



2026 First Tee Game Changers Academy – Participant Application

July 18–22, 2026 | Minneapolis, Minnesota

Application Deadline: March 18, 2026

Overview:

First Tee Game Changers Academy Honoring Joe Louis Barrow, Jr. is a five-day learning and empowerment academy. Participants selected across the U.S. will engage in meaningful discussions on self-awareness, inclusive leadership, and community building skills they will carry with them throughout their lives. First Tee invites its partners to lead dynamic, interactive workshops, complemented by reflective activities guided by our nationally trained First Tee coaches. This experience is designed to enlighten, inspire, and empower teens, preparing them to become Game Changers in their communities now and in the future.

The academy is the ultimate tribute to Joe Louis Barrow, Jr., a fearless champion of change.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Each Chapter may nominate up to **three** participants
 - Chapters with 100+ active participants ages 14-18 recorded in Salesforce as of December 31, 2025 may nominate up to five participants
- Participants must be between 14 and 18 years old (applicants must reach 14th birthday by the first day of the event date and not have reached their 19th birthday by the event's conclusion)
- Classified as a high school freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior as of spring semester 2026
- Entered in Salesforce and has been an active participant for a minimum of two years
- Participants who attended the Game Changers Academy previously are not eligible to apply
- If selected, the participant must be able to travel to Minneapolis, MN on July 18-22, 2026

Application Process:

Applications will be submitted online at <https://firsttee.smapply.org>. Please follow the instructions in the “Quick Start Guide” on how to complete this process. Please contact your Chapter representative if you have difficulty with the application process. The online application will consist of the following:

Application Tasks		
Task	Scored	Not Scored
Participant General Information	☐	☒
School & Community Activity Chart	☐	☒
Three (3) Short Answer Essays	☒	☐
Chapter Participation Survey	☒	☐
Letter of Recommendation	☒	☐
Participant Bio Form	☐	☒
Participant Headshot	☐	☒
Social Media, Code of Conduct and Media Waiver Forms	☐	☒
Release of Liability Form	☐	☒

Field Size: Up to 72 Participants

Selection Process:

Following the close of applications, a selection committee made up of Chapter staff, First Tee headquarters staff and Partner Staff will review and score applications using the criteria below:

Short Answer Essays (60%)	Chapter Survey (27%)	Letter of Recommendation (13%)
Evaluated based on: • Content of essays • Genuine, quality responses	Evaluated based on: • Authenticity of content • Details of participant achievements • Rationale for nomination	Evaluated based on: • Authenticity of relationship • Quality of content • Depth of understanding of participant

Selected Participants will be notified on May 13, 2026.

Travel & Stipend Information:

All ground transportation, lodging and meals will be provided for the duration of the event. All participants will stay at the University of Minnesota, sharing a room with one other participant, and will be assigned to gender-specific floors. First Tee Alumni will serve as chaperones and will monitor participants, perform bed checks each night, enforce the curfew, etc.

First Tee will provide each participant who will be flying a stipend of up to \$500 to assist with the cost of airfare. Participants who live within 150 miles of Minneapolis, MN will be required to drive to the event and will not be eligible for a transportation stipend. Mileage stipends will not be provided to participants who choose to drive to the event. Stipends will be sent directly to the Chapters following the conclusion of the event.

Policy on the Use of AI in Event Applications:

To maintain fairness and uphold the integrity of the application process, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as text generators or automated writing assistance, is strictly prohibited when completing event applications. Applicants are expected to submit original responses that reflect their own thoughts, experiences and perspectives. Submissions found to include AI-generated content may be disqualified. We value authenticity and encourage all applicants to share their unique voice and genuine enthusiasm in their applications.

