

## 2024 YEAR END NEWSLETTER



We hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable 2024! As we begin to transition to the new year, the First Tee – Greater Trenton (FTGT) is grateful to our many donors, volunteers, and community partners for your unwavering support throughout the year. We had another banner year due to incredible people like you, whose support has enabled FTGT to deliver life lessons that build character and empowers young people to navigate through a lifetime of challenges and opportunities. The FTGT Board and Staff are truly thankful for the many committed individuals like you, and sincerely thank you for your belief in our mission.

**Please enjoy our newsletter which focuses on growing our participate base, program expansion, and 2024 highlights**

## 2024 PROGRAMMING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

***Ranked #1 in our First Tee Peer Group Compared Against 12 Other Similar Chapters***

- An **14.7%** increase of Life Skills Experience Participants for 2024
  - 2024: 562
  - 2023: 490
- Percentage of Female Participants for the Year: **47.5%** increase of 2.5% points versus last year)
  - 2023 Percentage: 45%
  - 2023 Peer Group Peer Percentage: 36%
- Percentage of Diverse Participants for the Year: **81.0%** (an increase of 2.0% points versus last year)
  - 2023 Percentage: 79%
  - 2023 Peer Group Percentage: 35.5%
  - Service Area Index is 52% (Mercer and Northern Burlington Counties). We exceeded that mark by 31 points)
- Annual Retention Rate for the Year: **44%**
  - 2023 Peer Group Percentage: 41%
- Donor Support: over 50% of our participants receive financial support to attend programming
- We had our Kick-Off of our “Tiger Program” to get Trenton area youth on the golf course, competing

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In January of 2024, First Tee - Greater Trenton partnered with SWA Connect to provide **FREE TABLETS** and **INTERNET SERVICE** to qualified families. Over 100 families applied to receive this amazing offer that will help close the digital divide. We made this offer available to all fraternities, sororities, faith-based organizations and other nonprofits.

**Please see the smiling faces of those families who participated in this unbelievable offer**



First Tee - Greater Trenton was incredibly grateful to Wynn Outfits for their generous and unexpected donation of youth golf apparel. Thanks to their support, our young participants will step onto the golf course in style in 2024. This thoughtful gesture means the world to our kids and helps us continue fostering their love for the game.

### Dressing in Style for the Golf Course!



First Tee – Greater Trenton was honored to receive a generous 2024 grant of **\$11,600** from Women Golfers Give Back in support of our programs for girls. This funding will help us continue empowering young girls through golf and character-building initiatives. In June, our girls participated in the Annual Golf Clinic and Fundraising Tournament at St. Davids Golf Club. They had a ball interacting with other youth from the local Philadelphia area.

**Thank you, Women Golfers Give Back, for your incredible support!**





## 2024 FTGT ANNUAL GOLF FUNDRAISER AT TPC JASNA POLANA

First Tee - Greater Trenton extends our heartfelt gratitude to all the sponsors and participants who joined us for our Annual Golf Fundraiser at TPC Jasna Polana. Your support made this year's event another incredible success, and we were especially fortunate to enjoy such wonderful weather! We thank our major sponsors: **Bank of America, Case's Pork Roll Company, Yamaha Golf Car, The Coca-Cola Company, Smolar Group Restaurants (McDonald's Franchise) and Arlee's Raw Blends**

*Thank you for helping us continue our mission, and  
We Cannot Wait to see Everyone Again on Monday, April 28, 2025!*



## 2024 FTGT GOLF 4 GIRLS GOLF FUNDRAISER AT COBBLESTONE CREEK COUNTRY CLUB

We are thankful to all the golfers who joined us today for our Golf 4 Girls event. This all-women's event is dedicated to empowering our First Tee girls by providing them with greater access and opportunities in golf and beyond. A special "thank you" to our major sponsors for their generous support: **Rita's Franchise Company, LLC, Northfield Bank, Edward Jones, and David and Marilyn Friedman Foundation.**

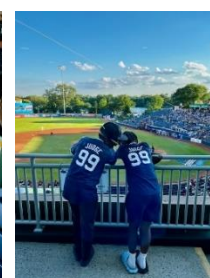
**Your contributions make a lasting impact on our mission to inspire and support  
the next generation of young women golfers!**  
*Our 2025 event is confirmed for Wednesday, September 17 at Trenton Country Club*



## FUN AT THE TRENTON THUNDER BASEBALL GAME!

We would like to pass on our gratitude to everyone who joined us at the Trenton Thunder baseball game in June. It was wonderful to share this experience with **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County, Millhill Child & Development,** and our First Tee participants and their families.

A special thank you to **Tom Dolan, President of Case Pork Roll Company,** for his generous donation of the suite—it truly made the evening unforgettable!

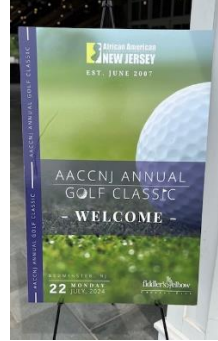




## WE THANK THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF NJ OUR YOUTH WELCOMED GOLFERS DURING THEIR ANNUAL GOLF FUNDRAISER

We thank the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey for partnering with us during their annual golf fundraiser. Our youth had an incredible experience, where they had the chance to meet and greet golfers at selected holes during the golf event. We are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate in empowering the next generation through golf!

**AND ONE OF OUR PARTICIPANT FAMILIES WON THE GRAND DOOR PRIZE – A LARGE SCREEN SAMSUNG TV**



## MORE FUN FOR OUR PARTICIPANTS...THIS TIME AT TOPGOLF IN MT. LAUREL, NJ

In August, our participants had an amazing time at TopGolf! Events like these help us inspire and empower kids and teens, using the game of golf to build confidence, character, and life skills. Thank you to everyone who made this day so memorable!



