

2025

Annual Report



Mission:

To impact the lives of young people by providing educational programs that build character and instill life-enhancing values through the game of golf.



Building Game Changers

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,

As we reflect on 2025, I am filled with gratitude and pride for the collective impact we've made in the lives of young people throughout Southern Colorado. First Tee – Southern Colorado exists to empower youth with confidence, resilience, and life skills through fun, educational golf-based programming, and this year we saw that mission come alive in remarkable ways.

Our approach uses golf not simply as a sport but as a powerful metaphor for life: teaching goal setting, integrity, responsibility, perseverance, and leadership. This year, our programs continued to provide not only physical activity but transformative learning experiences that help participants navigate challenges on the course and off.

In 2025, we achieved significant milestones by expanding our reach, strengthening community partnerships, and deepening our impact:

- **Increased Female Participation:** We grew female participation from 35% in 2024 to 46% in 2025, continuing our commitment to creating inclusive and welcoming spaces for girls in the game.
- **Strengthened Ethnic Diversity:** While we set a goal of 58% ethnic diversity among participants, we proudly surpassed it, ending the year with 65% ethnic diversity.
- **Empowered Teens and Preteens:** We increased engagement among core participants ages 10 and older from 41% to 44%, reinforcing our focus on sustained participation and long-term youth development.
- **Expanded Reach in At-Risk Communities:** With a goal of serving at least 38% of participants from distressed or at-risk communities, we exceeded expectations, 55% of our participants now represent these communities.

None of this progress would be possible without the unwavering support of our community partners. From local foundations and corporate sponsors to individual donors and dedicated advocates, your belief in our mission allows us to grow sustainably and extend our reach to those who need it most.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on one unwavering goal: preparing young people to lead with courage, compassion, and character. Whether through volunteering, partnering, or giving, your continued support fuels our progress and promises a brighter future for the youth we serve.

Thank you for being an essential part of our journey in 2025. Together, we are **building game changers** not just in golf, but in life.

With appreciation,
Sandy Johnson
Chief Executive Officer

Impact



6,209
kids and teens



6
program locations



13
partnership locations



12
outreach programs



65% ethnically diverse



46% female



55% from at-risk or distressed communities



30% teen retention

\$156,732
financial resources provided*

85%
benefitted from financial resources





Meet Meryn Meyers

15 years old

Meryn has been involved with First Tee – Southern Colorado for most of her life. She is currently part of our inaugural Ace class, First Tee’s capstone program, as well as a junior coach mentoring younger participants. This past summer she was chosen to travel to the First Tee Innovators Forum, an immersive experience that brings together young leaders from across the country to develop service projects focused on education, health, human rights, and environmental sustainability. Through hands-on workshops and collaboration with peers and industry leaders, Meryn gained practical skills to turn ideas into meaningful community impact.