Participant Submission Policy:

Online application **must be submitted by the First Tee participant. Applications submitted by a parent, guardian or Chapter representative will be automatically disqualified.** First Tee will not accept paper applications, emails or correspondence from families of participants. The deadline to apply online is March 18, 2026

Questions:

Brittany Wynne
Director, Events

BrittanyWynne@firsttee.org

GENERAL INFORMATION FORM			
Participant Name (First and Last):			
Chapter:			
Participant E-Mail:		Participant Cell #:	
Current Home Address:			
City:	State:	ZIP Code:	
Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):			
Does the participant have any allergies (drugs, stings, pollens, etc.)? ☐ Yes ☐ No		If yes, please explain:	
Does the participant have any dietary restrictions (dairy, gluten, eggs, peanuts, etc.)? ☐ Yes ☐ No		If yes, please explain:	
School Grade Level: 2025-2026 ☐ 8 th Grade ☐ Freshman ☐ Sophomore ☐ Junior ☐ Senior		School Grade Level: 2026-2027 ☐ Freshman ☐ Sophomore ☐ Junior ☐ Senior ☐ College Freshman	
High School Grade Point Average (based on a 4.0 scale):		Gender Identity: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Non-Binary ☐ The options listed do not reflect me ☐ Prefer not to respond	
Ethnic Background: ☐ Asian ☐ Black or African American ☐ Hispanic or LatinX ☐ Native American or Native Alaskan ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ White or Caucasian ☐ Multi-Racial ☐ Prefer not to respond		Shirt Size: Men's ☐ Women's ☐ ☐ Extra Small ☐ Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large ☐ Extra Large ☐ XXL	
Years playing golf:	USGA GHIN # (if none, "N/A"):		USGA Handicap:

FAMILY INFORMATION FORM		
Parent/Guardian #1 Full Name:		Parent/Guardian #2 Full Name: (optional)
Parent/Guardian #1 E-Mail:		Parent/Guardian #2 E-Mail:
Parent/Guardian #1 Cell #:		Parent/Guardian #2 Cell #:
Parent/Guardian Permanent, Legal Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Parent/Guardian #1 Employer:		
Parent/Guardian #1 Occupation:		Work Phone #:
Parent/Guardian #2 Employer:		
Parent/Guardian #2 Occupation:		Work Phone #:
Parent/Guardian Signature:		Date:
Participant Signature:		Date:
SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND FORM		
To help us better understand the participants we are serving and ensure everyone has access to our events, we kindly ask that all applicants complete the financial information below. If you need assistance filling out this portion, please consult your parent or guardian.		
Please add your family's household income for the 2025 tax year: (Required) ☐ < \$50,000 ☐ \$50,000-75,000 ☐ \$75,000-100,000 ☐ \$100,000-150,000 ☐ \$150,000-200,000 ☐ \$200,000-250,000 ☐ > \$250,000	Do you receive financial aid from your Chapter? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
Number of people in your household (including yourself): (Example: You, Mom, Dad, Sister, and Brother = 5 members in your household.) Note: Household size includes: 1. Yourself; 2. Your Parents/Guardians; 3. Your parents' other children (other than yourself even if they don't live with your parents) who will receive more than half of their financial support from your parents between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026 4. Other people who aren't your parents' children but who live with your parents and receive more than half of their support from your parents and will continue to receive more than half of their support from your parents between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026.		

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CHART

Please complete the chart below. More space will be available when completing this section online.
Please only provide activities starting in 2024. Please include information on your Extracurricular & School Activities, Community & Volunteer Service, Awards & Recognition, Work for Pay.
 This information will be reviewed but **NOT SCORED**.

Extracurricular & School Activities	Dates (From – To)	Responsibilities	Accomplishments
<i>Example: Golf Club</i>	<i>Jan 2024 - Present</i>	<i>Organized play dates</i>	<i>Club President</i>

SHORT ANSWER ESSAYS

Answer all three (3) of the following questions. Please use the space provided below (more space will be available when completing this section online). Your response must be 300 words or less per question. This section of the application will be **reviewed and scored** (60% of your total score).

