PROMOTION PLUS
GIRLS AND WOMEN IN
SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Network News

Volume 20 Number 1 ■ Spring/Summer 2009

Will Women's Ski Jumping be included in the 2010 Olympics?

by AJ Murray

On March 4th, 2009 the ProMOTION Plus Board of Directors followed the lead of Vancouver City Council in passing a resolution calling on the IOC to include women's ski jumping in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games here in Vancouver/Whistler.* We also put out a call to action asking people to sign the WSJ-USA petition (which gathered more than 10,000 signatures) and urging them to write a letter to the IOC. Shortly thereafter, CAAWS (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Girls in Sport) also passed a supporting resolution and put out a call to action at the national level.

US gold medal winner Lindsey Van at the World Nordic Ski Championships Feb. 20th, 2009.
Photo Courtesy of Women's Ski Jumping USA

Deedee Corradini, president of Women's Ski Jumping USA, and former Salt Lake City mayor, along with several female ski jumpers were in Vancouver April 20th to 24th to present their position to the BC Supreme Court. Fifteen current and former ski jumpers from Canada, the US, Slovenia, Austria, Germany and Norway were named in the suit against the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC). Their argument called for a declaration that having men's ski jumping events while failing to include the women's event in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The plaintiffs represent over 160 elite female ski jumpers (from 18 countries) who compete at the International level. Ski jumping, one of the original 8 events held at the first Winter Games in 1924, is the only winter event that doesn't allow female competitors. Ross Clark, lawyer for the ski jumpers argued that this was gender discrimination under the Canadian Charter. Clark maintained that VANOC is a government-funded and administered organization and therefore subject to the Canadian Charter. VANOC's response was that the decision was made by the IOC, an international body to which the Charter did not apply.

For many Canadians, the central issue comes down to — should millions of Canadian tax dollars be used to support an international event that discriminates against women? The IOC has maintained that it is purely a technical issue and has nothing to do with gender — women's ski jumping just doesn't qualify. But this argument has been hotly contested by the women themselves, various sport organizations and members of the media.

■ The IOC said that the ski jumpers needed to have held two world championships (they have held one) to compete in an Olympics, yet this rule has not been strictly followed in the past (marathoners were allowed to compete in 1984 after holding only one).

■ It's been argued that there aren't enough qualified women ski jumpers, yet there are more international level ski jumpers from more countries than in bobsleigh, snowboard cross and ski cross — which are already in the Olympics.

■ The IOC has said the technical standards aren't high enough, yet Ski Jumping Canada (SJC) is among the many that disagree, "In no other sport are the women's and men's events compared", said SJC chairman Brent Morrice. "[T]he women "can jump right down to the critical point in any hill that they've competed on . . . saying that they're not capable — it's uninformed. These girls are ready to compete."

(continued on page 5)

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This Issue

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Our Vision

All girls and women in the province of British Columbia will participate in and have access to a complete range of opportunities, choices and resources for positive experiences in physical activity and competitive and recreational sport and have equity as participants and leaders.

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The Power of a Vision

On March 4th, 2009 our Board of Directors passed a resolution to support the inclusion of women's ski jumping in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games here in Vancouver/Whistler.

It's astonishing to see just how uneven the playing field currently is; this injustice came to the forefront during the recent lawsuit brought against VANOC by the women ski jumpers. On Wednesday, April 22nd I sat in the courtroom and listened; this was actually the first time I had even been to a hearing or climbed the steps of the BC Supreme Court. I must say it gave me an uneasy feeling. I can only imagine the courage it took for the young women to stand up for themselves in pursuit of their dream — to be in the Olympics.

During the court hearing I sometimes wanted to pinch myself just to ensure I was living in the year 2009 not 1896. I had flashbacks to my undergraduate studies in the history of physical education where we read that Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics stated, "no matter how toughened a sportswomen may be, her organism is not cut out to sustain certain shocks" This is not modern.

