

## **Don Carlos Lee Gibson Jr. Calls for More Life Skills Education Through Golf**

Don Carlos Lee Gibson Jr., former golf operations executive and youth mentor, is encouraging communities to view golf as a tool for character development, discipline, and leadership education for young people.



**Marietta, Ohio Jun 5, 2026 (IssueWire.com)** - Don Carlos Lee Gibson Jr., General Manager of Marietta Motors and Westfall Towing and former Head Golf Professional, is speaking out about the value of golf beyond competition, calling for greater investment in youth golf programs that teach life skills alongside athletics.

Drawing from his experience in golf management and mentorship through programs like First Tee, Gibson believes golf can help young people build confidence, accountability, patience, and decision-making skills at an early age.

“Golf teaches integrity in a way few sports can,” Gibson says. “You learn accountability because the game depends on honesty and discipline.”

Gibson, who studied Golf Operations, Turf Management, and Teaching & Player Development at the Golf Academy of America, spent years working in golf leadership roles, including serving as General Manager and Head Golf Professional at the Golf Club of South Carolina at Crickentree.

During that time, he saw firsthand how the sport shaped behavior and mindset, especially among younger players.

“Golf slows people down,” he explains. “It teaches patience, focus, and how to manage pressure without reacting emotionally.”

### Golf as a Tool for Character Development

While golf is often viewed as a recreational or luxury activity, Gibson believes its long-term value is being overlooked.

Research supports many of the outcomes he describes:

- Youth sports participation is linked to higher graduation rates and stronger leadership skills
- Studies show that students involved in structured sports programs often report higher confidence and improved emotional resilience
- Mentorship-based sports programs have been associated with better communication skills and reduced behavioral issues among youth
- The First Tee program reports that many participants feel more confident in school and social environments after involvement in golf-based leadership training

According to Gibson, the structure of the sport is part of what makes it effective.

“In golf, there’s no hiding,” he says. “You have to manage yourself. That’s an important lesson for young people.”

### Leadership Lessons Beyond the Course

Gibson believes the lessons learned through golf carry directly into business, leadership, and everyday life.

“You learn how to recover from mistakes,” he says. “That matters in work and relationships just as much as sports.”

He points to decision-making as one of the sport's biggest educational benefits. Unlike fast-paced team sports, golf requires players to think ahead, stay calm, and adjust under pressure.

"Every shot has consequences," Gibson explains. "Young people start understanding responsibility in real time."

He also believes golf creates opportunities for mentorship and long-term guidance.

"A good coach teaches more than mechanics," he says. "They teach consistency, respect, and discipline."

### Expanding Access and Changing Perceptions

Gibson says one of the biggest challenges is changing public perception around golf itself.

"A lot of people see golf as exclusive," he says. "But at its core, it's about personal growth."

He believes more communities should invest in youth access to golf, mentorship programs, and leadership development through sports.

That includes partnerships between schools, local organizations, faith communities, and mentorship programs.

"The goal is not just creating golfers," Gibson says. "It's helping young people develop confidence and structure."

### What Communities and Families Can Do

Gibson encourages parents, coaches, and local leaders to focus on sports environments that prioritize character development alongside performance.

He recommends:

- Supporting local youth golf and mentorship programs
- Encouraging sportsmanship over competition alone
- Teaching accountability and self-discipline through athletics
- Creating mentorship opportunities between adults and young athletes
- Making leadership and communication part of sports instruction

"Small lessons become lifelong habits," Gibson says. "That's what makes the difference."

### A Broader View of Success

For Gibson, golf's greatest impact is not found in trophies or rankings.

It is found in confidence, discipline, and personal responsibility.

"Success isn't just talent," he says. "It's learning how to carry yourself when things don't go your way."

He believes those lessons are becoming more important for young people navigating stress, distraction,

and uncertainty.

“Sports can shape character when they’re taught the right way,” Gibson says. “Golf gives young people time to think, reflect, and grow.”

### **About Don Carlos Lee Gibson Jr.**

Don Carlos Lee Gibson Jr. is the General Manager of Marietta Motors and Westfall Towing and a former golf operations executive and Head Golf Professional. He studied Golf Operations, Turf Management, and Teaching & Player Development at the Golf Academy of America and has served as a mentor and advisor through youth programs, including First Tee. A former Military Intelligence Analyst in the United States Army, Gibson focuses on leadership, operational discipline, mentorship, and community development through sports and service.

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