1. Describe a time you witnessed or experienced exclusion. How did it affect you, and what could have been done to include everyone?
2. What does it mean to be a game changer? Provide an example of a time when you have been a game changer at your Chapter, at school or in your community.
3. Complete this phrase: Because of First Tee, _____

2026 Chapter Participation Survey

PLEASE COMPLETE AND SIGN: The following form is to be completed by a Chapter coach, program or executive leader that can **best represent** each participant applying for a First Tee national opportunity. It is the participant's responsibility to make sure this is filled out, signed, and then uploaded to their online application. **The same form can be used for multiple opportunities in the same year.**

This form is a vital part of the criteria evaluated for national participant opportunities. Please complete it thoughtfully. You can type directly onto this form or attach a separate typed page with numbered answers. **Questions 4 and 5 will be reviewed and scored.**

Participant Name and Chapter:	
1. How many years has this applicant been participating in First Tee programs at your Chapter?	
2. What was the most recent date this participant actively attended and participated in a First Tee Program class at your Chapter (not as a junior coach)?	
3. Is this participant an active junior coach? If so, please provide an example.	
4. Please explain why you feel this participant should be selected for a national opportunity.	
5. Is there any additional information that you would like to add about this participant that has not been covered by the questions above?	
By signing below, I acknowledge that I am fully aware of and understand that if the participant recommended above does not follow the Code of Conduct at the corresponding participant opportunity and is sent home early, the Chapter will be responsible for any additional airfare fees inquired.	
Name of Chapter representative:	
Signature:	
Position at Chapter:	E-mail address:
Date:	Phone Number:

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Please attach one letter of recommendation from ONE of the following, explaining why you should be selected for a National Participant Opportunity. This letter will be **reviewed and scored**. Please choose from one of the following:

- Adult mentor outside of your First Tee Chapter
- Teacher
- School Administrator

PARTICIPANT HEADSHOT

Please upload your photo. Here are some important tips to follow when submitting a quality headshot:

- Forward-facing image looking at camera
- Image should be from mid-section/shoulders up
- Look for bright lighting with a solid or light-colored background (i.e. Wall inside or outside of your house)
- Photo should not include other people, signs in the background or logos on your clothing other than First Tee
- No Hats
- No Selfies
- Remember to smile!

PARTICIPANT BIO FORM

The purpose of this form is to gather information and identify story ideas. Please be thoughtful and complete with your answers as these responses will be shared with the media. Note that it will serve for background information purposes only and will NOT be scored by the judging committee.

1. First & Last Name:

2. Chapter:

3. Please provide the phonetic spelling of your name (Ex: Jordan Spieth – Jor din Speeth):

4. Please provide the name you prefer to be used during the event for media and print use:
(Ex: Billy instead of William, please include any II or III or Jr. if you would like that used)

5. City, State:

6. Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):

7. High School Grad Year:

8. School Name:

9. Grade Level 2025-2026:

10. Grade Level 2026-2027:

11. How many years have you been involved with First Tee?

12. Have you achieved ACE? Are you currently pursuing it?

13. Please estimate your total community service hours in 2025:

14. Have you committed to playing collegiate golf? If so, which school?

☐ Yes ☐ No School Name (If Applicable):

15. If selected, will this be your first time on an airplane? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Please list your future aspirations and the goals you've set to attain them (150 words)

17. How were you introduced to golf/First Tee? Please share your approximate age and if there was a particular person or experience that got you interested in golf and/or First Tee. (150 words)

18. Tell us a fun fact about yourself. (50-word limit)

19. I certify that my parent/guardian grants First Tee permission to use participant's background information for media opportunities and promotional materials, including age, high school, hometown and information from the application essays.

☐ Yes, I certify that First Tee has permission to use participant's background information.

☐ No, I do not grant First Tee permission to use participant's background information.

