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For Immediate Release

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Riverview Teen Selected as The First Tee Scholar

Tampa, FL, (December 17, 2012) – Ashante Sanders from The First Tee of Tampa Bay, a program of the Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA that introduces young people to the game of golf and its inherent values, has earned the national designation of The First Tee Scholar - Class of 2013.

17-year-old Sanders is a senior at Riverview High School in Riverview, Florida. She embodies the leadership skills and characteristics that define The First Tee Scholars. Active at her chapter for eight years, she's participated in The First Tee Life Skills and Leadership Academy and coaches younger participants at the chapter. She also volunteers to help neglected animals at Critter Adoption and Rescue Effort (C.A.R.E.). At her high school, Sanders is captain of the golf team and a newspaper copy editor. She was also selected to represent The First Tee of Tampa Bay at the *2011 The First Tee of Tampa Bay Toro Future Leaders Forum* at Disney World. In addition, Sanders is a member of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Rising Star Leadership Academy and the National Society for High School Scholars.

"I want to thank The First Tee for providing me with such great opportunities, especially with their life lessons and educational growth in athleticism. I also want to thank my coach, Jeff Leonard, and my parents who taught me to do my best at everything," says Sanders.

"Ashante is very deserving of this designation as a The First Tee Scholar. She is a wonderful representative of The First Tee of Tampa Bay and a great example of the kind of young people The First Tee is helping produce. We are very proud of Ashante and all she is accomplishing in her high school career," says Jeff Leonard, Program Director for The First Tee of Tampa Bay.

The First Tee Scholars Program recognizes participants for exceptional achievement in academics, leadership, character development and chapter and community involvement. Applications are accepted once per year from seniors in high school who meet the minimum requirements and are scored by an independent committee. With this designation, Sanders has the opportunity to apply for any educational scholarship programs offered through The First Tee to attend a participating college or university.

Since 2003, the program has designated 521 scholars and funded 100 scholarships worth more than \$900,000. More than 20 colleges and universities throughout the United States have partnered with The First Tee to offer merit-based or leadership scholarships that help to offset the cost of attending school.

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About The First Tee of Tampa Bay

The First Tee of Tampa Bay, an official program of the Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA, provides more than 38,000 children each year with hands-on, interactive golf experiences. Through the game of golf, The First Tee of Tampa Bay provides young people educational programs that build character, instill life-enhancing values and promote healthy choices. Whether through introductory programs in 75+ Hillsborough County public schools, afterschool programs at several local courses, or week-long summer camp experiences, The First Tee of Tampa Bay shows children golf is more than a game—it's an opportunity to become the very best they can be. www.thefirstteetampabay.org

About the Y

The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA is one of the area's leading nonprofits, strengthening Hillsborough and East Pasco communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the Association, 19 facilities engage more than 142,000 men, women and children — regardless of age, income or background — to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve our community's health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. The Tampa Y has long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. www.tampaymca.org