

Computer labs join in First Tee project

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The First Tee Chapter of Phoenix, directed by The Thunderbirds, has taken a significant step toward developing what will be one of the most comprehensive First Tee facilities in the country.

The Thunderbirds plan a new 24-hole complex in south Phoenix that will include a regulation 18-hole course as well as a six-hole youth instructional facility, the latter designed by Tom Fazio. A new clubhouse will also be built and will incorporate after-school computer laboratories and study halls for First Tee participants.

"This is indeed a proud day for The Thunderbirds and all of their affiliated partners who share The First Tee vision and dreams," said Ray Artigue, Big Chief of the 62-year-old civic organization. "[This] is the culmination of years of planning and saving for what is a most significant golf course development, and the net result of these efforts will be a permanent golf home for the youth of south Phoenix."

Located on a 160-acre parcel on the southeast corner of 7th street and Dobbins, The Thunderbirds Golf Course will be jointly held by The Thunderbirds and the Alkhaseh Family Trust, former owners of the site. The Alkhasehs also plan to develop a resort hotel adjacent to the golf course.

"Because Luther Alkhaseh shares our commitment to providing broad access to the game of golf, we find ourselves in this unique partnership with him and his family. The Thunderbirds

would not be in the position to develop this project without the generosity of the Alkhaseh family," said Artigue.

Estimated cost of the projects is in excess of \$5 million, which reflects substantial savings provided through discounts from numerous national First Tee partner companies.

The First Tee is a World Golf Foundation initiative dedicated to providing affordable golf access for everyone, especially younger people, who otherwise might not have an opportunity to play. The World Golf Foundation is supported by all the major international golf organizations and professional tours.

"Though the new golf course will be jointly owned by The Thunderbirds and the Alkhasehs, our organization will be responsible for operating the facility," said Tim Grant, chairman of The Thunderbirds Junior Golf Foundation. "All monies raised by The Thunderbirds will be used to benefit needy charities, including funding additional First Tee facilities throughout the Valley."

"This is the stuff that dreams are made of," said Phoenix City Council member Cody Williams. "Since 1957, the Thunderbird Golf Resort has been an important part of the city of Phoenix. With this new commitment, I am sure that residents of the South Mountain Village area will celebrate the investment made by The Thunderbirds, Mr. Alkhaseh and The First Tee."



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