



2020

ANNUAL REVIEW



Building Game Changers

OUR HEART AND SOUL

We enable kids and teens 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. We provide active learning experiences that develop inner strength, self-confidence and resilience that kids can carry into everything they set out to accomplish.



NINE CORE VALUES + INCLUSION

Honesty

Integrity

Sportsmanship

Respect

Confidence

Responsibility

Perseverance

Courtesy

Judgment

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REFLECTING ON 2020



DAVE WHITEHEAD

Board President
First Tee - Benton Harbor

What a challenging, unprecedented and transformational year for First Tee - Benton Harbor. 2020 was our 16th year of programming, and we had big goals to achieve. While we continued on the journey of our long-term strategy on driving awareness, enhanced programming, and flawless execution, we were thrust into a year that no one could have anticipated. Our youth needed stability more than ever as we not only entered into a global pandemic, but also witnessed displays of racism and social unrest.

The killing of George Floyd and the resulting national spotlight on racial injustice drove the need for immediate action. Racism comes in all forms, whether it be systemic, due to lack of awareness, or a reflection of cultural norms. It was a time to reflect, educate ourselves, learn new perspectives, and chat with others about their experiences. There was no easy fix, no one solution to make this better. Our youth needed us more than ever. Our responsiveness in programming and outreach, while staying grounded in our principles, made us focus on what our youth needed – taking actions to be that change.

While kids were already challenged with virtual learning and the safety protocols associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, we needed to pivot in order to connect with our youth to drive education, answer questions, and be as supportive as we could be. We launched a new podcast series, continued Coalition classes virtually, implemented a reduced capacity summer program, and made our extended staff available through multiple avenues. The staff did an outstanding job continuing to drive our long-term strategic initiatives while also showing the agility to respond to the new demands of 2020.

Our mission is focused on YOUTH DEVELOPMENT through the nine core values, including INCLUSION as our tenth core value added specifically for our chapter. We appreciate all of the increased support from you as we further our mission as we head into 2021.

Sincerely,

Dave Whitehead

REFLECTING ON 2020



EBON SANDERS

Executive Director
First Tee - Benton Harbor

Looking back on an immensely challenging year, on behalf of the staff and the board of directors of First Tee - Benton Harbor, I want to thank each of you for your valued support. Similar to many other organizations, First Tee - Benton Harbor faced unprecedented difficulties in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm pleased to say that the strength of our chapter and our purpose endured, producing accomplishments worth remembering.

Young people are facing new challenges every day in school and life, and First Tee - Benton Harbor coaches and volunteers are working hard to empower personal growth, resilience and self-confidence – all through the great game of golf. If 2020 has taught us anything, it's that our programs are needed now more than ever.

Since 2005, we have been successful in positively impacting kids from all backgrounds. As we move forward, we are strengthening our resolve to be agents of change and ensure young people from underserved and underrepresented areas in our communities have greater access to First Tee - Benton Harbor and the programs we provide.

We are also continuing to open the doors to life-changing opportunities through national First Tee events and our First Tee - Benton Harbor Scholarship program.

I strongly believe First Tee - Benton Harbor can, and will, play a larger role than ever before in the important areas of diversity, equity and inclusion in Michigan's Great Southwest!

Together, with our school and community partners, First Tee - Benton Harbor overcame incredible obstacles this year I am very proud of our chapter's adaptability during a very difficult time for everyone and excited by our positive momentum. We are playing a critical role in building the futures of young people, and your support is what makes it possible.

Thank you,

Ebon Sanders

OVER 2,500

**PARTICIPANTS
IMPACTED
DURING THE
PANDEMIC**



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF IMPACT



First Tee - Benton Harbor celebrated its 15th year impacting the lives of local youth in 2020.

Since its inception in 2005, First Tee - Benton Harbor has impacted more than 10,000 young people through its Life Skills Experience program, providing children with experiences that build character and prepare them for their futures. Using the game of golf as the platform, participants learn critical life skills—like goal setting, conflict resolution and managing emotions—to help them grow socially, emotionally and academically.

“First Tee offers so many more things than just the game of golf,” said Kevin Guzzo, Board Member. “It offers kids opportunities to meet other people not only locally but at the national level. It also gives opportunities for kids to learn life long skills. How to shake hands and look someone in the eye when they’re introducing themselves. First Tee teaches things like manners, healthy habits, discipline, and the nine core values speak for themselves.”

First Tee - Benton Harbor is currently serving more than 3,500 youth annually. Additionally, First Tee has been introduced to more than a dozen schools and youth centers, reaching thousands of additional children throughout the community. The chapter’s success has been a result of many individuals, including hundreds of volunteers who have donated their time over the years.



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF IMPACT

CONT.



“First Tee is relevant because it teaches a lot more than just golf,” said Troy Jones, Volunteer. “Golf is secondary. It’s the life skills and all of the information that they learn about various things through the things they get to experience that will last a whole lifetime, while they might only play golf for a short period of time.”

