



FROM THE SOUTHWEST TO ALONG THE EAST COAST, THE WGA IS CREATING WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMISING YOUNG STUDENTS AND DRIVING

A YOUTH CADDIE RENAISSANCE

The WGA and ESF are helping drive significant growth among youth caddie programs across the country, particularly in new areas from the Southwest to along the East Coast.

From Tucson and Phoenix to Boston, New York and South Florida, organization leaders are working with top golf and country clubs to establish or grow youth caddie programs, providing more summer work opportunities to students who could eventually apply for the Evans Scholarship.

“The growth of youth caddie programs across the nation in the past few years has been unprecedented, and we are seeing increased excitement and momentum from our partner clubs and organizations,” said WGA Chairman Joe Desch. “It has truly been inspiring. We believe that caddying is the best summer job a young person can have, and the skills learned on the golf

course provide a foundation for lifelong personal and professional success. Caddying also provides an opportunity to earn college scholarships, including a full tuition and housing scholarship through the Evans Scholars Program.”

The organization’s growth around caddie programs is a major part of the WGA’s long-range plan, which includes goals of doubling the number of caddie opportunities nationwide and supporting 1,500 Evans Scholars in school by 2030. The expansion follows record fundraising efforts over the last decade, allowing for the introduction of the Program to new areas across the country.

As the recognized authority on youth caddying, the WGA has been boosting resources and launching numerous youth caddie initiatives in recent years. The next few pages highlight a few of our newer success stories.



ARIZONA: Caddying in the Southwest

Youth caddie programs are gaining momentum in parts of Arizona, where WGA Directors — who have seen more traditional programs thrive in the Midwest — are

looking to replicate the success at their clubs in the Southwest. In the desert, where summer temperatures often soar above 100 degrees, students caddie on weekends in the winter months.

At both Desert Forest Golf Club near Phoenix and Tucson Country Club, WGA Directors are working with club leaders to build youth caddie programs. This involves gaining the support and enthusiasm of leaders and members — who may be unfamiliar with the tradition — helping recruit local students, educating parents and schools on

the benefits, and training and mentoring caddies. It can be a slow and challenging process, Directors say, but ultimately one that is incredibly rewarding.



SECOND EVANS SCHOLAR: Desert Forest GC, Arizona

Jeremy Dreher of Phoenix was awarded the Evans Scholarship in January, becoming the second caddy from Desert Forest Golf Club to earn the honor. Dreher, who plans to study business at the University of Colorado, says he fell in love with caddying after his dad introduced him to it. “Caddying taught me how to talk to people, and not just talk to them, but to converse and make friends with anyone I encountered,” he says.

“The momentum and excitement around youth caddying continues to grow,” said WGA Director Vic Capadona. “We hope this serves as inspiration for other clubs to establish similar programs in the Southwest.”

THRIVING YOUTH CADDIE PROGRAM: Tucson CC, Arizona

Last year, Tucson Country Club members Steve Pearl, John Orcutt, Nancy Leslie and John Morgan helped drive efforts to create a youth caddie program, recruiting students from local schools and The First Tee.

With around 25 youth now regularly caddying, the new program is among the WGA’s bigger caddie success stories. And it goes beyond the course — members brought in Evans Alum Hugo Salazar, a four-star general, to talk to participants about his career, and facilitated a separate meeting for a student interested in learning about the FBI.

The program has been years in the making, thanks largely to the efforts of Pearl, who became club president to drive the initiative. “I have a passion for golf and education, and I’m a firm believer that we can improve our country by educating young people and giving them opportunities,” he said.



THE MOMENTUM IS GROWING. WE HOPE THIS SERVES AS INSPIRATION FOR OTHER CLUBS TO ESTABLISH SIMILAR YOUTH PROGRAMS IN THE SOUTHWEST.

KEYS TO SUCCESS: Collaboration

At both Desert Forest and Tucson, leaders say the keys to building successful youth caddie programs include having strong club leadership support, as well as club staff who understand the importance of mentoring youth. At Desert Forest, the commitment of pro Brandon Rogers, as well as WGA Directors including Vic Capadona, Bob and Ellen McCarthy and Craig Bruya, have been critical to the program’s success.



YOUTH CADDIE PROGRAMS ARE BLOSSOMING IN THE WEST AND MIDWEST, FROM NEW INITIATIVES IN ARIZONA TO RESURGING EFFORTS IN OKLAHOMA.

RECRUITMENT: Long Beach CC, Indiana



The youth caddie program at Long Beach Country Club in Indiana is an example of what happens when WGA Directors are intentional about selecting students who meet Evans Scholars criteria and then train them to caddie. Only a handful of students are brought on each year to work at Long Beach; with careful selection and strong mentoring, the result has been at least two new Evans

Scholar awards in recent years. The club now has eight current Scholars and is one of the most successful clubs in the state of Indiana in fundraising efforts — thanks largely to the work of WGA Director Dick McNamee and others.