Recently, we met with Sport BC to address our concerns on the elimination of the current template harassment policy for sport organizations. This policy provided guidelines for dealing with discrimination and/or harassment complaints within the British Columbia amateur sport system and provided a procedure for review and resolution. The existing policy will be replaced with a new template for Member Conduct, Dispute Resolution and Appeals Policy.

Our concern with the new policy is that harassment issues may not be given the vital attention that is needed. There is much anecdotal evidence of physical, emotional and sexual abuse of girls and women in sport. We are working together with Sport BC in our effort to advocate for harassment-free sport through education and training programs for every member of sport.

A draft version of the new policy is available on the Sport BC website. We encourage all members and partners to provide feedback on this important matter.

I would like to extend an invitation to all of you to attend our Annual General Meeting on June 16th, in Victoria, BC (see ad on page 8). I look forward to updating the membership at the AGM on all the issues, special projects and the good work of ProMOTION Plus.

In closing, on a very sad note, we say farewell to one of our esteemed colleagues and supporters, Wendy Ladner-Beaudry. Her connection to ProMOTION Plus was valued and her contributions will be forever with us. Wendy's spirit will continue on through the good work of our Board and members. She will be dearly missed, but not forgotten.

Warmest regards,
Deborah Pyne
Chair of ProMOTION Plus

Wendy Ladner-Beaudry

Celebrating Extraordinary

WENDY LADNER-BEAUDRY (1956 TO 2009)

by Beverley Siver and Irene Schell

Wendy's connection to ProMOTION Plus was a strong one. We were so fortunate that she was part of our organization. She was committed to the work that we do and her passion for sport and women's issues, along with her insatiable appetite for education was always evident. She was a phenominal facilitator and brought her skill, experience, and unique talent for engaging participants and audiences to our Coaching Female Athletes panels and Women and Leadership sessions throughout the province. Never resting on her laurels, two years ago Wendy enrolled in the Conflict Resolution and Mediation program at the Justice Institute of BC; she wanted to expand her already wide range of skills and knowledge and bring even more to the work to which she was so dedicated.

Wendy had a uniquely quiet and supportive demeanor. This, coupled with her passionately inquisitive nature meant she was always asking questions about process and ethics in order to discover the underlying rationale for a particular stance or course of action.

Part of Wendy's focus was on increasing participation among inactive youth, girls, women, and low-income families with a commitment to developing knowledge and awareness of physical literacy within the Canadian Sport for Life framework. Her work with KidSport Canada led her to the Vancouver Food Bank where Wendy encouraged mothers to sign their children up for sport programs. In the process she discovered that the mothers also needed support, so she set out to help them as well. With her determination and connections Wendy was able to secure running gear and a program for ten mothers to train for the SunRun.

Wendy looked for the positive in life and reached beneath the surface to find what lay there. She was able to bring out the best in others because she was willing to show that vulnerable side of herself. She possessed the wisdom to listen to what people had to say, and so was able to ascertain their intention and gain a greater understanding. As a result Wendy was often successful in helping others see situations through a positive lens. By living this philosophy and treating others with respect, Wendy modeled the way . . . she was a leader, an inspiration, and a role model.

Wendy began volunteering in the sport and physical activity sectors in 1994 as a Board member at Sport BC (1994–2000). Her subsequent position as Chair of KidSport BC propelled her to complete an MA in sport administration at UBC (2004). She worked and volunteered with many community sport clubs and provincial sport organizations. In 2002 Wendy began her involvement with the BC Games Society; she joined the Board in 2003 and was appointed Co-Chair in 2005 and again in 2008. She had been actively involved with ProMOTION Plus since 2006.

It is with great sadness that we mourn Wendy Ladner Beaudry — a sport leader, mentor, advocate, colleague and friend. She will be remembered fondly and deeply missed.

Remembering Wendy...

