

Rylee Gramling is 12 years old and has been with First Tee - Central Valley for a little over a year. She told us she loves golfing because it was her and her dad's favorite thing to do together and he passed away in April 2020.

She also shared this.

"My grandmother golfed until her 80s and her son, my dad, golfed his whole life. My dad taught me how to golf when I was five years old. We loved golfing together. He took me to my first driving range at River Oaks Golf Course. I played my first 9-holes with my dad there when I was 7 years old. My dad bought me golf clubs for my 11th birthday in February 2020 and he and my mother signed me up for the First Tee. He was super excited that I was going to be in a golf program and couldn't wait to golf more with me. My dad died suddenly in April before he was able to see my first day at First Tee. The first few weeks of First Tee were very hard for me because I thought about my dad the whole time and how much I missed him. I didn't go one time because I was so sad. He was missing everything. But then I met Coach Mary and she helped me realize that it was a good way to honor my dad's memory and our love of golf! Then I looked forward to going every single week because my dad would love it and I met a lot of new friends. The First Tee taught me to persevere through difficult things and to have fun. I love learning to get better at golf and I want to play in college and professionally when I'm older. It's something me and my dad will always have my whole life."

Thanks for sharing your story Rylee. We are so proud of you for sticking with golf and we can't wait to see where this game takes you. Keep up the hard work!!