Warren counties continued opportunities for learning life skills through the game of golf is an honor for First Tee – GCNKY," said Jim Muething, First Tee – GCNKY Board President.



# Joining Forces

Each year, we continue to look for ways to partner with other youth organizations in the community. Last summer, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC), the Tony Yates Junior Golf Academy, Indigo Golf, and First Tee – Greater Cincinnati & Northern Kentucky came together to host an all-immersive 8-week program at Reeves Golf Course that provided golf and life skills instruction to underprivileged youth from recreation centers across Greater Cincinnati. Over 100 kids and teens participated from 6 different youth centers and recreational facilities. This was a true community effort as 136 volunteers from 13 area companies and golf clubs helped staff the 30 hours of programming these kids and teens received.



# Building Game Changers

## Making a Difference

Each November we recognize those who have had a positive impact shaping the lives of the kids enrolled in our programs with The Tom & Melissa Briner Heart of First Tee - GCNKY Award. We never intended for this award to be given to First Tee participants, but as it turns out we have some amazing participants well deserving of this award. Our 2021 recipient, Owen Mockabee, is one of these participants who lives and demonstrates the First Tee core values and is going above and beyond to promote our mission.

Owen's love for the game began in 2009 after watching Tom Watson and Stewart Cink battle it out in a 4-hole playoff at the Open Championship. Owen's mom, Wendy, knew she needed to get him involved in the game: "We saw a commercial for First Tee and thought that was something he needed to be involved in. We were thrilled to find a program within a few minutes of our house. I will never forget how excited he was when I picked him up after his first session. He couldn't say enough about the people he met and the things he did during the class. At this point in his life, Owen was pretty shy, so I was thrilled to see him so excited about participating in the program."

As Owen improved his game and matured, he advanced to the Birdie level where goal setting is a big part of the curriculum and a life skill that Owen has consistently used to accomplish his goals like becoming ACE certified at First Tee and playing collegiate golf. Owen is a senior at Lebanon High School where he excels on and off the course. He has advanced through the five levels of First Tee and just completed the four projects to become ACE Certified – the highest achievement for First Tee teens. Owen is also achieving his goal to play collegiate golf at Anderson University next fall. However, these aren't his only goals.

"Owen had a former classmate who had created a run to raise money for the Dragonfly Foundation so he thought he could do something similar with a golf outing. We asked him who he would raise funds for, and he immediately said First Tee," Wendy explained. And with that The Big "O" Classic began. That inaugural year in 2013 had 32 golfers. Owen played one hole with each of them, raising around \$3,000. Owen had so much fun that he immediately began planning for the next event and takes ownership of all of the planning as Chair of the event. He has gained confidence with each tournament and every meeting, year after year. Owen has now hosted 9 events and raised over \$70,000 for First Tee chapters! Some of the funding went to First Tee School Programs in elementary schools in Lebanon, where he attends school, and also used funds to help his First Tee peers like when he purchase a new driver to support a fellow participant who needed one before playing in a national First Tee event.

Owen has been a First Tee participant for 11 years but only with First Tee - GCNKY for the past year. "When the First Tee – Greater Miami Valley chapter closed its doors, Owen had to use perseverance to keep his event going. Once he found out that First Tee – GCNKY was expanding into Butler and Warren Counties, he knew the event would continue and he would now support this chapter. He was able to use the skills he had learned in his First Tee classes to speak to past event participants about why it was important to continue to host his event, even if the chapter he grew up in no longer existed," Wendy added.

In 2022, Owen will hold his 10th Big "O" Classic and hopes to make it the best one yet before heading off to college where he has earned three academic scholarships and plans to major in Business Management and Data Science. We are honored to have Owen as part of our chapter!



# Building Game Changers

## Dreams Come True

The PURE Insurance Championship Impacting First Tee is held at Pebble Beach Golf Links each September. For 18 years this national opportunity is a goal of many First Tee teens as they have the opportunity to be paired with a PGA TOUR Champions players providing life-changing mentoring opportunities. Victor Caliguri, a senior at Elder High School and a participant of our chapter for over a decade, made this a goal when he was very young. Teens must have a USGA GHIN handicap of 6 or better and can only apply when they are in the 8th-11th grades, with the tournament being held their following school year. This is a narrow window and takes much preparation and discipline to achieve this goal.

Vic put in the time and made a plan for success. He spent his free time at the course and working out, he played in countless tournaments throughout the year, and he was a leader on his high school golf team. Because of all of this work, Vic improved his game, his confidence, and faced obstacles head on becoming resilient and that much better.

Victor was not accepted the first year he applied. His next window was to apply was in 2020, a year of uncertainty. He applied but the First Tee component of the tournament was cancelled due to COVID and therefore the First Tee field was not announced. So this past spring was Victor's final year to apply and he was one of 81 teens selected to play in the 2021 PURE Insurance Championship. He did it!

Paired with PGA professional, Dean Wilson, the group teed off on Pebble Beach Golf Links on Friday and Spyglass Hill on Saturday. Victor played an outstanding two days, having four birdies on both courses. Although they missed the cut to compete on Sunday, what an incredible experience for Victor and one that he will not forget any time soon!

Victor continued to have an incredible senior year leading his Elder Panthers to a District championship and placed 2nd in the OHSAA Division 1 Boys Golf State Tournament. We wish him the best as he continues his studies at Eastern Michigan University majoring in Finance and where he has also committed to play on their Men's Golf Team.



## A Lifetime Impact

As First Tee approaches the 25th anniversary milestone, Charles R. Schwab has committed transformational support through a new Charles Schwab Challenge Grant. Last November, the \$25 million grant challenge was announced and will provide up to a \$1 match for every \$2 donated to First Tee Chapters by individuals, corporations and foundations now through 2026. This Grant program will provide First Tee Chapters across the network the opportunity to grow and deepen their impact over the next several years.