☐ First Tee may only use the information listed below – (please list information)

Participant Opportunities Code of Conduct

First Tee takes great pride in the quality of its participants, scholars, host facilities, and community involvement at each and every event or special opportunity. In order to make these events enjoyable for everyone, First Tee requires all participants to adhere to a set of guidelines known as the Participant Opportunities Code of Conduct. Its purpose is to help First Tee participants grow and mature by understanding and accepting the consequences of their actions. Your signature at the bottom of this page indicates that you understand that the Participant Opportunities Code of Conduct is to be followed throughout your stay at this event.

PARTICIPANT OPPORTUNITIES CODE OF CONDUCT:

Attendees of First Tee Participant Opportunities are expected to refrain from the following for the duration of all First Tee events.

- Unsportsmanlike conduct, including abusive language, disrespect to staff, host, or volunteers
- Use or association with drugs or alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco products
- Vandalism of any sort at host dormitory or hotel
- Conduct not becoming of a First Tee participant, such as acting in anger or creating other distractions
- Physical abuse, threat of physical abuse or verbal abuse to other participants, staff or guests
- Sexual harassment, abuse, or misconduct
- Not adhering to the lights out policy
- Not adhering to the dress code

DRESS CODE AT THE EVENT (Unless otherwise instructed)

- Hats/visors are acceptable during golf activities and must be worn with the brim forward. Males must remove hat/visor while indoors.
- Collared shirts or mock turtlenecks must be worn and tucked in at all times
- Women's fashion shirts without a collar are acceptable but must have sleeves
- Women's shorts and skirts must be no more than 5" above the knee or the inseam of the shorts must measure at least 5"

Suggested attire for activities will be sent to participants prior to each event. Proper attire is required at all times including meetings and free time. Questionable attire will be reviewed by on-site staff. Should a host facility have a stricter dress code, its policy will take precedence.

CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION PENALTIES

Participants in violation of this Code as determined solely by First Tee will face consequences including being prohibited from participating in the remainder of the event and may be sent home at the participant's own expense.

Participant Signature

Participant Printed Name

Date

Social Media Code of Conduct

First Tee Social Media Code of Conduct requires participants to demonstrate the First Tee values in their everyday lives and, in particular, to show respect for oneself, others and your surroundings. This is expected not only in face-to-face situations but also in written correspondence and electronic social media interactions. We consider social media to include all personal websites and all forms of online community activities such as online blogs, social networks, message boards, conversation pages, chat rooms, emails and cell phone texting.

The First Tee Social Media Code of Conduct:

- While using any social media platform to communicate with other First Tee participants or with anyone about First Tee, you must abide by the First Tee Participant Opportunities Code of Conduct
- Also, the First Tee's copyrighted words, logos and trademarks may not be used in any manner on social media pages without headquarters approval. For example, you cannot create a social media group that appears to be sponsored by First Tee.
- Images and likenesses of First Tee participants may not be used on social media platforms or otherwise without approval from First Tee headquarters. All electronic communications between unrelated adults and First Tee participants who are minors must include a third-party adult.

It is very important to respect and follow the rules set forth when using any social media platform. If you fail to do so, there will be consequences which may include, but are not limited to, cancellation of benefits and being prohibited from participating in future participant events hosted by First Tee HQ. Headquarters will also involve parents and Chapter leaders in these discussions as needed. Thank you for your attention to these guidelines.

Examples of Social Media (but not limited to): Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter/X, Blogs, YouTube, Email, Texting.

Participant Signature

Participant Printed Name

Date

First Tee Headquarters Media Waiver
(for use with minors and parent/guardian)

For good and valuable consideration, including but not limited to my child's participation in and/or attendance at events hosted by PGA TOUR First Tee Foundation, Inc. (the "Event"), the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, as the parent or guardian of the below named minor (the "Minor"), I release PGA TOUR First Tee Foundation, Inc., a Florida not for profit corporation, together with its affiliates, successors, assigns, sponsors, licensees and/or sublicensees (collectively, "First Tee") as follows.

