**First Green Media Step by Step**

Here are a few options to gain media coverage of your First Green event:

1. Ask for assistance from GCSAA media relations manager Mike Strauss. Mike can be reached at mstrauss@gcsaa.org or 785-312-5164 and would be happy to handle the pre-event media relations portion of your event.
2. If you work at a golf course that has a communications/marketing director or you are at a municipal course and your city has a communications/marketing director, utilize their expertise and contacts with the local media to gain coverage of your event.
3. School district communications directors know media and how to reach out to them. Send the teacher you are working with the sample press release and ask them to have their district communications director help publicize the event.
4. Handle the media relations portion yourself. Two weeks in advance of the First Green event, you will need to contact your local media via e-mail or a phone call. You can search contact information by visiting each outlet’s website and finding a Contact Us, Staff Directory or Meet the Team link. Focus on finding a couple of people who might be good contacts at each outlet to reach out to such as:

Newspapers: Editor, Assignment Editor, Education Writer, Sports Editor

Television: News Director, Sports Director, Education Reporter, News Tip e-mail address

Radio: News Director

Another way to find media is via twitter. Tweet at them about your event and for them to reach out to you to get information about this media opportunity. If you haven’t heard back from any media, reach out with the press release again one week before your event. Or you can make a phone call to media you think would come to the event.

**What Information to Send to Media**

**Press Release**

Send a press release two weeks before the event and send again one week before the event if you have not received a response from the media.

E-mail Subject Line: <Golf Course> Hosting Hands-On Learning Experience For Students <Date>

A First Green press release template is available at the end of this document and on the First Green website under superintendent resources and you will just need to fill in the blanks about your event or tailor it to your liking. You may also create your own information.

When you reach out to the media make sure you include your contact information and be responsive to their return calls or e-mails.

**Talking Points**

If you are having conversations with media prior to the event, you will need to explain why covering the First Green event is a good thing for them and their audience.

The event does a number of things including:

• Provide hands-on learning for students.

• Expose kids to golf courses, which shows them recreation opportunities, importance of green space, potential career path, how superintendents are stewards of the land.

• Shows the industry giving back to the community.

• Great visuals for television and newspaper photographers.

**What to Expect**

Be prepared to be interviewed by a reporter and to be able to highlight the key messages of the program and how this benefits the students (hands-on learning which supplements their in-class work, some kids may have never been on a golf course and are being introduced to both the game of golf and the potential career of turf management), the golf industry and the benefits of golf courses (importance of green space, wildlife habitat, pollution control, physical activity, stewards of the land, recreational opportunities, etc…).

One thing to do when you are discussing the event with the teachers before they come out to the course, is to tell the teachers there will be television or newspapers there and make sure parents have consented for the children to be shown or interviewed.

Sample Press Release below:

**Contact:**
Mike Strauss

GCSAA Manager, Media Relations
785-312-5164
mstrauss@gcsaa.org

John Feeney

GCSAA Golf Course Superintendent, Estes Park Golf Course
(phone number)

(email address)

**Estes Park Golf Course to host Innovative, Educational First Green Event for Estes Park Elementary School Students, September 7**

*Students will get hands-on educational opportunities from golf course superintendents*

**Lawrence, Kan. (September 5, 2023) –** Estes Park Golf Course will host an innovative environmental education outreach program that uses golf courses as environmental learning labs, when course superintendent John Feeney, welcomes students from Estes Park Elementary for a GCSAA First Green event, Thursday, September 7.

First Green is a Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) program which focuses on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) principles where students get hands-on learning opportunities in a real-life setting. GCSAA First Green curriculum benefits students by helping them apply their classroom knowledge in an engaging outdoor setting.

WHEN: Thursday, Sept. 7, 9:15 a.m.-Noon

WHERE: Estes Park Golf Course practice green, 1480 Golf Course Road, Estes Park, Colo.

WHO: 56 students from Estes Park Elementary School, who will learn from GCSAA superintendent John Feeney and others. Feeney is a 24-year member of GCSAA.

WHAT: An interactive, highly engaging field trip that provides hands-on learning and exposes students to the golf industry. Benefits of First Green include applying lessons learned in class, inspiring students, building community, strengthening futures, advancing golf and having fun.

The 56 students will arrive by 9:15 a.m. at Estes Park Golf Course. Students will rotate through stations including Math on the Course, Cool Tools, Compost, and Putting with the Pro before eating lunch at the maintenance facility and departing around noon.

Media are encouraged to attend the event and should contact Feeney at (email address)

or (phone number) prior to the field trip.

To learn more about GCSAA First Green visit [www.TheFirstGreen.org](http://www.TheFirstGreen.org)

First Green is a program of the GCSAA Foundation, which is the philanthropic organization of the GCSAA. Its mission is to secure funding and support to strengthen advocacy, education, and research that advances the work of golf course management professionals. Visit the Foundation at [www.gcsaa.org/foundation](http://www.gcsaa.org/foundation).

Estes Park Golf Course sits at the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park. This location creates unique challenges for the maintenance staff. Estes Park is home to about 500 head of elk. In addition to repairing elk damage on the greens, fairways, etc… the staff is responsible for collecting and removing the “organic debris” the elk leave behind. This is now a large part of a compost operation. The nutrient rich topsoil is a valuable commodity, and the course is now able to produce compost from what used to be hauled off to the landfill.

**About GCSAA**

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) is a leading golf organization in the United States. Its focus is on golf course management, and since 1926 GCSAA has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the U.S. and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to more than 19,000 members in more than 78 countries. The association’s mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and improve communities through enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf. Visit GCSAA at [www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org) or find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/GCSAAFB) or [Twitter](https://twitter.com/gcsaa). Visit our industry-leading magazine at [GCMonline.com](http://www.gcmonline.com).

The GCSAA Foundation is the philanthropic organization of the GCSAA. Its mission is to secure funding and support to strengthen advocacy, education, and research that advances the work of golf course management professionals. Visit the Foundation at [www.gcsaa.org/foundation](http://www.gcsaa.org/foundation).