As one of the 150 Chapters in the First Tee network, this is significant for Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky and will allow us to amplify the generosity of so many local donors who invest in our efforts to reach more kids and teens in our community.

# What We Do

We exist to enable kids to build the **strength of character** that empowers them through a lifetime of new challenges. By seamlessly integrating the game of golf with life skills curriculum, we create learning experiences that **build inner strength, self-confidence, and resilience** that kids carry to everything they do.

With the belief that all kids deserve the chance to grow in a supportive environment with mentors guiding them, we are dedicated to building programs that are accessible, welcoming, and as impactful as they are fun.

We are incredibly proud of what we were able to accomplish in 2021 and are grateful to everyone who made it possible.



First Tee participants were selected for the PURE Insurance Championship, John Deere DRIVE your Future Academy, both First Tee National Opportunities. One senior also became an Evans Scholar.



We expanded our service area in Ohio to include Butler and Warren counties, bringing positive youth programming to seven counties.



In efforts to continue to build on our foundation and commitment to DEI, staff took part in over 40 hours of DEI training.



We continued to see incredible growth on the golf course. 1, 013 kids and teens enrolled in our golf course programming. Our highest participation to date. On the course, they learn things like a proper handshake and goal setting

# 2021

## Accomplishments



Three First Tee Seniors graduated in Spring 2021, each having been awarded the Rita S. Metcalfe Scholarship benefitting the First Tee. These seniors also received scholarships from their respective universities - The Ohio State Univ. (2) and Miami Univ.



Volunteers continue to be a huge part of our success. The addition of Corporate and Group Volunteers made all the difference in 2021 adding an additional 136 community program volunteers to our 124 volunteers on the golf course.



With the addition of a dedicated staff member to manage our School Program, our number of active school partners grew to 66 schools delivering in PE classes. Expansion of our school programs was made possible by the Charles H. Dater Foundation.

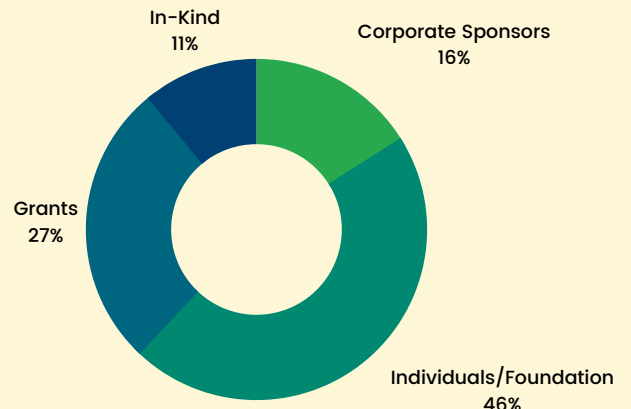


A record number of girls enrolled in our on course program and LPGA\*USGA Girls Golf classes. 33% of all registrations were female kids and teens. This surpasses the national average of 23%.

# Financial Analysis

We continued efforts to strengthen our financial position to ensure the quality and growth of our programming operations. We are careful stewards of the support we receive, keeping a sharp eye on our expenses and seeking operating efficiencies wherever possible.

In 2021, we assembled a service area expansion committee who worked to secure vital resources and funding to sustainably launch service in Butler and Warren counties. We are grateful to individuals, grant funders, corporate partners, and other support that enables us to reach an increasing number of children in the community.



Donations by Type of Investor

## Clubhouse Society

The Clubhouse Society enables individuals to mirror the commitment of participants. Individuals contributing a minimum of \$2,006, in honor of the year we were established, annually are recognized members. We encourage a 5 year commitment to echo the five levels of progression a child makes through our Life Skills Program.

### 2021 Clubhouse Society Members

Cindy Crilley  
 Gary and Dina Gruber  
 The Muething Family  
 Steve and Gail Mullinger  
 Tom and Torey Torre  
 Chris and Nancy Virgulak  
 Phil and Maria Wherman  
 Dave and Lisa Witgall

## Grants

In 2021 we were grateful to receive generous grants for critical new and ongoing programs from the following funders:

- J. Frederick & Helen B. Vogel Charitable Trust
- Western & Southern Financial Fund
- Charles H. Dater Foundation
- Wadsworth Golf Charities Foundation
- WohlgelmutH Herschede Foundation
- PGA Tour First Tee Foundation
- PNC Charitable Trusts
- LPGA Foundation
- Dick's Sporting Goods Foundation
- USGA IDEA Grant
- We Are Golf Grant
- Elsa Heisel Sule Charitable Trust
- Middletown Community Foundation



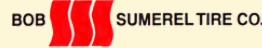
# Special Thank You To Our Corporate 2021 Partners!

We are incredibly appreciative of our corporate partners who support our mission. Regardless of the level of support our partners choose, they are directly impacting the kids and teens in our community.

## Gold Sponsors



## Silver Partners



## Bronze Partners



## Alumni Spotlight

"First Tee was the highlight of my summer every single year. The family-like atmosphere, the desire to play the game, and love of teaching kids made me excited to come to FT every single day. Whether it was me getting to learn alongside my peers or coaching alongside the world's best set of volunteers, I loved every second I was at Reeves. Truthfully, FT was like my second home. When you're surrounded by caring, kind, and loving people, it's hard to not want to keep coming back. Teenage years are some of the hardest, and that was certainly the case for me as well. My teenage years were some of my roughest years to date, both in school and at home. FT granted me a safe space to just be me, and that was the motivation I needed to keep coming back."

- Morgan Thomas, Alumni