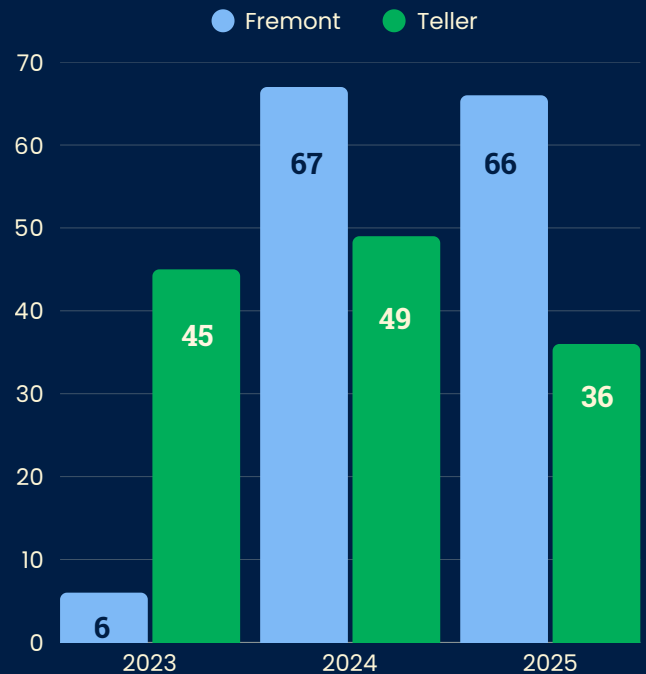
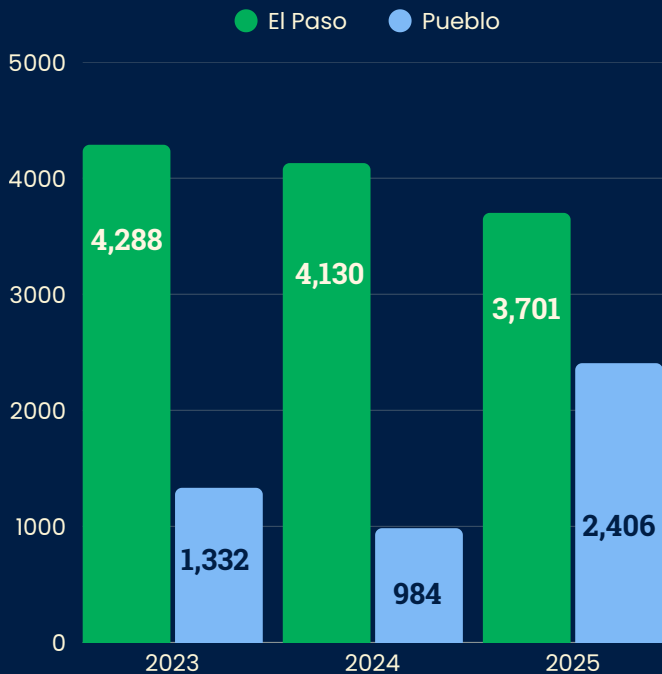


“My time at the Innovators Forum helped me to develop my social and business skills so I can successfully conduct a service project for my community.”





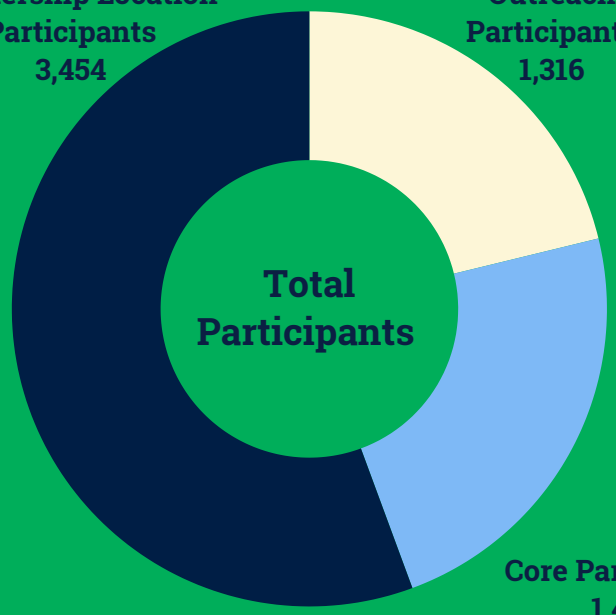
Core Program Stats



While our total number of participants has declined, our engagement and retention rates continue to rise. Our engagement rate reached 40.3%, significantly outperforming the First Tee Network average of 22.6%, and our retention rate climbed to 38.1%, exceeding the network average of 36.4%. These results show that participants are staying involved year over year, reflecting deeper connections, stronger relationships, and a more meaningful impact on the youth we serve.

