

AGA Board Candidate Statement

My name is Ashish Varma and I am running for the position of At-Large Representative on the AGA Board of Directors. The game of Go has held a special place in my life ever since I first witnessed it being played in the well-known show *Hikaru no Go* when 12 years old. I found it immediately both fascinating and awe-inspiring. I hope to help promote the game through the AGA to ensure that current and future generations are a part of our growing community!

Issues

At the national level, I believe that it is important that a timeline for future events is developed with proper markers put in place to ensure that milestones are successfully reached. Transparent communication from the AGA to local chapter organizers and general AGA members is necessary to inform the Go community on various issues. Ensuring that resources allocated to teaching, organizing, and promoting greater youth involvement are all distributed equitably and broadly will help to effectively grow the Go community.

Recently with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic it has also become clear that more resources need to be devoted to online materials, events, and environments to help foster a greater AGA presence. This is especially true in the absence of in-person gatherings. For these reasons, it is essential that further steps are taken to revitalize and reinvigorate the Go-playing base across the country.

Goals

- Work more closely with chapter organizers to expand club involvement as it relates to active AGA membership participation, go tournaments, and teaching workshops. This would help to enhance AGA community involvement.
- Increase youth participation and involvement through the establishment of online teaching programs in conjunction with schools and colleges across the country. This is important because it will grow the number of youth players along with participation in events such as the Redmond Cup, North American Kyu Championship, and Girls Cup.
- Create a metric in which to measure that progress is being achieved. This will help to ensure that both short-term and long-term goals are being addressed.
- Encourage greater involvement of AGA members in the decision-making process along with yearly publishing of the annual budget and monthly publishing of meeting minutes. This will help general AGA members learn what actions are being taken to further develop the Go community.
- Engage in greater collaboration with the AGF. This will aid in coordinating large events and identifying areas that require additional funding.
- Develop a protocol for online AGA tournaments and introduce a separate AGA rating for events or tournaments held online. This would facilitate greater online participation, and ensure the integrity of in-person AGA ratings.

June 15th, 2020

Action Plan

- Increase AGA membership through greater support of go club organizers in the form of online advertising and material stipends along with further promotion at events.
- Provide greater resources in the form of go boards & stones and enhance online activities available to college go clubs through partnership with the AGF and local chapters. This would allow them to be able to advertise, recruit, and participate in national online events such as the Collegiate Go League.
- Create a protocol for online AGA tournaments that will be held on a variety of Go servers. Work on establishing a separate online AGA rating for players participating in these events.
- Partner with the AGF to expand their grant-matching teacher program into more schools across the country. This would include directing additional investment towards greater online Go offerings in the form of events and workshops tailored towards teaching youth about the game.

Go Community Service and Activities

- Was active on the online Tigers Mouth youth forums and tournaments [2009-2011]
- Participated in the 2011 U.S. vs. Japan Youth Friendship Matches
- Former moderator on the Online Go Server (OGS) [2015-2016]
- Volunteered with registration and game recording at the 2015 Twin Cities Go Congress
- President of the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities Go Club [2016-2019]
- Created a club team and participated in the Collegiate Go League [2017-2018]
- Organized the Spring 2018 Go Tournament between the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities Go Club and Twin Cities Go Club
- Lifetime AGA Member
- KGS Admin [2019 – Present]

More Info About Me

- University of Minnesota – Twin Cities graduate majored in Neuroscience and Genetics
- Former Travel Coordinator and Treasurer for the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Pre-Med University of Minnesota Twin Cities Chapter [2017-2019].
- Enjoy teaching a variety of subjects (science, math, and Go)!
- Pursuing medical school in the future!
- Moving to the DC metro area in August!

Feel free to reach out via email (ashfairgo@gmail.com) or call (701-429-3546) with any suggestions or questions you may have regarding further fostering growth in the Go Community. Thank you for reading!