FULL LOOP: Indian Hills CC, Kansas City

In 1968, four male caddies from Indian Hills Country Club near Kansas City were awarded the Evans Scholarship, including Jack Holland. Now a longtime WGA Director at the club, Holland reflects on this year’s class of four New Scholars, which includes three young women, who will attend the University of Kansas this fall. “The evolution of what’s happened since then has been amazing,” he says.

In the decades since he earned the Scholarship, the Indian Hills caddie program — the region’s strongest and oldest — has faced challenges, including younger members who prefer to carry their own bags. One or two kids annually would earn the Scholarship, Holland says. But in recent years, WGA Directors and golf operations staff have worked to more aggressively recruit youth and educate members and parents on caddying as a life-changing opportunity.

Indian Hills caddie and Kansas Scholar Anh Do, who will soon serve as the KU chapter’s resident advisor, has been instrumental in encouraging students she tutors to caddie, an initiative Holland calls “Replace Yourself.”

“With four students earning the Scholarship in our club’s Centennial Year, our caddie program is as strong today as it’s been in the last 20 years,” Holland says. “We take such great pride in seeing these students get the Scholarship. It’s very exciting and rewarding.”

RESURGENCE: Oklahoma City G&CC

Oklahoma City G&CC is in its second year of a re-launched youth caddie program. Several club caddies earned the Evans Scholarship in the 1960s before the program disappeared. WGA Director Richard Clements helped re-start the program, which now has about 20 youth regularly caddying.



PARTNERSHIPS: NJSGA's Caddie Scholarship Foundation



Lily Formichella, a caddie at Manasquan River Golf Club, is one of seven students to recently earn a New Jersey State Golf Association

Evans Scholarship, the result of a partnership between the ESF and the NJSGA's Caddie Scholarship Foundation.

In January, the organizations formalized a partnership to expand youth caddie opportunities and jointly raise funds to send New Jersey students to Rutgers University.

"It is a great job to be outside all summer," Formichella said. "The best thing is how many relationships I have created, not only with caddies, but members, as well. I appreciate going out with new people every day and talking to successful professionals."



SCHOLAR CHAPTERS: Penn State ES

Since opening in 2019, the growth of the J. Wood Platt Evans Scholarship House at Penn State is indicative of a successful partnership among the ESF, J. Wood Platt Caddie Scholarship Trust and Penn State. It also provides a model for chapters at Maryland and Rutgers in the coming years. Nearly 50 students call the Penn State chapter home, the first time Scholars at the university have been able to live together in community. This summer, participants of the Eastern Caddie Academy, a WGA-run program for young women learning to caddie, will also live at the House for the first time.

Platt Evans Scholars were first spotlighted during the BMW Championship at Aronimink Golf Club outside Philadelphia in 2018. They will again play a big role at the 2022 BMW Championship at Wilmington Country Club, near Philadelphia.

KEYS TO GROWTH: Partnerships



In the East, the WGA's growth has been largely due to building partnerships with local golf organizations, schools and nonprofits. In addition to working

with the NJSGA's Caddie Scholarship Foundation, other supporting groups include the GAP's J. Wood Platt Caddie Scholarship Trust, West Penn Golf Association, Francis Ouimet Scholarship Fund, Long Island Caddie Scholarship Fund, Westchester Golf Association's Caddie Scholarship Fund and the Metropolitan Golf Association.

OUR GROWTH IN THE NORTHEAST IS DUE TO SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS, AND WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS.

PUBLIC COURSE SUCCESS: University of Maryland GC

In 2021, the WGA began a new youth caddie program at the University of Maryland Golf Course in College Park. The inaugural program featured 10 student caddies and was overseen by the



course's Director of Golf, Jeff Maynor, with support from Evans Scholar Nana Keita.

The program's launch coincided with the BMW Championship at Caves Valley Golf Club outside Baltimore, and the announcement of the inaugural class of two Scholars at Maryland.

The UMD program, a major success in its first year, begins again in June, with local youth returning to caddie in hopes of being able to qualify for the Evans Scholarship.

IN THE NORTHEAST AND MID-ATLANTIC, PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOLF ASSOCIATIONS, CLUB PROS AND LOCAL SCHOOLS ARE DRIVING MOMENTUM AROUND CADDYING AND SCHOLARSHIPS.

PROGRAMS: Ambassadors



To support WGA growth in the East, Jack Druga, longtime golf professional at the famed Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in Long Island, has been hired to help lead youth caddie efforts from Boston to South Florida.

Druga, a former caddie himself, will work to strengthen partnerships with PGA professionals at top clubs through a newly created Ambassadors program.

These relationships — and the guidance and support provided to the pros — will be instrumental to the growth and success of youth caddie programs.



SANKATY HEAD: The WGA works with Sankaty Head Caddie Camp in Nantucket, Mass., to provide the Evans Scholarship to deserving caddies. Currently, nearly 20 Scholars caddied at Sankaty Head.

YOUTH CADDYING AT TOP CLUBS: New York

WGA leaders are working with local organizations in New York to promote youth caddying. This year, new caddies were awarded the Evans Scholarship from top clubs across the state, including Shinnecock Hills, Winged Foot, Friar's Head, Oak Hill and Sebonack. Sebonack caddie Abby Sisler, *right*, will begin college this fall as an Evans Scholar at the University of Maryland.