"Wendy's leadership in the sport system was multi-faceted. Whether keeping the BC Games Society at the forefront of athlete and community development, or moving from ideas to actions with KidSport BC, she did it quietly, confidently, and with the greater good in mind. For Wendy, it was about telling the story; alerting all of us to the strides and successes made by the sport sector. Her feeling was that if people know about the goodness of sport, more will come to be included either as participants or funders, or preferably both." Kelly Mann *(President and CEO, BC Games Society)*

"When I think of Wendy I think of family as she talked about her family whenever we saw each other. We both shared a passion for sport and for our families and loved how it kept us connected, real, and young-at-heart. I know how proud Wendy was as a mother to be playing field hockey on the same team as her daughter Jenna – it's the same way I feel when Sam [my daughter] and I play basketball together. These small, simple things bring everything that is important in life to a complete and full circle." Denise Coutts *(Executive Director, Pacific Parklands Foundation)*

". . . even though we hardly knew each other she made a profound impact on me. I knew I had a lot to learn from her." Kirsten *Close (Recreation Programmer, Vancouver Parks & Recreation)*

"Wendy had an amazing ability to ask the right questions – not always the easy questions, but the right questions – the ones that got down to the heart of the matter. She brought wisdom and caring to all that she did and had a remarkable outlook on life, the world, the sport system, and people. I treasure the many conversations we shared. She inspired me and taught me so much. She will be with me always." Irene Schell *(Past Chair, ProMOTION Plus)*

". . . an incredible ambassador for sport and a true colleague and friend of recreation." Cindy Crapper *(District Recreation Coordinator, Vancouver Parks & Recreation)*

"As a leader [Wendy] brought to sport her spiritual beliefs, her heart, and her passion. [She] would ensure the process was inclusive, the people were valued, and that the outcomes, as well as the unintentional impacts of our actions were discussed. She will truly be missed by all of us in sport that were fortunate enough to know her and call her our friend." Marion Lay *(Olympian & Honorary Board Member, ProMOTION Plus)*

Women in Sport Leadership
Sharing our Passion
Moving toward the future together

by Irene Schell, Steering Committee Chair

While more and more women participate in sport and make their mark at high levels as athletes and leaders, there are still fewer women than men in leadership positions as volunteers, coaches, officials, and/or as paid administrators. It is because of this that ProMOTION Plus undertook the *Women in Sport Leadership, Sharing our Passion* initiative. We wanted to support women in leadership positions in sport in BC, provide an opportunity for them to share strategies and ideas, foster a supportive network, and consider ways to not only increase the number of women in leadership positions in sport but broaden the diversity of the women in these positions. We felt that the Women in Sport Leadership initiative would result in a stronger BC sport system and a stronger network of women leaders.

Women in Sport Leadership participants

In addition to funding from the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport and ActNow BC, five other organizations came on as partners of the event providing significant cash or in-kind support. The BC Games Society, 2010 Legacies Now, the City of Richmond, Insights Vancouver, and the BC Golf Association enabled us to hold a first-class event. These partnerships show that supporting women in leadership is something that the sport system sees as important. This unique and unprecedented event held at Richmond City Hall, January 22-24, 2009, brought together **99** women from **27** communities. The funding enabled us to provide some financial support (accommodation, travel, or child care) to **36** delegates.

The delegates are amazing women — when you read their bios you realize that collectively they have given time, energy, and expertise to **hundreds** of organizations and affected ***hundreds of thousands*** of individuals as a result of their leadership in sport. "Structured and targeted leadership development initiatives like this one are an important element of a focused effort to affect the recruitment, advancement, retention, and recognition of women leaders", states Debbie Pyne, Chair of ProMOTION Plus. "When you look at the women at this event you can't help but be in awe. These exceptional women leaders in sport will help create an environment for women to achieve at the highest levels."

And here's what delegates had to say . . .

"WOW, this came as a surprise. It sounds absolutely incredible. Thanks for thinking of me. I am deeply honoured . . ."

"I feel rejuvenated, reenergized, and re-focused."

"Thank you for putting on this incredible event. Thank you for the invitation. I look forward to fostering and building more relationships and connections. You have helped open up more doors and opportunities for me."

"I felt a great sense of being drawn into the life of women in sport when Allison Forsythe told her story. I don't think there was a dry eye in the room."

