



CDGA FOUNDATION

RAYS OF HOPE

News and Inspiration from the Three-Hole Sunshine Course at Midwest Golf House

New Name, New Look, Same Values

What's old is new again for the charitable organization of the Chicago District Golf Association.

In an effort to increase the recognition of its ties to the CDGA, the Sunshine Through Golf Foundation officially became the CDGA Foundation in March, a return to a name it held for many decades since its inception in 1944.

The circular name journey began in 2004, when the CDGA Foundation was renamed the Sunshine Through Golf Foundation. The Foundation was thriving after the construction of Midwest Golf House and the creation of its Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program, leading to the belief that expanding beyond the golf industry could lead to further growth.

"At that time, the Board hoped that we would broaden our appeal to donors beyond CDGA members by choosing a name unconnected to the Association," CDGA Foundation President Sheldon Solow explained. "In that way we expected to reach a larger audience, which would enable us to provide more services."

While the Foundation continued to succeed in fundraising for its existing programming, the increased reach expected from the name change did not come to fruition.

"The experience did not meet our

expectations," Solow said. "Instead, outside of the direct beneficiaries, the Sunshine name never gained significant traction among CDGA members and the general public," Solow said.

As part of a long range planning initiative designed to maximize the Foundation's ability to thrive for the foreseeable future, the Foundation

Board determined that a closer identification with the CDGA is desirable.

"We decided that a direct connection with the CDGA would establish immediate recognition with our more than 80,000 members and our member clubs," Solow said. "Moreover, many individuals and organizations outside of our immediate sphere of influence know and appreciate the CDGA as a progressive force within the golf community. By taking advantage of this instant recognition, we hope to communicate our charitable mission quicker without the need to explain who we are."

Coinciding with the name change is an increase in the diversity of programming offered by the Foundation, while also strengthening its existing programming.

One of the Foundation's mainstays will continue to be its Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program, which will utilize golf to impact more than 1,200 individuals with special needs through more than 90 camps throughout the District.

The Foundation's work with veterans, which was at the core of its founding in 1944, will continue to expand. In addition to continuing the existing relationship with RevelationGolf, the Foundation will seek more opportunities to work

A circular graphic with a green, leafy border. Inside the circle, there are three sections. The top section is titled "Special Needs" and features a sun icon. The middle section is titled "Veterans" and features an American flag icon. The bottom section is titled "Youth" and features a golf ball icon. Each section contains text describing the program's goals and history.

Special Needs
The Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program will continue to service 1,200 individuals with special needs

Veterans
The Foundation will continue to expand its assistance for veterans that originally began in 1944

Youth
A new partnership with Youth on Course will offer affordable access to golf for youth at local courses

Continued on page 6...

Leaderboard

The CDGA Foundation would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following individuals, corporations and foundations for their generous contributions made between April 1, 2015 and April 1, 2016.

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Friends of the Foundation

Odyssey Golf Foundation Golf Course

In the same vein that "The Odyssey" famously tells the story of a Greek warrior's journey, the transformation of the Odyssey Golf Foundation Golf Course is compelling, unique and making a difference throughout the Chicago District.

Odyssey Golf Foundation Golf Course established itself as a 501(c)(3) charity last fall, meaning revenue generated from all rounds played goes towards fulfilling the charity's mission of "providing both therapeutic and instructional golf opportunities to qualified Veterans and for children with special needs due to physical challenges or psychological and emotional disorders."

"Anyone can play our course and know that it is a dollar well spent," said Executive Director Lisa Halikias.

Odyssey's transformation began many years and miles ago, in Greece where Lisa's husband's (Aristotle) family hails from. It was his family's immigration to and success in the United States that led to the creation of a family business, which, with the help of two-time U.S. Open winner Curtis Strange, founded The Odyssey Country Club more than 20 years ago.

Aristotle and the rest of the Halikias family operated the Tinley Park club as one of the premier public golf and special event experiences in the area for numerous years. However, with the ever-changing golf environment, the Halikias family eventually determined that an opportunity "to give back to the country that had given them so much" was the right next step for Odyssey.



The CDGA Foundation and Odyssey help bring the game of golf to veterans

"We always wanted to bring the benefits of a private golf course to the public, but the public's appetite for golf has changed in a lot of ways," Halikias said. "We thought, 'What if we could drive a new type of membership, a membership that benefitted something that we wanted to pay tribute to, our veterans?'"

Qualifying veterans benefit from Odyssey in a number of ways. They receive discounted golf, discounted group golf instruction, discounted driving range visits, 20-25 special events per year and a 9-hole golf league. All veterans programming is put on with funds generated from rounds played at Odyssey and donations made to the Foundation.

"We have the benefit of being in an area where there are a lot of veterans and a lot of individuals that can benefit from what we were trying to do," Halikias explained.

As Odyssey continues to establish its veterans programming, a partnership has been formed with the CDGA Foundation, which itself was initially founded during World War II to assist returning veterans. Every one of the nearly 400 veterans who take part in Odysseys programs will be given the full benefits of CDGA membership, while Odyssey will offer its facilities to host a Sunshine Through Golf Camp and Sunshine Through Golf Tournament Series event.

"We thought that this could be and should be a natural partnership," Halikias explained. "We would like to benefit the CDGA Foundation in any way we can and believe in what it is doing to bring golf to individuals that might not otherwise be able to experience golf. It's something that we all believe so strongly in, to benefit families that want to enjoy."

"With Odyssey's focus on also serving the veteran population, it's just natural for our foundations to partner," added CDGA Executive Director Robert Markionni. "We hope it grows in the future and provides numerous benefits to the veteran population."