Ed Brockner, former executive director of The First Tee of Metropolitan New York,



PROGRAMS: Caddie Scholar Prep



The ESF's new Caddie Scholar Prep program is helping drive growth in the East through purposeful recruitment, training and mentoring of youth who fit the Evans Scholars Program criteria.

By building partnerships with schools, nonprofits, and clubs to provide work opportunities to promising students in need, leaders will have a pipeline of qualified caddies who will be eligible to apply for the Evans Scholarship. Staff leader Brian Bianchi is leading efforts in this area.

St. Benedict's School in Newark, New Jersey, is one such case — more than 40 students have been placed at golf clubs around New Jersey to caddie, receiving training and mentoring.

IN DEVELOPMENT: Sea Island GC & Frederica GC

At Sea Island Golf Club and Frederica Golf Club, exclusive neighboring courses along the Georgia coast, WGA Directors are in the planning stages of adding youth caddies to the existing adult programs. WGA Directors Kel Goalby and Andy Langan are working to build momentum around the recruitment of

youth caddies, with the support of club leadership and the cooperation of CaddieMaster, Inc., a leading technology provider of caddie services.

“We’re working to encourage young people in the area to begin caddying, and a number of youth have become loopers,” says Langan.

“The hope is for a handful of youth to caddie regularly alongside adults,” Goalby says. “We want everyone to understand that taking a youth caddie is a positive experience not only for the golfer but a terrific first job for a student and can provide so many life-changing opportunities.”



FIRST EVANS SCHOLAR: Kiawah Island, SC

With a father who has worked as a golf professional for 20 years, it was only a matter of time before John Wolscheid learned the game. But it wasn’t until high school that he began playing golf more seriously. And when he was offered a chance to caddie at Kiawah Island Club, the exclusive resort near Charleston, South Carolina, where his dad worked — he couldn’t turn it down.

“I sprang at the opportunity, as becoming part of the tradition of golf is an honor and a privilege,” he says. “The relationships I have formed through caddying will stick with me for the rest of my life.” Thanks to the guidance and commitment of WGA Directors Joe Desch, Rusty Shepard and John McMurray, the club now has its first Evans Scholar. Wolscheid will study engineering at Michigan this fall but golf will always remain a part of his life — and his dad will always be his biggest fan.



PILOT PROGRAM: Memphis CC, TN

The success of a pilot youth caddie program last fall at Memphis Country Club led to the first full season of youth caddies working this spring. WGA Director Marshall Clark is leading the effort, with about 12 students taking part.

IN THE SOUTH, INCLUDING SOUTHEAST FLORIDA, CLUBS ARE CREATING NEW YOUTH CADDIE PROGRAMS; OR RECRUITING YOUTH TO JOIN EXISTING ADULT PROGRAMS AT TOP RESORTS.



New Scholars Connor Noone from Seminole and Jacie Goodman from Old Marsh.

The famed Seminole Golf Club in Juno Beach, Florida, has for decades had a strong adult caddie program. Several years ago, WGA Director John Hand helped lead efforts to add a handful of youth caddies to work alongside the adults.

Himself a former caddie, Hand saw the value of recruiting and mentoring young students, especially at a club with as exclusive of a membership as Seminole. Club leaders supported the idea — and this year, caddie Connor Noone became the second straight Evans Scholar from the club, following the first last year.

“When I first started caddying at Seminole Golf Club,

I instantly fell in love with working at a beautiful golf course,” said Noone, who works on weekends through the winter season. “It took a handful of loops for me to feel comfortable, but now I’ve made relationships with golfers and caddies that will last forever.”

Not far from Seminole, high school senior Jacie Goodman is the first caddie from Old Marsh Golf Club in Palm Beach Gardens to earn the Evans Scholarship — and the first female Scholar to come from the state of Florida. WGA Director John Braniff, *pictured below*, has been a key leader here in helping to slowly add youth caddies to the existing adult program.

A participant with The First Tee of the Palm Beaches, Goodman has had several leadership opportunities through First Tee, including coaching golf to kids with autism and watching the Solheim Cup.

“Just months after I started working as a caddie, the pandemic struck and caused my world to flip upside down,” she said. “One of the only things that was stable in my life during this time was caddying, and without it, I don’t know what I would’ve done.”

RedStick Golf Club in Vero Beach has also started a new youth caddie program, with several students working over the winter.



CLUB LEADERS IN SOUTHERN STATES FROM TENNESSEE TO THE CAROLINAS AND GEORGIA ARE RECRUITING, TRAINING AND MENTORING YOUNG STUDENTS.

NEW CITY EFFORT: Charleston Muni, SC

Up to 12 students will participate in a pilot youth caddie program this summer at Charleston Municipal Golf Course in South Carolina. They’ll caddie weekends through August, with students recruited from local schools, including Meeting Street Schools, a network of independent and public schools headed by Evans Scholars Alum Chris Ruzkowski. WGA Director and golf course designer Troy Miller is helping lead efforts on the youth caddie program, in conjunction with his firm overseeing the renovation of the course.