"Empowering, Inspiring, Educational!"

"Thank you so much for getting me back on track and inspiring me."

"What a gathering of amazing leaders across the province. Being in a room full of 99 women in sport leadership across the province of BC you just can't help but get fired up and feel the passion and energy created by these incredible people. You could sense the power of the people wanting to make a difference for women in sport, wanting to contribute to the development of themselves and others."

While we achieved what we set out to do, the most significant outcome of the Women in Sport Leadership initiative is the new network of women sport leaders that was created. We are in the process of setting up a community of practice so the delegates can continue the conversations they began on January 22nd. ProMOTION Plus also plans to continue the Women in Sport initiative, which will likely include an event such as this one every two years in January.

Girls Only Success Story

It Takes Time and Perseverance to Build a Team

In the summer and fall of 2005, ProMOTION Plus partnered with the BC Ruby Union to encourage inactive women to play rugby. We ran "A Little Taste of Rugby" programs at SFU, in Vancouver and Victoria. Although we had some success with the women-only programs, we did not achieve to the degree we would have liked in bringing inactive players into the program. However, during this time we figured out that if we were going to succeed we needed to find a home for the women who were already interested in playing rugby, something that the participants could feel a part of and help to grow into a league. BC Rugby Union introduced us to the Vancouver Rogues Rugby club and a wonderful new partnership was formed. We were there in the beginning and able to help the Rogues run their very first rugby clinics for women.

2009 Rogues Rugby Women's team

Four years, four coordinators and many rainy Saturdays and Sundays later, the Rogues are still running the rugby clinics for new players and have achieved one of their primary goals: having a women's team competing under the proud banner of Rogues Rugby.

"The real success is in the cohesiveness of the women and in the continued development of the women's side. All of the women who have remained with the club have come together both on field and off the field."

— Rogues Rugby,
Women's Player Liaison

Today, the Rogues have a women's rugby team with some spares to boot. They recently played in the BCRU women's 2nd Division Spring League finals in the lower mainland. Good luck in the future Rogues!

Want to be part of the fun?
Contact: rugby@roguesrugby.ca or www.roguesrugby.ca

WOMEN'S SKI JUMPING *(con't from page 1)*

In fact Lindsey Van, the first world champion female ski jumper, holds the record (for both men and women) for the longest jump off the ski jump at Whistler, where the Olympic competition will be held.

Although great public support has resulted from the campaign, it would be wrong to assume that the women wanted to go to court. Legal action was the last resort in a battle that began back in 2006 when 4 Canadian mothers of female ski jumpers took their grievance to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. The matter went to mediation and was settled in January, 2008 with the federal government announcing its support of their bid. Former Canadian Minister for Sport Helena Guergis publicly declared Canada's support of its female ski jumpers, but newly appointed Minister for Sport Gary Lunn has since said that the government would leave the decision up to the IOC and wouldn't interfere. Former Minister in charge of the 2010 Olympics David Emerson has also publicly stated his support for including women's ski jumping in 2010.

So what happens now? Justice Lauri Ann Fenton may take several months to reach a decision, citing volumes of material to wade through. When asked if she was concerned that the IOC would simply pull the men's ski jumping event if they lost, Deedee Corradini explained, "I'm not worried. Ski jumping is huge in Europe; it's a rock star event. I don't believe the IOC would pull men's ski jumping. It just wouldn't happen."

For their part, VANOC has said that they would support the IOC if they decided to admit women's ski jumping, and that it is still possible to schedule a women's ski jumping event at the existing facilities. Most importantly, if a positive decision is made in time for the ski jumpers to compete, it will be an historic moment for Canada and the Olympics — the 2010 Games will be the very first gender equal Olympics.

ProMOTION Plus Chair, Deborah Pyne summed it up well, "In the last month, our organization has been questioned on our involvement with this international sport issue. One cannot question the inherent right of girls and women to an equitable share of resources. We need to challenge authorities and take steps to redress discrimination . . . In the end, we firmly believe that in the court of public opinion, the women ski jumpers are already gold medal winners."

