



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **First Tee – Cleveland Announces Leadership Transition**

Patricia LoPresti passes the CEO torch to Brian McFarland, effective April 1

*Cleveland, OH; February 19, 2026* — **First Tee – Cleveland** announced today that after 16 years as Chief Executive Officer, **Patricia LoPresti** will transition into a part-time role as Strategic Advisor, effective April 1. Associate Director **Brian McFarland** will step into the role of Chief Executive Officer, continuing his long-standing leadership within the chapter.

This planned leadership transition will take place following a thoughtful, year-long strategy and succession process designed to ensure continuity and momentum for the nonprofit youth development organization.



During LoPresti’s tenure, First Tee – Cleveland grew from serving 300 participants on one golf course to reaching more than 20,000 young people in 2025 across six golf courses, through partnerships with 18 community organizations and in 97 elementary schools throughout Northeast Ohio. LoPresti also led the successful “More Than a Game Capital Campaign,” raising \$3.5 million and expanding the organization from a 1,200-square-foot facility into a renovated 12,000-square-foot facility — now known as the Woodworth Activity Center — on the campus of Cleveland Metroparks’ Washington Golf Course. Today, the chapter offers year-round programming through state-of-the-art facilities, including three golf simulators, an indoor activity area and a culinary studio.

“This transition reflects strong planning and a deep commitment to our kids and community,” said Board Chair Craig Glazier. “Pat has guided remarkable growth and innovation over the past 16 years, and Brian’s steady leadership, heart for the mission, and operational strength position First Tee – Cleveland well for its next chapter.”

While stepping out of the CEO role, LoPresti will remain actively engaged part time as Strategic Advisor, supporting leadership continuity, strengthening key relationships and advancing national opportunities in close partnership with McFarland and the Board.

One of the projects LoPresti will focus on is cultivating First Tee National Trustee prospects. The Cleveland chapter recently announced that Richard Buoncore, Chairman & CEO of MAI Capital Management, has become a National Trustee — the first trustee from Cleveland — underscoring the organization’s growing impact at both the local and national levels. The distinguished list of National Trustees is made up of individuals, corporations and foundations that pledge \$1 million or more to support the First Tee mission.

“I’m incredibly proud of what this team has accomplished,” said LoPresti. “Together, we’ve built a place where young people develop confidence, character and life skills — on the course, in schools and through innovative programs like our culinary class, Fit to a Tee. I couldn’t be more confident in Brian’s leadership and am grateful to continue supporting First Tee – Cleveland in this next chapter.”

McFarland brings 15 years of experience with First Tee – Cleveland and a deep connection to its mission. Having spent his entire career with the First Tee network, McFarland has held positions with First Tee – West Virginia and First Tee – Charlotte. He began his First Tee career in 2003 at First Tee Cooks Creek in his hometown of Ashville, Ohio.

“I’m honored to step into this role,” McFarland said. “We will continue creating safe, welcoming spaces where young people can grow, thrive and discover their potential. Having the opportunity to positively impact so many young people is a joy and responsibility I take very serious. I’m excited to build off the momentum Pat has established over her decorated career.”

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### **About First Tee – Cleveland**

First Tee – Cleveland is a youth development organization that uses golf and innovative programming to teach life skills and build character, empowering young people to pursue goals, grow through challenge, build positive self-identity, use good judgment and collaborate with others. As one of 150 First Tee chapters, First Tee – Cleveland serves youth ages 7-18 across Northeast Ohio and is headquartered at Cleveland Metroparks’ Washington Golf Course in Newburgh Heights. For more information, visit [www.firstteecleveland.org](http://www.firstteecleveland.org).

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