



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | April 17, 2018**

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### **ALDERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN TO LINK GOLF SKILLS WITH LIFE LESSONS**



*Pictured (L-R): Executive Director of the West Virginia Golf Association, Brad Ullman; PE Teacher at Alderson Elementary School, Jason Ward; Front Office Assistant at MedExpress, Nikki Massey; Center Manager of MedExpress, Twila Booze; Principal at Alderson Elementary School, Deborah Fairchild; Director of The First Tee of West Virginia, Ashley Hamilton.*

(Charleston, WV) – Elementary school students at Alderson Elementary School in Greenbrier County will be introduced to the basic skills of golf along with character and health education in their physical education program. It will be taught by physical educators using safe, fun lesson plans provided in The First Tee National School Program curriculum. Funding for the program was provided by MedExpress Urgent Care, a neighborhood health care provider.

Nationwide, more than at 8,000 schools in 1,200 school districts have been introduced to The First Tee National School Program. Throughout West Virginia, 91 schools serving more than 32,000 students offer the program during their Physical Education classes.

“We’re proud to partner with The First Tee in our home state of West Virginia to provide safe, fun and educational activities that help Alderson Elementary School students chart a course for a healthy and active lifestyle,” said Dan Neely, regional vice president, MedExpress. “As a community health care partner, MedExpress believes strongly in the value of programming that supports the long-term health and wellbeing of West Virginia children. It’s our privilege to play a role in making sure these students have the groundwork they need to lead healthy and happy lives.”

Launched in 2004, The First Tee National School Program helps students develop an appreciation for the positive personal and social values associated with golf. Students engage in safe, fun lesson activities that lead to motor skill development and while gaining an introduction to a lifelong recreation and health-enhancing activity.

The curriculum was developed by The First Tee along with leading experts in physical education and positive youth development. It is aligned with and meets national standards developed by the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE). Physical educators delivering the program are formally trained and certified by The First Tee and use safe, developmentally-appropriate lesson plans and equipment in their classes.

The lesson plans include The First Tee Nine Healthy Habits, which were developed in partnership with the ANNIKA Foundation and Florida Hospital for Children.

According to a survey among 860 physical educators using The First Tee National School Program curriculum, 66 percent reported using The First Tee Nine Core Values—character education seamlessly delivered as part of the program—in other sports and activities they teach beyond golf. A third-party case study conducted in one Midwestern school district in 2011 further validated the program when administrators and physical educators reported finding great value in the program.

For more information about The First Tee National School Program, visit [www.thefirsttee.org](http://www.thefirsttee.org) or about The First Tee of West Virginia, visit [www.thefirstteewestvirginia.org](http://www.thefirstteewestvirginia.org).

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**ABOUT THE FIRST TEE OF WEST VIRGINIA:** The First Tee of West Virginia is a state-wide youth development organization operated by the West Virginia Golf Association, focused on introducing the game of golf and its inherent values to young people. On golf courses, in elementary schools and on military installations, The First Tee has helped shape the lives of young people from all walks of life by teaching values like integrity, respect and perseverance. Our mission, supported in part by Citizens Conservation Corps of West Virginia, Smith Land Surveying Inc., Little General Stores and Tri-State Roofing & Sheet Metal Company 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. Through our programs young people discover how skills essential to success on a golf course can also help them flourish in life.

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