

Remi Mandell "SNAGs" a Hole in One at Lynbrook Public Elementary Schools

Article by Brittany Georgalas



Remi Mandell, a 16 year old girl from Lynbrook, Long Island has now given many youngsters in her community the opportunity to experience golf within their physical education classes. Remi started playing golf at the age of 10 with her dad at Woodmere Country Club. Ever since then she has been hooked on the game. During her junior year in high school Remi decided it was time to leave her mark and give back to her community. She wanted to expose the game of golf to children in her local area so they could share the same enjoyment of the game that she did as a child. Remi searched for options on how to make this possible and came across The First Tee National School Program.

The First Tee National School Program brings the game of golf into elementary schools through a structured curriculum using SNAG equipment. SNAG stands for Starting New At Golf. This beginner golf equipment consists of big plastic clubs, tennis balls and a multitude of targets that can be arranged in many different ways

for hours of fun. In order for Remi to make this program possible in local elementary schools, she had to raise over \$3,000 and get approval from the superintendent of the school district.

Remi then assembled a go to team of three helpful individuals, Guy Garbarino, Vice President of Outreach for The First Tee, Thomas Graham, Lynbrook High School's athletic director, and Robert Kolb, Lynbrook High School's varsity girls golf coach. With their help, Remi was able to get approval from the superintendent and raise the money for the program.

"I couldn't be more proud of her," said Kolb. "Doing this for our community, speaks volumes on what type of person she is."

Remi was able to get donations from Seawane Country Club, Woodmere Country Club and Daniel and Mindy Bass, close friends of the family. In order to do this, she set up presentations and pitched the idea to her target donors.

"Remi really took this upon herself," said Graham. "She deserves all the credit on this."

After collecting all the donations, Remi sent the money to The First Tee for the equipment and training materials. Each gym teacher then received a training manual which gives them knowledge on how to use the equipment and implement life skills into each lesson. The whole program will be shared by three elementary schools in the Lynbrook area, allowing the program to reach over 1,100 children.

"It's wonderful that Remi wanted to give back to schools in her community and that she wanted to use the game of golf and its values as the vehicle to do so," said Garbarino.

The program will be introduced into the physical education curriculum at all three schools beginning in September 2013. Remi will be starting her senior year of high school and is excited for the programs to finally launch. Remi hopes to visit the elementary schools in the fall to see the program in action and she cannot wait for the kids to enjoy the experience of golf like she did.

"It's all about the smile," Remi says. "That smile that I get when I play golf, I want everyone to be able to experience it too."