

## **AGA Board Candidate Statement**

My name is Ashish Varma and I am running for the position of Central Region Representative on the AGA Board of Directors. The game of Go has held a special place in my life ever since first witnessing it being played in the well-known show *Hikaru no Go* when I was 12 years old. I found it immediately both fascinating as well as 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**

The Central region is underdeveloped when it comes to involvement of the Go community. This is coupled with the fact that often there are not enough resources allocated to teaching, organizing events, nor promoting greater youth involvement in this region which are necessary in order to grow the community. For these reasons it is essential that more is done to revitalize and reinvigorate the Go-playing base located in this vast part of the country.

At the national level, I believe that it is important that a timeline for future events is developed along with having proper markers put in place in which to assess that milestones are successfully reached. It is also important for there to be transparent communication from the AGA to local chapter organizers and general AGA members.

### **Goals**

- I hope to work more closely with local chapter organizers to expand club involvement as it relates to active AGA membership participation, go tournaments, and teaching workshops, especially in the Midwest where it has traditionally been more difficult to sustain. This would increase AGA community involvement in the region.
- Increase youth participation and involvement in the Central region through teaching go at schools and colleges across the region. This is important because the number of youth players in our region is much fewer than those on the coasts as evidenced by participation in 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 in order to further develop the Go community.

### **Action Plan**

- Increase AGA membership in the Central Region through greater support of go club organizers in the form of advertising and material stipends along with further promotion at events such as festivals and anime expos (Years 1 and 2).

\* Evidenced by the fact that many central states have fewer active AGA members (those whose memberships are current as of 1/1/2019) than coastal states, even when

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accounting for differences in overall population (Minnesota has 28 vs. Maryland which has 79).

- Provide greater resources in the form of go boards & stones, posters, and books to college go clubs in the Central region so that they are able to advertise, recruit, and participate in national events such as the Collegiate Go League (Year 1).
- Start a pilot program to teach go in schools across the Central region through teacher recruitment and community involvement (Year 2 and beyond).
  - \* Initially would include a handful of schools to test out different teaching methods and strategies for involvement.

### **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

### **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)!
- Plan on applying to medical school in the future!

Feel free to reach out to me via email ([ashfairgo@gmail.com](mailto: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!