To make a donation toward court costs and travel expenses go to: www.womensskijumpingusa.com

** For more information on the call to action visit: website at: www.promotionplus.org.*

2009 Bobbie Steen Award Recipients Honoured at River Rock Casino

On Tuesday, March 24th, ProMOTION Plus honoured Sherri Thomson and Amber Zirnhelt, this year's Bobbie Steen Award of Excellence recipients at the annual ceremony, held in conjunction with Sport BC President's Awards at the River Rock Casino in Richmond, BC. Congratulations to everyone who was nominated for the phenomenal work that you do for women and girls in sport.

2009 Career Achievement Award: Sherri Thomson

Sherri was drawn to the grace and power of horses early in her life. Over the course of her extensive career as an athlete, coach and trainer, Sherri has become a magnet for young female riders and loves to share her knowledge and passion for the sport of Reining with these young competitors. Sherri's phenomenal work ethic makes her an amazing role model who has had a profound impact on the lives of her young protégés. This is evidenced by the love and dedication of her students to Reining, and by the fact that they spend most of their free time working with Sherri and the horses.

2009 Development Award ($1500): Amber Zirnhelt

Amber has been running Girl Power programs for adolescent girls since 2002. She has delivered Girl Power workshops in Vancouver and Williams Lake, BC as well as in Edinburgh, Scotland where she studied community planning and recreational management in 2005. The development award will support Amber's goal to create a culturally relevant model of her program for aboriginal women in BC. Once the pilot program is complete, Amber will train young women from the Tseshaht First Nation as Girl Power facilitators. With Amber's support, these women will then be able to deliver the program in their own community.

Amber Zirnhelt and Sherri Thomson

Congratulations Sherri and Amber!

The Bobbie Steen Awards of Excellence are presented annually by 4 partners: BC Games Society, BC Sport & Recreation Branch, Sport BC and ProMOTION Plus.

PROMOTION PLUS
GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Show your support for ProMOTION Plus!

Become a new member or renew your membership to ProMOTION Plus for 2009/10

On an annual basis we impact as many 4500 girls and women through our programs and services. This is made possible through partnerships, funding from the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, through 2010 Legacies Now, from membership fees and contributions from individuals. Every $35 membership helps us support one or more programs or individuals.

Membership forms are available at: www.promotionplus.org

Call for Nominations to the ProMOTION Plus Board

ProMOTION Plus is now accepting nominations to the Board of Directors for election at the 2009 AGM on June 16th, 2009.

All positions are elected for 2 year terms. Elected positions on the Board are: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, up to 9 Directors, and the Past Chair. There are currently 7 individuals completing the second year of their 2 year terms. In addition to the Vice-Chair position, up to six Director positions may be filled at the 2009 AGM.

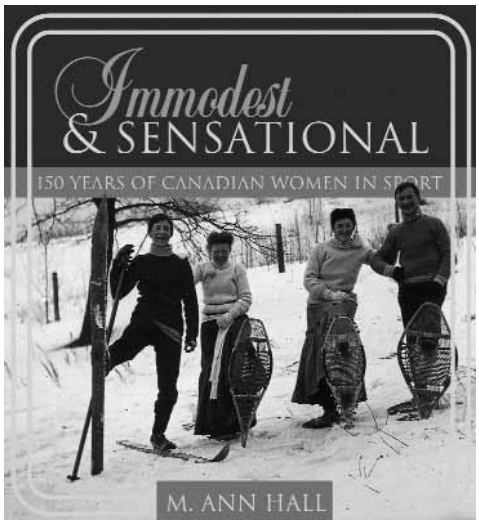
Application deadline 4:00 pm on May 27, 2009 ■ Visit: www.promotionplus.org for more details

Immodest & Sensational, 150 Years of Canadian Women in Sport

M. Ann Hall

Reviewed by Ann Oishi

With references back to the 1700s, M. Ann Hall begins her historical account of women in Canadian sport in the 1870s. This is the latest historical and gender specific text written by Professor Emeritus Hall from the University of Alberta's Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation. While the origins of women's participation in sport were primarily recreation-based, the evolution of women's restrictive attire, social interaction, freedom, and competition are chronologically noted.