**Partnership Location
Participants**
3,454

**Outreach
Participants**
1,316



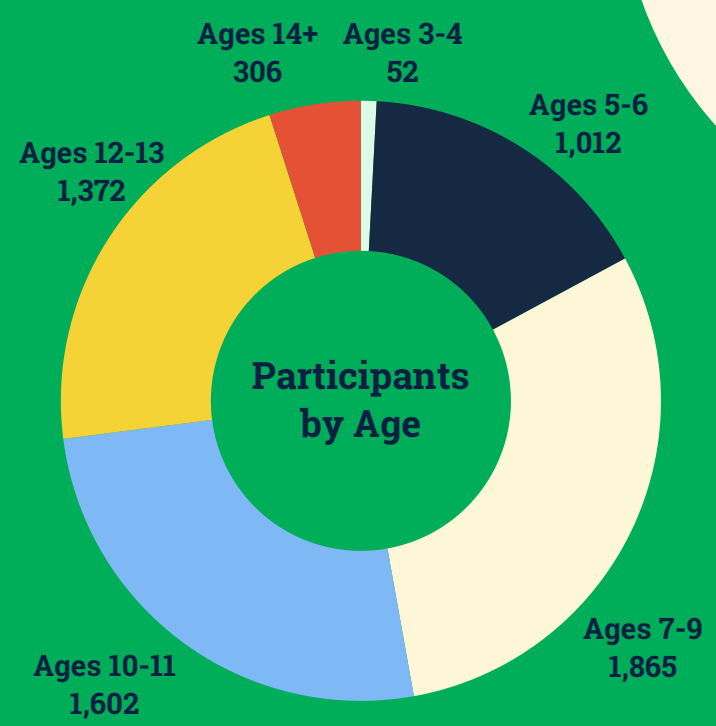
**Total
Participants**

Core Participants
1,439

Our **Core Program** delivers a year-round, research-backed curriculum that builds life skills and core values through age-appropriate golf instruction.

Our **Chapter Led Programs** introduce youth to golf in Title I schools and high-need community organizations, focusing on skill development, character, and wellness.

Our **Partnership Locations** integrate First Tee – Southern Colorado into Title I and underserved schools, particularly those with high rates of free and reduced lunch, by providing free training and equipment so every student participates annually.



**Participants
by Age**

Coaches

55
Active
Coaches &
Volunteers



Total
Volunteer
Hours
900



29

Volunteers certified through
additional coach training at First
Tee Headquarters

Coaches are the foundation of First Tee – Southern Colorado. As mentors and role models, they do more than teach golf, they build confidence, character, and integrity in every participant. Through their guidance and commitment, coaches empower young people with life skills that extend far beyond the course, shaping the next generation, one swing at a time.





Meet Rowan Huls

17 years old

Rowan has been part of our program since she was seven years old and is now part of our chapter's inaugural Ace class, First Tee's capstone program, as well as a Lead Coach and Member Service Specialist at The Learning Center. In 2025, she was chosen to represent our chapter at the First Tee Drive Your Future Academy presented by John Deere, a five-day female-empowerment experience for young women creating positive change in their schools and communities. During the academy, Rowan strengthened her leadership skills by exploring mentorship, networking, career planning, and the importance of giving back through volunteerism.

