

About The Michigan Women's Golf Association The Past - The Present - The Future

MISSION

The Michigan Women's Golf Association (MWGA), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, established in 1986, promotes the game of golf for all levels of amateur female players in our state. The goal is to foster and support amateur golf by providing a forum to educate, mentor and develop amateur female golfers, including the children in the Girls Golf Program, on the rules and values of the game. This is done by conducting and supporting competitions, educational clinics, fitness and nutrition seminars and other events that benefit members. The MWGA has partnered with women's golf associations across the state, region and country, as well as with the LPGA, USGA, GAM, to bring more quality competitions to amateur women golfers and to address the concerns and issues that impact women golfers at all levels.

MWGA offers opportunities for its members to compete in a variety of different types of competitions. The competitions, along with the clinics, seminars, events and other programs, are intended to provide members with opportunities for personal development, growth and appreciation of the sport as a golfer, while at the same time, introducing them to others who share their same love and respect for the game. Core values of honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, courtesy, judgment and perseverance have become MWGA's mantra. To continue to grow and evolve, the MWGA and all of its programs must remain strong. Many younger members and those who have gone through the girls' golf program have had an opportunity to learn more about the opportunities and benefits available in the golf industry and in the advantages of learning the game and becoming better players. Many senior members stay with MWGA after retirement, relocations, personal challenges and tragedies, due in part to the friendships and support they have found through the Association. MWGA is not just a golf organization, it's a women's organization.

THE BEGINNING

In 1985, 20 women golfers realized that more opportunities were needed for those accomplished women in the sport who did not have a private club affiliation. Women, public course players, needed an avenue to excel and competitively compete in the sport they loved. The U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship (WAPL), sponsored by the USGA provided a forum for these women with the establishment of the WAPL competition. The problem, at least in Michigan, was there was no tour or progressive set of competitions through which non-private club members could compete and advance, to earn a spot in the WAPL Championship. This realization planted the seed and became the impetus for the 20 trailblazers to launch the Michigan Women's Publinx Golf Association. The MWGA founding members are:

Nancy Abbeg, Sallie Campbell, Mary Cunningham, Evelyn Denton, Shirley Estabrooks, Mary Fossum, Bernice Henderson, Kathy Heriford, Tanya Hurley, Dee Klockow, Sue LeClair, Pat Meyers, Joyce Ouimet, Reva Palmer, Oleana Pearsall, Betty Smith, Kitty Stromberg, Tia Watson, Lavinia Wingo, and Sara Wold.

In 1986, their foresight and determination led to the establishment of an organization that became A Driving Force for Women's Golf. The MWGA was founded on the premise that women with skills and talent, regardless of background, age or privilege should have access to the same opportunities as others.

Our leaders facilitated the move to Title IX compliance through organizing women's golf initiatives. Doors were opened for opportunities to access local, state, regional and national events, while giving more women the opportunity for the recognition they deserved.

It did not take long to realize that women golfers needed a voice in many facets of the game. The accomplished players needed more and better competitions. All players had concerns regarding the availability of tee times, equipment, attire and course setup. Having more high level competitions available increased opportunities for the accomplished golfers to participate on high school and college teams, and in more competitions across the state, region and nation. Women, who simply enjoyed golf, wanted to learn more about the rules and the game, while developing their skills and becoming accepted as players. Women golfers wanted to be taken seriously and treated with more respect. The MWGA has been at the forefront in increasing awareness of these needs.

MWGA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the years, MWGA accomplishments have been many. For this organization to grow and stay strong, we must continue our work. In addition to what we provide our members, we have helped initiate and/or been closely involved with:

- The Women's Interstate Mid-Amateur Golf Championship (WIMAGC), which was formed in 1986 from members of women's golf associations in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. They held an annual event where women could golf and exchange ideas. One of WIMAGC's first initiatives was to show interest and support of a USGA women's mid-amateur championship. Influenced by the WIMAGC, the USGA conducted the 1st US Women's Mid-Am Championship in 1987.
- For over 30 years administered sectional qualifying rounds in Michigan for the U.S. Women's Amateur Public Links Championship (WAPL)
- The Michigan Women's Golf Summits, organized with a goal to provide interaction among all golf associations and golf-related organizations in Michigan, including support of the GAM, USGA, LPGA and LPGATP. The summits would include educational programs, interesting speakers and activities. Four (4) summits have been conducted

since 1986 and the main speakers were Carol Mann, Kathy Whitworth, Marcia Chambers and Teresa Zamboni.

- In 2006, the MWGA took on the new challenge of aligning the organization with a local charity, which mentored girls in the Detroit area. We provided direction and instruction through the discipline and teaching of golf skills and core values. A year later we partnered with the LPGA-USGA to formally establish our Girls Golf Program. “Women of today supporting the women of tomorrow” seemed natural.
- The Women's Golf Alliance (WGA) to develop relationships and exchange ideas with other members of the Alliance (28 other women's state golf associations) throughout the US.
- The creation of the Michigan Women’s Senior Championship, now sponsored by the Golf Association of Michigan (GAM), and other women’s competitions and championships
- The MWGA received recognition as the first female public players association in the nation to become a member of the USGA and has received national recognition as a women’s public golf association.

THE FUTURE

In 2016 the MWGA Golf Hall of Fame was established with Sara Wold as the first inductee. In 2017, 9 others were inducted. More can be found on the hall of fame at www.mwga-hof.org.

The mission and vision for the MWGA, under focused leadership and a membership committed to the growth of the organization will seek new ventures in the support of women. The future is bright.