



# WGA Director Handbook

## Keys to Success

### Introduction

WGA Directors are the volunteer leaders for the Western Golf Association (WGA) and Evans Scholars Foundation (ESF). Key responsibilities of WGA Directors include:

- Advocating for youth caddie opportunities
- Raising awareness for the Evans Scholars Program
- Providing personal financial support
- Raising funds from within their clubs and network
- Mentoring Evans Scholarship applicants and current Evans Scholars
- Supporting the administration and operation of the WGA's professional and amateur golf tournaments

The WGA ESF professional staff works closely with our WGA Directors in order to ensure they are armed with the tools and resources to be successful volunteer leaders. Please visit <https://wgaesf.org/content/director-resources> to view a number of our helpful online resources.

WGA Directors truly are the lifeblood of the organization and without their support we would not be able to operate our successful championships or provide young men and women each year with the life-changing opportunity of an Evans Scholarship.

The following pages include a number of "better practices" that you can employ in your role as a WGA Director. If you have questions or want to discuss a specific idea, please contact your regional lead from the WGA Director Development Team.

Todd Melrose – West Region – [melrose@wgaesf.org](mailto:melrose@wgaesf.org)

Joe True – Central Region – [true@wgaesf.org](mailto:true@wgaesf.org)

Ed Brockner – East Region – [brockner@wgaesf.org](mailto:brockner@wgaesf.org)

We are grateful for your leadership and our staff is standing by to support you in any way we can.

### **Raising Awareness of the Evans Scholars Foundation**

The following tactics are designed to increase awareness of and support for your club's youth caddies and the Evans Scholars Program.

- Establish an Evans Scholars Committee
  - A committee of 5 - 20 members should be created, ideally including a diverse cross-section of the club's membership. This enables you to spread the workload and serves as a force-multiplier.
  - Everyone has different spheres of influence within the club and your committee members can become storytellers on behalf of the Evans Scholars Program and influence their friends to be more supportive.
  - This committee will also serve as a pipeline of future WGA Directors at your club.

- Membership Communications
  - A letter or email should be sent to the entire membership in the spring highlighting any recently awarded Evans Scholars from the club and sharing any updates related to youth caddies.
  - If your club has a regular newsletter, ask to include information on your caddie program and any current Evans Scholars or Alumni from the club.
  - Featuring a “Caddie of the Week/ Month” and celebrating deserving caddies will help connect your membership to your caddies in a positive way.
  
- Locker Room Posters & Marketing Materials
  - The ESF staff can provide you with standard or customized marketing materials to be distributed in your locker rooms or hung on the bulletin boards.
  
- Evans Scholars Selection Meetings
  - Selection Meetings, which are the final interviews for the Evans Scholarship, are held annually around the country from late November until early March.
  - These meetings are the most personal and impactful way to showcase the Evans Scholars Program each year.
  - You should invite board members, influential club members and significant donors and prospects to attend.
  
- Member Events
  - Have a current Evans Scholar, Evans Scholar Alum or WGA Director share their story.
  - Spend a morning on the first tee with your current Evans Scholars as an opportunity to promote the Scholarship, thank the members and solicit financial support, if appropriate.
  
- Recognition Displays
  - A plaque could be displayed in the clubhouse with photos and/or the names of all of your club’s current Evans Scholars and Alumni.
  - Some clubs will encourage members to hang their Par Club tags on their lockers as a display of support.
  
- Special Caddie Bibs for Evans Scholars
  - Having your current Evans Scholars wear special bibs is a great way to highlight their achievement of becoming a Scholar.
  - The bibs should be a different color so that they stand out on the course.
  - The ESF staff can connect you to a vendor to special order these bibs.
  
- Social Media
  - Encourage club members to follow the WGA ESF on their social media.
    - Facebook: [www.facebook.com/EvansScholars](http://www.facebook.com/EvansScholars)
    - Twitter: [www.twitter.com/WGAESF](http://www.twitter.com/WGAESF)
    - Instagram: [www.instagram.com/WGAESF](http://www.instagram.com/WGAESF)
    - LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/evansscholars](http://www.linkedin.com/in/evansscholars)

Caddying is an investment in the futures of the young men and women in our communities as well as the game of golf. Our WGA Directors serve as stewards of their club's caddie programs and work to promote youth caddies and the Evans Scholarship to their fellow members.

- Board Engagement
  - Board support is key to the success of a thriving caddie program and Evans Scholars presence.
    - We encourage you to make a presentation to the board at least once every two to three years to update them on the club's Evans Scholars initiatives and thank them for their support.
  - If your club has a Caddie Committee, meet with the group periodically to ensure they are supportive of the Evans Scholars Program.
    - If your club does not have such a committee, propose starting one.
  
