



Development Director

Job Description

Organization

First Tee - Greater Akron uses the game of golf to build character and life skills in young people across our community. Last year alone, we reached 21,803 kids through on-site programming, school partnerships spanning 66 schools, and community outreach at 26 locations.

But the numbers only tell part of the story. We're talking about kids who show up shy and leave confident. Kids from underserved communities getting access to experiences and spaces that change their trajectory. A kid like Braden Gunter, selected from an international pool of applicants for the Congaree Global Golf Initiative. Or Caitrin Coyle, who started as a First Tee participant and signed her letter of intent to play college golf at St. Bonaventure.

And parents are noticing. 89% say our programming helped advance their child's social and emotional learning. 96% are signing their kids up again.

Our work isn't about improving a golf score. It's about strengthening what kids bring to everything they do. We've been doing it in Greater Akron for 26 years, and we're just getting started.

Position Summary

First Tee – Greater Akron (FTGA) is looking for a dynamic Development Director (DD) to lead our fundraising and development efforts. This is a high-impact role at a growing nonprofit with deep roots in the Akron community and a 26-year history of changing young lives through golf.

The Development Director will own our fundraising portfolio, including individual giving, corporate partnerships, foundation giving, and events, while also contributing to marketing and communications. This person will be a visible, trusted face of First Tee – Greater Akron in the community, building and nurturing the relationships that fuel our mission.

Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and working closely with our Board of Directors, the right candidate brings a service-oriented mindset, outstanding communication

skills, strong organizational instincts, and the initiative to move things forward without waiting to be asked. They are optimistic, relationship-focused, and genuinely energized by connecting people to a cause worth believing in.

Reports to: CEO

Employment Status: Full-Time, Exempt

Key Responsibilities

- **Fundraising/Development**

- Collaborate with the CEO to develop and execute a comprehensive fundraising and development plan aligned with organizational goals, mission, and best practices
- Partner with the CEO and Board of Directors to identify, cultivate, solicit, and steward donor relationships across individuals, corporations, and foundations with the goal of deepening and growing those connections over time
- Build and manage a major gifts program, including prospect identification, cultivation, and solicitation
- Diversify and strengthen the organization's funding base by pursuing new revenue streams and expanding existing ones
- Manage donor communications including gift acknowledgment letters, thank you notes, new donor welcome letters, direct mail campaigns, and thank you calls
- Support the CEO and Operations Manager throughout the grant process, from prospect research through reporting
- Plan, coordinate, and execute fundraising events in collaboration with the CEO, and actively solicit sponsorships, donations, and ticket sales
- Identify and recommend new fundraising event opportunities that align with organizational priorities
- Oversee the donor database, ensuring accurate and timely entry of prospective, new, and current donor information
- Maintain current and accurate mailing and email lists in support of fundraising efforts
- Monitor and analyze fundraising data trends to inform strategy and decision-making

- **Community Involvement**

- Be a visible, enthusiastic ambassador for First Tee – Greater Akron. That means showing up, building relationships, and representing the organization at networking events, community gatherings, and speaking opportunities in ways that expand our reach and deepen our donor pipeline.

- **Marketing & Communications**

- Support the organization's marketing and communications efforts, including social media, with a focus on growing awareness, sharpening our impact storytelling, and converting that visibility into new individual and corporate donor relationships.

Additional responsibilities as need, in support of the organization's mission and the CEO's priorities.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required
- Prior fundraising or development experience required
- Strategic thinker with strong attention to detail and effective time management
- Able to manage multiple priorities without losing focus
- Highly professional demeanor with the confidence to navigate complex or sensitive situations
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- A genuine desire to be out in the community, building and nurturing external relationships
- Self-directed and accountable, with the ability to collaborate well within a team
- Available for occasional evenings and weekends as needed
- Able to travel for events and regional or national meetings
- Must pass a background check and complete Safe Sport training upon hire

Preferred Qualifications

- Familiarity with the Greater Akron and Northeast Ohio's philanthropic community, with existing donor or funder relationships
- Experience in marketing, communications, and social media
- Prior nonprofit experience

Compensation

- \$65,000 to \$75,000 annual salary, commensurate with experience

Benefits

- Performance-based bonus opportunity
- Paid vacation and holidays

To Apply

- Email your cover letter and resume to Jeff O'Brien, CEO of First Tee – Greater Akron (jobrien@firstteeakron.org).