Unlike "The Odyssey," the Odyssey Golf Foundation Golf Course and CDGA Foundation's journeys are not complete, with many chapters still to be written side-by-side.

News and Notes

Commemorative Brick Program

Honor loved ones while contributing to the Foundation through the Commemorative Brick Program! Placed at the front entrance of the Midwest Golf House, 4 x 8 or 8 x 8 inch bricks are available to purchase for \$150 and \$500, respectively.

More info:

www.cdgafoundation.org/brick

16th CDGA

Foundation Outing

Premier course, limited field, great meals, high-end tee gifts - all for a cause! The 16th CDGA Foundation Outing will be held June 13 at Knollwood Club.

More info:

www.cdgafoundation.org/outing

Brittany Ottolini: (630) 685-2313

Chicago White Sox Fundraiser

You can purchase a ticket for Sunshine campers to enjoy a Chicago White Sox game on Friday, Aug. 19 against the Oakland Athletics.

More info:

www.cdgafoundation.org/whitesox

Alex Nolly: (630) 685-2351

Sunshine Club

The following clubs and their membership support the Foundation through an annual giving program:

Beverly Country Club • Biltmore Country Club • Bryn Mawr Country Club • Butler National Golf Club
Butterfield Country Club • Calumet Country Club • Cress Creek Country Club • Crystal Lake Country Club
Crystal Tree Golf & Country Club • Edgewood Valley Country Club • Evanston Golf Club • Geneva Golf Club
Glen Oak Country Club • Hinsdale Golf Club • Idlewild Country Club • Inverness Golf Club • Itasca Country Club
Kankakee Country Club • Knollwood Club • La Grange Country Club • Lake Shore Country Club • Midlothian Country Club
Naperville Country Club • Olympia Fields Country Club • Park Ridge Country Club • Prestwick Country Club
Ridgemoor Country Club • Riverside Golf Club • Rockford Country Club • Ruth Lake Country Club
St. Charles Country Club • Twin Orchard Country Club • The Legends at Village Greens of Woodridge
Wilmette Golf Club (Men's Club) • Winnetka Golf Club (Men's Club)

veterans groups, such as the Odyssey Golf Foundation Golf Course (see "Friends of the Foundation" on Page 5).

"We continue to be true to the primary objectives which have guided us from our inception; to use golf as a means of helping individuals with various disabilities, be they physical, emotional, economic or a combination," Solow said.

The Foundation's new realm of impact will be with youth golfers, particularly those economically disadvantaged. Through a new partnership with Youth on Course (see more in "Tending the Flagstick" below), a non-profit started by the Northern California Golf Association, the Foundation will provide youngsters the opportunity to play golf at various local courses for \$5.

"Our principal emphasis, in the near term, will continue to



The Sunshine Through Golf Camp Program will continue to introduce the game of golf to individuals with special needs

center on our core competencies; working with veterans and individuals with special needs, particularly children and young adults," Solow said. "But we are also expanding our efforts into youth golf, not in an effort to compete with our friends in existing organizations such as the Illinois Junior Golf Association and the First Tee, but rather to complement their efforts by helping to expose more young people to this wonderful game for a lifetime."

For Solow, who began his two-year term as president in December, the re-brand and programming expansion are just the beginning of his plans to further the Foundation's impact.

"I am proud to undertake the responsibility of leading an organization that brings so much joy to people in need," Solow said. "We will never change our emphasis on that service. I hope that during my stewardship, we can expand the reach of the CDGA Foundation to more individuals and to new areas. I know that our dedicated Board, staff and volunteers are willing to put in the time and effort.

"We all realize that the game provides more than recreation by teaching core values as well as creating opportunities that many people do not understand until they become actively involved," Solow added. "The CDGA Foundation provides those opportunities to people who need them most and who may be unable to have the chance without our help. I urge anyone who cares about these issues to learn about the Foundation and then help in any way that they can. They will find the experience very rewarding."

New name, new programming. Still the same, however, is the CDGA Foundation's dedication to its cause and the ability of golf to make a positive impact on numerous lives.

Tending the Flagstick

Youth on Course

Helping the CDGA Foundation expand its charitable reach to children will be a new partnership with Youth on Course (YoC).

Founded by the Northern California Golf Association and headquartered in Pebble Beach, Youth on Course has expanded its reach to eight additional regions: Arizona, Idaho, Kansas City, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington and the Chicago District. The organization subsidizes rounds for its age 6-18 members, ensuring that they can play for \$5 or less. YoC pays participating courses the difference between the \$5 and their respective junior rates, allowing youths access to the game and courses a full tee sheet, future players and increased revenue. Since 2006, the organization has subsidized more than 380,000 rounds for its nearly 15,000 members.

"Youth on Course does a great job of providing affordable access to golf in a way that also is beneficial to the courses," CDGA Executive Director Robert Markionni said.

Coinciding with Youth on Course's expansion into the Chicago District is a new partnership with the Southern Nevada Golf Association. Youth on Course views these new alliances as another key factor in golf's growth.



Youth on Course has subsidized more than 380,000 rounds for children since 2006

"Introducing the '\$5 or less' program in Chicago and Las Vegas is a huge leap forward in making golf readily available for every kid in the U.S.," Youth on Course Board President Bill Hammonds said. "There's an enormous opportunity to grow the game of golf in such major metropolitan areas and we could not be more thrilled to welcome two new groups of golfers into the Youth on Course family."

Information for participation in the Youth on Course programming in Chicago will be made available in the coming months.