- Member Engagement
  - It is important to educate the membership about the benefits of using a youth caddie.
  - WGA Directors should stay in tune with youth caddie usage and determine if any action needs to be taken to increase usage by the members.
  - Members should be encouraged to mentor caddies, especially those who are potential Evans Scholarship applicants. This will create an emotional investment in the success of these caddies.
  - A Caddie Banquet should be held each year to celebrate the Caddie Program and to better connect your members to the caddies. It also serves to motivate the caddies to be a top performer when there are prizes for the highest ranked caddies.
  
- Staff Engagement
  - Having an engaged and supportive caddie manager and golf staff is vital to a successful youth caddie program.
  - WGA Directors should help ensure the golf staff fully understands the positive impact caddying has on young people and how life-changing the Evans Scholarship is for these young caddies and their families.
  
- Appropriately Sized Roster
  - Whether a caddie program is youth-based, adult-based or a combination of both, it is critical to have the right number of caddies on the roster.
  - Accepting too many caddies will result in higher turnover and not having enough caddies on the roster will result in disappointed golfers when caddies are unavailable.
  
- Training
  - In order for the caddie program to add value to the club, the caddies need to be well-trained.
  - The WGA offers a caddie playbook, caddie training video, caddie manual and caddie exam on its website and as a part of Director Resources.
  - Pre-training is a key step to ensure that on-course training is effective.
  - Have golf staff, member volunteers and experienced caddies work together for caddie training.
  - One or more shadow-loops will help new caddies develop their skills.
  - A caddie-rating system should be developed so you can identify caddies who need further training throughout the season to address performance issues.
  - WGA staff is available to help consider ways to improve caddie training at your club.

- Caddie Recruiting
  - The focus of recruiting new youth caddies should be on those caddies with high character and who are committed to caddying during peak times, e.g., weekends, tournaments, leagues and guest play.
  - Recruiting 8th and 9th grade students allows them enough seasons to have enough loops to apply for the Evans Scholarship.
  - Often-times caddies from modest financial backgrounds benefit the most from the opportunity and will grow to become dependable and hard-working caddies.
  - The following organizations can be effective for sourcing new caddies:
    - Local organizations such as The First Tee, Boys & Girls Club of America, YMCA and YWCA, Boy and Girl Scouts, and other church/ scholarship/ mentorship programs.
    - Local school officials including guidance counselors can typically identify high-achieving 8th and 9th graders with financial need, especially at private schools.
    - Family members of current club employees can make excellent caddies. They frequently come from a modest financial background and transportation is typically accounted for as families can travel to the club together. This can be a great benefit and incentive for your employees and their families.
    - The local high school golf team can be a good source for new caddies with existing golf knowledge. Often these young people may be from more affluent families and not be potential Evans Scholars. However, if you are building a caddie program for the first time, this can still be an effective recruiting pool based upon their availability and willingness to work hard as a caddie.
  - Invite potential new caddies, along with a family member, to learn about the benefits of caddying and the opportunity to pursue an Evans Scholarship.
  - Require that new caddies fill out a questionnaire with their address, school, grades, test scores, activities, goals, availability and family information. This will help identify potential future Evans Scholarship applicants.
  
- Single Bags
  - It is recommended that all high school aged caddies carry single bags.
  - This creates a greater number of loops to go around which will position your caddies for greater success when applying for the Evans Scholarship.
  - Carrying single bags will also allow your caddies to focus greater attention on a single golfer which will create a better experience for the caddie and the golfer.
  
- Supporting your Evans Scholar Applicants
  - Ensure that your Caddie Manager is aware of which caddies might be potential candidates for the Evans Scholarship and ask that those caddies are regularly assigned to WGA Directors or ES Committee members.
  - Hang the Evans Scholarship Application Information Sheet in the caddie area so they are aware of when the application becomes available and is due to be completed.
  - If there are any strong candidates that seem to be not getting an appropriate amount of loops, speak to that caddie about the issue and encourage them to caddie as often as possible.
  - If caddies from your club are selected to be finalists, help them prepare for the final interviews which take place during Evans Scholars Selection Meetings.

## Fundraising

One of the critical roles of WGA Directors is to help raise the funds needed to support our Evans Scholars. Every club is unique in the way that funds can be raised among the membership.