## OUR LONG-STANDING PARTNERSHIP WITH CHRISTINA SEIX ACADEMY

We continue to be grateful for the on-going partnership with the students at CHRISTINA SEIX ACADEMY (CSA). This summer, Justin Hogue joined us as a summer intern. Justin is former FTGT participant and student at CSA and is a current student at The Lawrenceville School. He shared, *"After participating and being involved in the First Tee for so long, it has become a special place in my heart. I now desire to give back to the program so I can become a buddy/mentor."*



## LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PARTICIPANTS

FIRST TEE - GREATER TRENTON'S foursome was *ready, focused, and excited* to represent us in July during First Tee Northeast Regional Challenge in Philadelphia. They represented us well as they highlighted their skills and sportsmanship throughout the week.

### FIRST TEE NORTHEAST REGION IN PHILADELPHIA



## NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PARTICIPANTS

Nick Yagnik, a standout from First Tee – Greater Trenton, in September highlighted his talent at the PURE Insurance Championship held at Pebble Beach Golf Links. In this prestigious event, he had the unique opportunity to be paired with Stephen Ames, a prominent figure on the PGA TOUR Champions.

This unique event pairs each First Tee participant with a PGA TOUR Champions player and amateurs from the business world. Ranging in ages from 14 to 18, the First Tee players compete for the pro-junior team title. The teens represented 44 First Tee chapters from across the country. Participants were selected by a national panel of judges based on their personal growth and development through First Tee's programs, as well as their playing ability. On average, participants have been involved with First Tee for more than seven years, have a 3.95 GPA and have recorded a 1.5 handicap.

### PURE CHAMPIOHSHIP AT PEBBLE BEACH: NICK YAGNIK



[Nick's Interview on the Golf Channel](#)



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT – RAYMOND JIN



### Raymond Jin with Rory McIlroy at the Wells Fargo Pro-Am in 2021

Raymond graduated from our program in 2021 as a senior graduating from West Windsor – Plainsboro North High School and he remembers how First Tee has impacted his life by preparing him for Yale University. Below he shares the following thoughts: *“after going through First Tee’s golf and life skills curriculum, I have completely transformed into an outgoing, approachable individual, ready to take on any challenge. First Tee – Greater Trenton allowed me to mature through opportunities like the National Life Skills & Leadership Academy and the Northeast Regional Challenge. In college and beyond, I will continue to make an impact in my community and embody the ideals of a global citizen.”*

**Today:** Raymond is a senior at Yale University and he has provided us with the following commentary. *“Going to Yale has been a life-changing experience. Over the past four years, I have taken advantage of many opportunities to explore my interests and serve my community.”*

As a member of the Yale Provost’s Undergraduate Advisory Committee, I advised the Provost of Yale University on university academic policies and the allocation belonging at Yale. As a Yale President’s Public Service Fellow during the summer after my freshman year, I had the opportunity to work in the Department of Economic Development at the City Hall of New Haven. There, I was able to impact the lives of New Haven citizens by:

1. Helping execute a distribution strategy for \$125 million in federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding during the COVID pandemic.
2. Reviewing legal documentation and advancing work on the proposed expansion of the runway at Tweed New Haven Airport.
3. Conducting a review on the health of local businesses through the Downtown New Haven survey, in which I went door-to-door and interviewed local business owners.
4. Research and update local and national economic indicators to aid in economic recovery efforts during the COVID pandemic.

This summer, I was an intern at JPMorgan Chase in their Investment Banking Division on the Public Finance team. There, I was able to expand my impact by helping execute financings that enabled the construction of crucial facilities like schools, hospitals, bridges, and utilities. I am excited to have the opportunity to pursue a career in finance while making an impact on the lives of people throughout the United States.

### How has First Tee helped me?

I have been able to practice The First Tee’s Nine Core Values every day at work and in school, in and out of the classroom. I have been able to exercise good judgement about how I use my time wisely, and I have been able to develop confidence in my abilities over time by persevering through academic and life challenges. Over the past four years, I have taken on increasing responsibility as a member of my Residential College and local community. From serving as a member of the Provost’s Undergraduate Advisory Committee, to serving as a member of the Executive Committee of Dwight Hall, the oldest student-run service organization in the United States, I have been able to succeed academically and lead a purposeful life on campus because of The First Tee’s Nine Core Values

[Raymond's Wells Fargo Championship Video](#)

# **FTGT MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of FTGT is 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.

## **FTGT STRATEGIC VISION**

FTGT provides area youth with alternative and accessible forums for positive character development. We recognize that golf is an ideal vehicle to encourage this type of development, offering essential values including courtesy, respect, judgment, responsibility, confidence, honesty, integrity, sportsmanship and perseverance. More importantly, FTGT fulfills this need in an educational environment that is challenging, exciting, enjoyable and continuous throughout the year.

**Donate (AND SPREAD THE WORD)**: The expansion and sustainability of the First Tee - Greater Trenton programs are made possible by our generous donors. Please consider making an investment in the lives of young people served by the First Tee - Greater Trenton. As evidenced by the few select highlights of 2024, our high-quality, positive youth development programs continue addressing the needs of our community and further development of our youth.

**Jeff Hughes**, *President*

**Rosalind Williford**, *Vice President*

**Ed Benson**, *Executive Director*

**Rob Connelley** *Program Director*

**Robert McGill**, *Lead Coach*

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