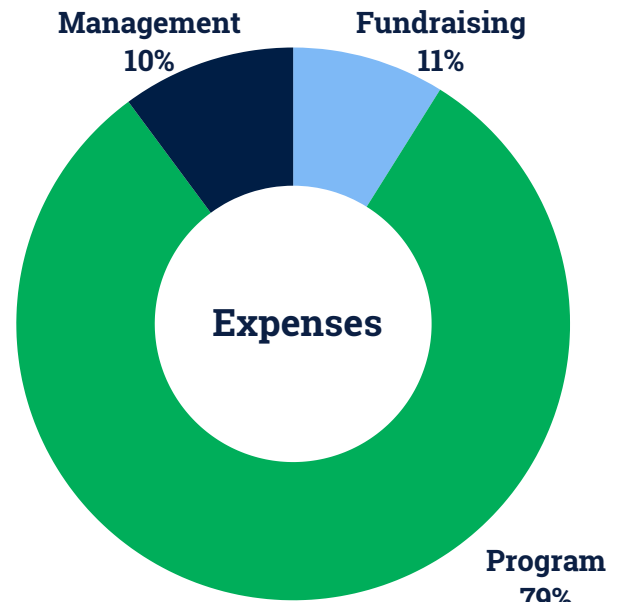
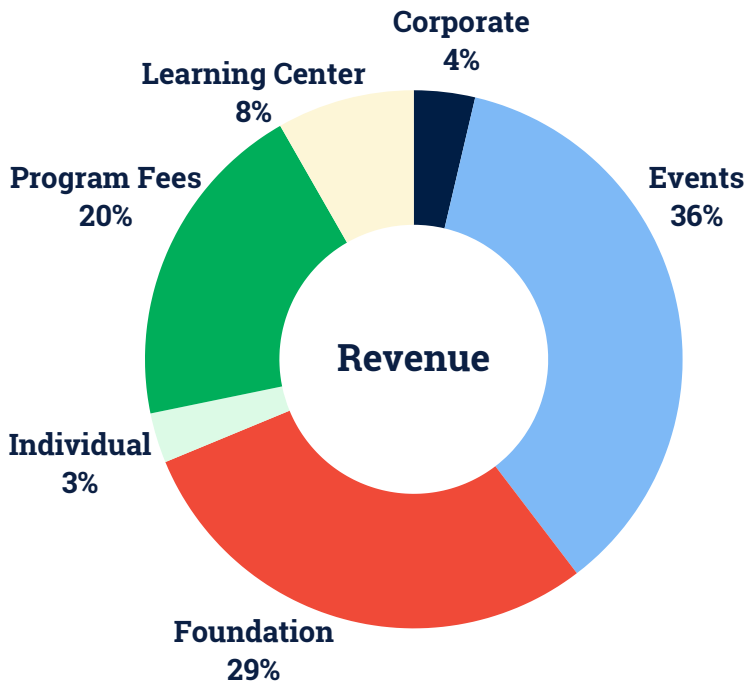


"I learned that so many of my experiences are shared by the girls I met, and I'm incredibly grateful for this opportunity. Each workshop connected back to my own life while also being informative and eye-opening, helping me see the experiences of girls all over the country."



Financial Stability

We are deeply grateful to the individuals and partners who make our mission possible. As a locally funded chapter, **100% of donations directly support our programs**, creating lasting impact for youth across Southern Colorado.



Birdies & Brews
Topgolf



Legacy Golf Tournament
The Broadmoor Golf Club



Legacy Awards Dinner
Cheyenne Mountain Resort



First Tee Golf Classic
Desert Hawk Golf Course



Meet
J.J.
Raykowski
16 years old

J.J. has been part of First Tee since he was five years old and is now a member of our inaugural Ace class, First Tee's capstone program, as well as a junior coach, serving as a mentor and role model for younger participants. Having participated in every season of our programming, J.J. has grown alongside the program, developing confidence, leadership skills, and a strong sense of responsibility. He says he loves First Tee because it allows him to play a sport he's passionate about while forming meaningful relationships and experiences that keep him engaged year after year.



"First Tee has taught me to be more confident in my own skills both in sports and my personal life. Applying the ideas of good sportsmanship, respect and courtesy to others even in the face of adversity."





Staff

Sandy Johnson
Chief Executive Officer

Emily Ortmeier
Director of Operations

Cerise Fender
Business Development Manager

Nick Dreczka
Program Coordinator

Abbie Nelson
Program Coordinator



“Dear Coach Abbie: Thank you for everything you have done for me Coach Abbie, you have helped my shots go very far and helped me with my confidence. Thank you!”

– Alicia, First Tee Participant



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Reliant Construction





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Thank You!

The support of our Program Partners is essential to advancing First Tee – Southern Colorado’s mission of empowering youth. Our success wouldn’t be possible without the dedication of these golf courses and community partners, who play a vital role in making our programs a reality.





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FirstTeeSoCo.org