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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



## **Local Teen Achieves Top Certification from National Youth Development Organization First Tee**

*Giavanna Bolognese from First Tee of Western New York among 24 National Ace-Certified Recipients in 2019*

**Buffalo, NY** – Giavanna Bolognese from First Tee of Western New York has achieved Ace certification, the highest level of certification from First Tee, a national youth development organization dedicated to impacting young people by building character and instilling life-enhancing values through the game of golf.

Giavanna is one of 24 participants this year, and one of more than 150 since 2006, to achieve Ace certification. Giavanna was recognized for her accomplishment at the Annual **Kids First** Fundraiser which benefits the First Tee of Western NY Chapter which was held at Park Country Club.

To become Ace-certified, participants must complete four major projects – Community Service, Career, Educational Opportunities and Golf – which are submitted and reviewed by a national committee. It is a notable feat and the honorable culmination of hours of volunteering, goal-setting, preparation and practice.

“The First Tee Ace Certification was very challenging and extremely rewarding. Reaching the Ace Level goal not only prepared me for the game of golf, but more importantly, forged a path for me with a strong base in life skills and leadership. I intend to continue my service with First Tee and pass down what I have learned to the youth of the program, and up and coming ACE participants.”, said Giavanna.

“Less than 1 percent of First Tee participants achieve Ace certification and Giavanna is the first ever to accomplish Ace Level certification at our Chapter. Gia joined our program over 10 years ago and excelled in every aspect of our program. She has been part of several national opportunities and recently joined our coaching staff this past summer to become a mentor for kids in our program. We could not be prouder of Gia’s accomplishments and look forward to her

continued involvement in our program.” – Tim Frank, Executive Director of First Tee of Western New York.

Ace certification is the final step and the pinnacle of the First Tee program. Participants can work towards Ace certification after completing PLAYer, Par, Birdie and Eagle level certifications. The certification process requires a higher level of personal planning through First Tee’s Life Skills Experience that includes interpersonal communication, self-management, goal-setting, self-coaching and resiliency skills — building an important foundation for success in higher education and career planning.

Bolognese has been a participant at First Tee of Western New York Chapter for over 10 years and recently graduated from Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart. She now attends Niagara University where she is a freshman studying Biology on a Pre-Med track and is active in community service and public speaking.

For more information about First Tee of Western New York, visit [thefirstteewny.org](http://thefirstteewny.org). To request an interview with Giavanna Bolognese or Timothy Frank (Executive Director) please contact Timothy at [tfrank@thefirstteewny.org](mailto:tfrank@thefirstteewny.org) or call 716-316-5498.

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### **About First Tee of Western New York**

*First Tee of Western New York ([www.thefirstteewny.org](http://www.thefirstteewny.org)) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit youth sports organization whose mission is to impact the lives of young people by providing programs that build character and instill life-enhancing values through the game of golf. First Tee of Western New York reaches kids on golf courses, in elementary schools and at youth centers across the Western New York region. Since its inception in 1999, First Tee of Western New York has grown its network to deliver programs at over 30 schools districts and 9 golf facilities. First Tee of Western New York has reached more than 30,000 Western NY kids through the game of golf.*

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