First Tee will use the reasonable standards of care within its industry for any storage, transmittal, or protection from disclosure of any data, and it will follow standards of care that are the same or greater than the standards of care that First Tee uses to protect other individual data.

Photo Release

I attest that I am the parent or guardian of the below named Minor who is participating in and/or attending the Event. I hereby assign, authorize, give and grant to First Tee, the unrestricted right and permission to copyright, exploit, use, re-use, publish, republish, and/or sublicense all and any photographic portraits and/or pictures, and all and any audio and/or video images or clips (each, an "Image," and collectively, the "Images"), in whole or in part, in which the Minor may be included, in whole or in part, whether composite or distorted in character or form, in color or black and white, made through any media now or hereafter known for illustration, art, promotion, advertising, trade, or any other purpose whatsoever at any time, by, or on behalf of First Tee, including without limitation the use of any printed matter in conjunction with such Image(s).

I hereby waive and relinquish all and any right to examine, inspect and/or approve the Images, advertising copy and/or printed and/or digital matter that may be used in conjunction with or contain such Images, or to the eventual use that such Images may be applied.

I acknowledge and agree that First Tee may, without prior consent or approval, assign the rights to Images of the Minor, together with its rights hereunder, to any party acquiring all or substantially all of its assets.

I hereby voluntarily release, discharge and agree to hold harmless First Tee and its agents, consultants, employees, independent contractors and other representatives from and against any and all claims, damages, expenses (including without limitation reasonable attorneys' fees) and liability arising out of or relating to the Image(s), including, without limitation, any blurring, distortion, alteration, optical illusion, or use of such Image(s) in composite form, whether intentional or otherwise, that may occur or be produced in the taking of said Image(s) or in any subsequent processing thereof, as well as any publication thereof, including, without limitation, claims for libel or invasion of privacy.

Facial Recognition Policy

First Tee has instituted this Facial Recognition Policy ("Policy") to define the policy and procedures for its collection, storage, disclosure, use, protection, and destruction of the data using First Tee's facial recognition technology for photo storage, categorization and to enable First Tee's marketing efforts by making photos easily searchable. Each time the Minor attends an event where photos are taken, photos of the Minor, which includes the resulting biometric data (i.e., the Minor's unique facial characteristics ("Biometric Data")), (collectively, "data") will be recorded and stored within First Tee's photo storage processor's system of record. If you, the Parent or Guardian, consent below, the Minor's data will be stored and used to automatically identify the Minor on subsequent uses for the purposes described in this Policy. This will allow First Tee to ensure individuals are recognized in First Tee's database and enables First Tee to locate and identify photos that First Tee may post on social media and on the internet. It is First Tee's policy to ensure that individual data is used and handled in accordance with all applicable laws.

1. Scope.

This policy applies to: (i) First Tee's events and all individuals whose photos may be captured at such First Tee events and activations and (ii) photos provided to First Tee.

2. Biometric Data.

First Tee uses facial recognition software purchased from or provided by its third-party vendor, as part of First Tee's photo storage and organization. The software scans an individual's face for purposes of verification in connection with First Tee's storage and organization functions to ensure that individuals are recognized. The devices use a secure technology that generates an encoded mathematical representation. First Tee securely stores these representations in a secure space made available by a third-party provider in a cloud environment for that purpose.

3. Additional Information Around Consent.

With respect to consent herein, I agree that First Tee and any third-party subcontractors processing may include activities such as photo organization and storage, equipment servicing, database maintenance, software repair, data restoration, or maintenance backup copies necessary for related activities, even if such activities never occur. Third-party subcontractors can only access such data pursuant to First Tee's instructions and authorization. Individuals may revoke their consent on behalf of the Minor at any time by notifying First Tee [here](#). First Tee will provide reasonable accommodations to those individuals who refuse to consent to the collection and use of their data as described in this Policy. Additionally, by consenting to this Policy, you acknowledge and agree that you are 18 or older and provide consent for the use of images of the Minor named herein in accordance with this facial recognition policy.