Jones said it touches him deeply in his heart to see students who have been involved in the program continue on and become successful in life.

“I am deeply proud of the positive impact First Tee - Benton Harbor has been able to provide over these 15 years,” said Ebon Sanders, Executive Director. “I’m especially pleased that there are a number of young people who are now in a different place because of our work.”

First Tee - Benton Harbor is one of 150 chapters across the First Tee network dedicated to helping young people build character through the game of golf.

“Our mission and methods haven’t changed much through the years; First Tee - Benton Harbor has and always will be made up of caring adults who understand that we do more than teach a game to the young people we serve,” said Sanders. “Through fantastic partnerships with youth-serving organizations, incredible community volunteers and a caring and engaged board of directors, we have been able to make a positive impact in our community.”



first tee

benton harbor



2020 HIGHLIGHTS



Conducted year-round virtual and in-person programming with First Tee - Benton Harbor participants. Sessions focused on helping them maintain their high academic standards and their relationship to the game of golf, as well as providing pandemic-related social and emotional support.



Started a First Tee Podcast Series conducting zoom interviews with local celebrities like NBA player Wilson Chandler, former NFL player Joiqee Bell, Harbor Shores Director of Instruction Ross Smith and more! Guests discussed their relationships with the game of golf, favorite First Tee Core Value and why they support First Tee among other topics.



Held our first ever Golf Marathon! On September 30, more than 20 golfers came together locally and across the United States to play up to 100+ holes of golf in a day to support First Tee - Benton Harbor programs and participants.



2020 HIGHLIGHTS



Five First Tee - Benton Harbor participants were selected for national opportunities. Maya Hunter and Cameron Dirlam were chosen for the PURE Insurance Championship Impacting the First Tee at Pebble Beach. We have had 7 chapter participants selected for this event in the last five years.



Increased the School Program to eight schools. Many students are teeing off for the first time thanks to our School Program, bringing our curriculum to the children's physical education class. By teaching elementary students First Tee's Nine Core Values and Nine Healthy Habits, we're putting them on the course to a healthy and active lifestyle.



Continued our commitment to our graduating First Tee seniors. In 2020, despite not being able to host our Scholarship Dinner in person, we awarded \$40,500 in college scholarships!



2020 HIGHLIGHTS




Safely conducted summer programming for more than 200 registered participants and 2,278 additional children through safe outreach programming taught in community schools.

Engaged with hundreds of our participants and their families by providing free pre-recorded golf lessons through our social media channels.

Began a relationship with RISE to Win organization to develop a curriculum and delivery mechanism to address social justice issues. We will partner with local high schools in our community for this effort and address unconscious bias, systemic inequities and building communities that foster inclusion across all of Michigan's Great Southwest.

Transition the Coalition program, our post high school prep program conducted through a partnership with the Benton Harbor Promise, to a virtual format working year-round with at least 12 students each week. The Coalition program provides our students with SAT preparation and practice tests, tutoring, guest speakers, college campus tours, community volunteer opportunities and fun outings to increase their chances of achieving academic success in high school and beyond.





**“When I get challenged
with something I always
think back to what I’ve
learned through First
Tee and it always helps
me overcome whatever
comes my way.”**

JORDAN MILLER

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Jordan Miller is an 8th grader at Lakeshore Middle School and an Eagle Level participant at First Tee - Benton Harbor. Miller has been a part of First Tee - Benton Harbor for over 5 years.

“My favorite part about First Tee is making new friends and getting better at golf,” said Miller.

Jordan has a lot of great memories at First Tee but one stands out as his favorite.

I love when I connect with my driver and hit the ball as far as possible. I remember one time where the ball traveled almost 300 yards.”

First Tee has helped Jordan face obstacles in his life. Two years ago Jordan was facing a tough challenge when he had to have hip surgery that would sideline him for almost a year.

“First Tee really helped me keep a positive mindset and not dwell on my negative situation,” said Miller. “When I get challenged with something I always think back to what I’ve learned through First Tee and it always helps me overcome whatever comes my way.”





Now that Jordan is fully recovered he has set some very high goals for himself as he heads into high school.

“I want to be a Division I football player,” said Miller. The ultimate goal is to make it to the professional level.”

When Jordan isn’t at First Tee he enjoys playing football, weight training and playing basketball with his friends.



GOLF MARATHON



On September 30th, 2020 over twenty golfers came together locally and across the United States to play up to 100+ holes of golf in a day and in doing so raising money for First Tee - Benton Harbor.

Lake Michigan Hills Golf Club was the host course for this event. Point O'Woods Golf & Country Club, Lost Dunes Golf Club and Rivermont Country Club in Johns Creek, Georgia also hosted golfers.

Four golfers completed 100 holes or more and the leader of the day finished with 201 holes played!

GOLF MARATHON CONT.



Each golfer maintained a peer to peer fundraising page leading up to the event to fundraise on behalf of First Tee - Benton Harbor. Golfers solicited flat donations to their individual fundraising pages, or per-hole pledges to be calculated after completing the event. Golfers and volunteers braved rain, hail and 30+ MPH winds to grind out as many holes as possible.