- Lead by Example
  - It is important for other club members to view our WGA Directors as philanthropic leaders at the club.
  - Directors are required to make a minimum annual gift to the Par Club at the “Hole-in-One” Level (\$1,000).
  - Directors are highly encouraged to give at the Match Play Challenge level of \$2,500 or greater. More than 60% of WGA Directors do so.
  - The average WGA Director Par Club gift, excluding commitments of \$50,000 and greater, is \$3,100.
  - Any financial support to a capital campaign, endowment program or WGA ESF event should be incremental to your annual gift to the Par Club.
  
- Par Club (Gifts of \$250 - \$2,499) and Match Play Challenge (Gifts of \$2,500 - \$49,999)
  - WGA Directors should strive to establish an automated billing mechanism at their clubs.
    - Convenience Billing is when all members are billed \$250 with the ability to opt out.
    - Automatic Renewal Billing is when all existing Par Club donors are billed at their previous year’s giving level automatically.
    - Utilizing one of these automated billing mechanisms will free up your time as a WGA Director to focus on upgrading the giving levels of select donors at your club.
  - If an automated billing mechanism is not possible at your club, the ESF staff can help send a customized Par Club appeal to the members.
  - Gifts of \$2,500 and greater are matched dollar for dollar through the Match Play Challenge.
    - WGA Directors should work with the ESF Development Team to create a customized approach for members at your club who might be inclined to support the ESF at a higher gift level.
  - Handwritten thank you notes should be sent from your WGA Directors and committee members to all new and upgraded donors each year.
  
- Leadership Commitments (Commitments of \$50,000 & Greater)
  - Donors with capacity to make leadership commitments should be discussed with the ESF Development Team so that a tailored cultivation strategy can be developed.
  - IRA owners over age 70 ½ have Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) requirements to meet each year. Qualified Charitable Distributions are a tax-advantaged way to distribute funds from these retirement accounts.
  
- Events
  - Showcasing your club’s Evans Scholars at existing events can be an effective way to raise incremental funds and awareness for the ESF.
  - The Evans Scholars Foundation operates numerous fundraising events and outings around the country in partnership with local WGA Directors and other volunteer leaders. You are encouraged to participate in these events as you are able.
  
- Foundation Giving
  - Foundations are typically required to distribute 5% of their corpus to qualifying charitable organizations.
  - If you are aware of members at your club who are involved in the decision-making process for a foundation, please alert the ESF Development Team so that a customized approach can be created.

- Planned Giving
  - Many times there are loyal members at clubs who have included the Evans Scholars Foundation within their estate plans, or who might be willing to do so. Please work with the ESF Development Team to determine an appropriate way to engage these donors.
- Bag Tag Program
  - A Bag Tag Program is when the club will automatically bill every member for a dollar amount less than Par Club. These gifts range from \$25 - \$100 per member.
- Establishing a New Evans Scholars Program
  - When establishing an Evans Scholars program at a club for the first time, there may be obstacles to fundraising. The Development Team can help you develop a long-term strategic plan to initiate and grow fundraising efforts over time.

### **Supporting the Operation of WGA-Run Golf Tournaments**

Since 1899 the Western Golf Association has operated some of the most prestigious golf events in the world. The Western Open (now BMW Championship) and Western Amateur were both first held in 1899 with the first Western Junior being held in 1914. Starting in 2022 the Evans Scholars Invitational will have a new title sponsor and be called the NV5 Invitational.

- 2022 Tournament Schedule
  - NV5 Invitational (May 23-29)
    - The Glen Club – Glenview, IL
  - Western Junior Championship (June 20-23)
    - Naperville Country Club – Naperville, IL
  - Women’s Western Junior Championship (June 20-24)
    - Prestwick Country Club – Frankfurt, IL
  - Women’s Western Amateur Championship (July 18-23)
    - Sunset Ridge Country Club – Northfield, IL
  - Western Amateur Championship (July 26-31)
    - Exmoor Country Club – Highland Park, IL
  - BMW Championship (August 15-21)
    - Wilmington Country Club – Wilmington, DE
- Ways to Support our Tournaments
  - Volunteer
    - WGA Directors provide critical volunteer support at all of our tournaments. Volunteer opportunities include serving as a starter, range or putting green attendant, greeter, rules official, on-course observer or walking scorer.
  - Corporate Support
    - Corporate hospitality suites and Pro-Am playing positions are an opportunity for businesses to spend time with their best clients in a unique and memorable setting.
  - Provide introductions to corporate decision makers within your network
    - Our corporate sales team looks to our WGA Directors for valuable referrals to companies that might consider using one of our premier championships as an opportunity to invest in their business.