4. Use, Disclosure, Protection, Storage, and Destruction of Data.

Individual data will only be used for the purposes and related activities set forth in this Policy. First Tee will not sell, lease, trade, or otherwise profit from an individual's data. First Tee will not disclose, re-disclose, provide access to, or otherwise disseminate any data outside of the terms of the Policy, unless:

- The individual or the individual's legally authorized representative provides consent to such disclosure.
- The disclosed data completes a financial transaction requested or authorized by the individual or the individual's legally authorized representative.
- The disclosure is required by state or federal law or municipal ordinance, or
- The disclosure is required pursuant to a valid warrant or subpoena issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.

First Tee will obligate its subcontractors to comply with this Policy.

5. Policy Enforcement.

First Tee is responsible for enforcing and administering the policy. If you have any questions regarding this policy or questions not addressed in this policy, please contact support@firsttee.org.

Limitation of Liability

Voluntary Participation.

I understand and confirm that the Minor's participation in the Event is voluntary.

Assumption of Risk at Event.

I understand and acknowledge that there may be potential risks involved related to the Minor's attendance at the Event. On behalf of the Minor, I assume all risks and accept sole responsibility for any injury (including, but not limited to, personal injury, disability, and death), illness, damage, loss, claim, liability, or expense, of any kind, that the Minor may experience or incur in connection with attending any First Tee event. I hereby voluntarily release, discharge and agree to hold harmless First Tee and its agents, consultants, employees, independent contractors and other representatives from and against any and all claims, damages, expenses (including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees) and liability arising out of any loss, damage, or injury that may be sustained by me, the Minor or any property belonging to me, or both, at or as a result of this event..

I have read the above authorization, release and agreement, and I fully understand, accept, and agree to the contents thereof. I acknowledge this Release shall be binding upon me, the Minor and my respective assigns, heirs and legal representatives.

MINOR:

PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN:

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Address:

Address (if different from minor):

WITNESS:

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Release of Liability and Acknowledgement of Risk

In consideration of my minor child for whom I am the parent/legal guardian ("Child") being permitted to participate in the First Tee Game Changers Academy

Further, I do for myself, my Child, and my personal representative(s), heirs and assigns, hereby agree to defend, hold harmless, indemnify, release and forever discharge PGA TOUR First Tee Foundation, Inc. ("First Tee"), PGA TOUR, Inc. ("TOUR"), the title sponsor of the Event (if any), the Event facility (the "Facility"), the host organization (if applicable), and their affiliates and subsidiaries as well as each of their respective officers, directors, agents, members, officials, employees (collectively, "Indemnified Parties") from and against any and all claims, demands and actions, or causes of action, on account of damage to personal property or personal injury (including death) which may result from my Child's participation in the Event (including without limitation transportation to or from the Event), whether or not such injury or damage or death was caused by the Indemnified Parties' acts of negligence and whether or not such injury or damage or death occurred at the Event location. I accept full responsibility for the costs of treatment for any injury or damages suffered by myself or my Child relating to my Child's participation in the Event.

Additionally, I do, for myself and my Child acknowledge that COVID-19 is extremely contagious and that despite the measures the Event has implemented to help mitigate the risk of transmission, the elimination of risk of exposure and infection to COVID-19 is not currently possible. Accordingly, I do, for myself and my Child, assume all risk and danger arising out of attendance at and/or participation in the Event, including out of or related to COVID-19.

Also, I give permission for my Child to participate in all activities sponsored by or associated with the Event and to travel in the vehicles provided by Event personnel. I understand that all and any transportation provided in connection with the Event will be provided by adults with a valid driver's license. I further understand that such transportation may be provided by one or more independent, third-party contractor(s) and not by First Tee. I hereby release the Indemnified Parties from all liability for my Child during travel to and from Event activities.

I acknowledge having read this release and agree to be bound by the terms set forth herein. In witness whereof, I have caused this release to be executed as of the date below.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Date