



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | October 17, 2017**

**CONTACT: ASHLEY HAMILTON**

Phone: 304.391.5000 ext. 205

[ahamilton@wvga.org](mailto:ahamilton@wvga.org) | [www.wvga.org](http://www.wvga.org) | [www.thefirstteewestvirginia.org](http://www.thefirstteewestvirginia.org)

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

(Charleston, WV) – Beginning in September, students at Neale Elementary School began being introduced to the basic skills of golf along with The First Tee Nine Core Values: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy and judgment. The lesson plans also include health activities that focus on physical, social and emotional wellness. Jordan Brown, Physical Education Teacher, received training and has been teaching the lessons using safe, fun lesson plans provided in The First Tee National School Program curriculum.

Today, select students traveled to Parkersburg Country Club to partake in The First Tee Life Skills Experience which is used to further enhance and instill the inherent values of the game of golf and teach participants how these values transfer into other aspects of their lives. These lessons for life are learned through a variety of golf-related activities with the primary goal of having fun. Participants learn about themselves and others through a range of experiences enhancing their golf skills and fundamental values for life. As opportunities on the golf course expand so do the opportunities for the rest of their lives.

“The First Tee uses golf to teach youth life lessons and leadership skills,” says Ashley Hamilton, Director of The First Tee of West Virginia. “Sessions include a fun, group setting for youth to help them to become good golfers and even better people.”

Funding for The First Tee National School Program was provided by Parkersburg Country Club, while funding for today’s outreach program was provided by Tri-State Roofing & Sheet Metal Company. Nationwide, more than at 8,000 schools in 1,200 school districts have introduced to The First Tee National School Program. There are currently (85) schools offering it throughout the State of West Virginia.

“Neale Elementary School is proud to be working with The First Tee of West Virginia and the PGA Members from Parkersburg Country Club to introduce golf to our young people at an early age” says Jordan Brown, Physical Education Teacher at Neale Elementary School. “Our hope is to grow the sport with increased interest from these young students who are the future of the golf program at Jackson Middle School and Parkersburg High School.”

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 also 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.

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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.

THE FIRST TEE OF WEST VIRGINIA MEDIA CONTACT:

ASHLEY HAMILTON

Phone: 304.391.5000 ext. 205

[ahamilton@wvga.org](mailto:ahamilton@wvga.org) | [www.wvga.org](http://www.wvga.org) | [www.thefirstteewestvirginia.org](http://www.thefirstteewestvirginia.org)