

AHS Student Tees into Her Future

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Not many high school sophomores know what they want to do once they graduate let alone work on achieving that goal every day after school and on the weekends. However, AHS sophomore Tezira Abe knows where her life is headed. She has been walking down that path since she was 11 years old.

If one were to ask Tezira what she wants to be when she grows up, she would not hesitate to answer—a professional golfer on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour.



Photo by Hanna Chalmers

Besides practicing every day on her own and with her father and younger sister Lakareber, Tezira sees a swing coach in Houston approximately every three weeks and then travels to Dallas to get lessons from a putting coach almost every three months.

“I’m very competitive and like to push myself,” Tezira said. “I chose golf because it’s a challenging sport. You have to be emotionally and physically in shape because it challenges you.”

Competition is second nature for Tezira who says she’s very self-motivated in everything she does. She excels academically and is consistently on the A Honor Roll and hopes to graduate as one of the top three in her class. Nevertheless, her true competitive side comes out when she’s on the green.

Recently, she placed sixth at an American Junior Golf Association tournament and was proud that she held herself together all three rounds. Tezira also looks beyond the tournaments to challenge herself and her standards.

“I saw one of the girls I know who qualified for an LPGA tournament, and that makes me want to work that much harder to show people that I can do it too,” she said.

Tezira’s passion has earned her much acclaim from her peers, teachers, coaches and most recently professionals in the golf industry. She has been selected as one of 50 students from The First Tee Chapters, a worldwide organization that promotes character development and life-enhancing values through golf, to attend the third annual *Future Leaders Forum* in Walt Disney World Resort.

“I was really honored because I don’t know how many kids apply, but only 50 were chosen, and it’s an international forum,” Tezira said. “To actually go to Disney and talk to these business leaders and about my future—see what it’s like at the top—is exciting,”

The forum, which is a joint effort of the Toro Company, Walt Disney World Resort and The First Tee, is a three-day event where participants receive practical training to become productive leaders in their classrooms, communities and careers. Students learn first-hand from industry leaders about career opportunities in tournament operations, golf course management, hospitality and other related fields. Plus, they get a behind the scenes look at a professional golf event as they shadow tournament staff at the *Children’s Miracle Network Classic*, gaining them access to some of the world’s most respected golfers and golf industry leaders.



“Tezira earned this honor,” AHS social studies teacher Monica Kotrla said. “She’s a great kid who works hard at everything she does.”

Kotrla says there was no question for her when Tezira asked her to write a letter of recommendation as part of the forum competition.

“It was easy because she is such a fantastic person,” she said. “She’s intelligent and polite and has a great rapport with her peers and teachers.”

In addition to the letter of recommendation, Tezira had to fill out an application listing school and community activities. She also wrote a 200-word essay about her career aspirations and post-high school plans.

No matter what Tezira plans for her future, it’s easy to see that golf will play some part.

“I want to be a golfer because I love golf. I’m at home when I’m on the course.”

Photo by Amber Stowers

ALSD is proud of you Tezira!