At the end of the day, over **\$50,000** was raised to support First Tee - Benton Harbor and the young people they serve!

"What an incredible 1st Annual First Tee - Benton Harbor Golf Marathon! In the midst of a global pandemic, incredibly cool fall weather and even a little sleet, our community (and others around the United States) selflessly stepped up to support our organization and the young people we serve," said Ebon Sanders, Executive Director.

"Thank you to all of our very generous sponsors, donors, volunteers and especially golfers for making this event so successful. Through their efforts we were able to raise funds to assist us as we continue Building Game Changers throughout Michigan's Great Southwest!"

With the great success of the inaugural First Tee - Benton Harbor Golf Marathon, we look forward to this event for many years to come!

MAYA HUNTER



Maya Hunter is an ACE Level participant with First Tee - Benton Harbor and 12th grader at St. Joseph High School. Maya has been a part of First Tee - Benton Harbor for over 10 years.

“First Tee has taught me how to golf, but also taught me how to make friends, grow as a person, and put others first,” said Hunter. “Summer programming has been an outlet for me to get away from my normal life and have fun with friends I don’t usually hangout with.”



Hunter cherishes a lot of memories over the years but one stands out the most.

“My favorite memories were the play nights out on the course.”

Maya attributes First Tee - Benton Harbor with helping her come out of her shell and helping to shape her into the person she is today.

“I wouldn’t be who I am now without First Tee - Benton Harbor,” said Hunter.

“Looking back at when I first started with the program, I was shy, unsure and very quiet. Now, with the foundation of the core values to guide me toward the most important things in life, I’ve become more confident in myself and am more aware of how my words and actions affect other people.”

Hunter has big plans when it comes to college.



“Golf-wise, I’d like to continue into a college golf career as an important member of the team and really soak it all in,” said Hunter. I am looking forward to playing golf in college and am already starting to set goals for myself.” First among Maya’s collegiate goals is to win her conference championship and place in the NCAA DII tournament.

Maya has overcome a lack of self-confidence throughout the years. “It really wasn’t until junior year of high school I really started to believe my opinions are worth sharing and I shouldn’t be ashamed of myself,” said Hunter. “Those beliefs and increase in self-confidence naturally came with age, but also from my two best friends who showed me I am worthy of everything I have and want. I wouldn’t be the same person I am today without them, or sports, or frankly the First Tee.”

Hunter has been a key part of the girls golf program at St. Joseph High School for the last four years and has really developed into an important leader.





"For me, as I became more confident in my game, I became more confident in myself," said Hunter. "That helped me realize I did have something to offer other than my golf skills. I began to offer advice to my teammates and be there when they needed someone on a hard day. I eventually realized I needed to step up and be an outlet and friend to my teammates who weren't as confident."

Mentors have also played a crucial role in helping Maya develop into the person she is today. "I think the biggest influence in my golf game and myself as a player was having a mentor to look up to," said Hunter. "I had a mentor for two years on the high school golf team, who was also a member of First Tee - Benton Harbor, and she really set the expectations for what I wanted to pursue in my near future."

Because of the important mentors in her life, Hunter was able to return the favor to her teammates around her. "After my mentor graduated, I took what I learned from her and tried to give that back to the players on my team," said Hunter.

Outside of First Tee, Maya loves to play soccer and basketball and enjoys being outdoors. She loves hiking, biking, camping, jet skiing, snowmobiling, skiing, hammocking or just hanging out with friends. She also loves road tripping around the country with her family.



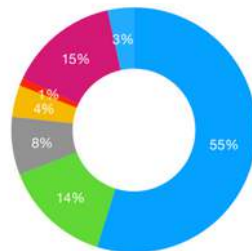
OPERATING REPORT

REVENUE

REVENUE (thousands of dollars)

Golf Events	\$158
Individual & Small Business	\$41
Grants	\$22
Participant Fees	\$12
Scholarship Dinner	\$3
Harbor Shores Use of Facility	\$42
Other In-Kind Donations	\$10
Total expenses	\$288

Investment Income \$29

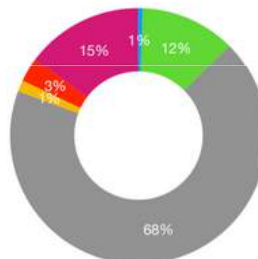


- Golf Events
- Individual & Small Business
- Grants
- Participant Fees
- Scholarship Dinner
- Harbor Shores Use of Facility
- Other In-Kind Donations

EXPENSE

EXPENSES (in thousands of dollars)

Scholarships	\$42
Operating Expenses	\$239
Utilities	\$5
Accounting	\$11
Harbor Shores In-Kind	\$52
Total income	\$351



- Golf Events
- Scholarships
- Operating Expenses
- Utilities
- Accounting
- Harbor Shores In-Kind

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