Before the turn of the century, women slowly pushed the boundaries of participation in more respectable and socially accepted pursuits. Activities such as fancy skating, badminton, tennis and golf were viewed as reasonable and healthy, but as women took to bicycling and other more athletic activities and sports, the debate about healthy participation vs. medical damage to women's reproductive systems escalated. Hall refers to the 1920s as the golden age of women's sport. As more opportunities and a higher level of competition became available, women took on leadership roles and greater responsibility for their own participation. Interestingly, Hall writes about the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam and the fight to allow women's events to be included in the Track and Field competition. The fight for inclusion in these Games was lead by a group of women who, when they were allowed to compete, travelled overseas for this prestigious international event, set many world records, and tallied up numerous medals. Contrast this, 82 years later, with the current situation of women's ski jumping at the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver.

This text, illustrated throughout, is easy to read, comprehensive and takes the reader on a journey of women's sport in Canada that is both proud and extensive. The final chapter entitled "Fighting for Gender Equality" is current and offers the latest information on the state of women's sport in Canada. Hall offers a wide range of historical accounts from the origin of recreational activities to the most competitive sporting experiences, and the pioneering women athletes she presents are truly immodest and sensational.

Report From ProMOTION Plus Victoria

The Victoria chapter is calling for applications for its annual grant competition. The three grants funded by KidSport Greater Victoria and administered by ProMOTION Plus Victoria are:

"Play it Forward" Locally based schools, not for profit organizations and recreation centres who either develop a new "Girls Only" physical activity/sport program, or who increase the number of girls given access to participation in an existing co-ed program will be eligible for a grant of $1,000.

"Proud to Play like a Girl" Young women may apply for an individual grant that is offered to two age divisions. Junior female athletes, age 10-14 may apply for a "Fair Play Award" ($250) to support training clinics, camps or other forms of athletic training. Girls, 15-18 may be eligible for a "Leadership Award" for coaching or leadership clinics, workshops or training/skill development.

"In Training" Our new $250 award for 18-25 year old females currently attending post secondary education in the fields of sport, recreation, fitness or physical activity in Victoria. Two awards will be distributed for the 2009 fall term.

Application deadline: May 18, 2009. Application forms are available on the ProMOTION Plus website.

The funds for these grants were raised by the annual KidSport Golf Tournament, held this year on May 14th at Prospect Lake Golf Club.

(continued on page 8)

Joan Wharf Higgins and Deborah Pyne at the 2009 President's Awards

Congratulations and thanks to P+ Victoria Co-Chair Joan Wharf-Higgins (pictured) who was chosen to be this year's President's Award recipient for her long service and outstanding volunteer work with ProMOTION Plus.

Congratulations to P+ Victoria Board member, Donna Atkinson on her appointment as Rowing Canada Aviron's new Executive Director. "Donna brings to RCA valuable experience in management of many different types of projects and organizations, enormous energy, and an extremely well-regarded reputation of 'getting things done,'" says Rowing Canada Aviron President Brenda Liski.

Finally, the **Annual General Meeting** of ProMOTION Plus will be held in Victoria this year at the Pacific Institute of Sport Excellence on Tuesday, June 16th, 2009, at 6pm. The Victoria chapter is co-hosting this event where grant recipients will be announced and special recognition given to Dr. Liz Ashton, outgoing President of Camosun College and longtime athlete, mentor, visionary and champion of physical activity and sport for girls and women.

Please RSVP by June 10th to: info@promotionplus.org

Mark your calendars!

The ProMOTION Plus Annual General Meeting and reception will take place in **Victoria, BC** this year.

Tuesday, June 16th, 2009

6:00 pm–7:30 pm
Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence (PISE)
4371 Interurban Rd,
room 329
Victoria, BC V9E 2C5

There will be guest speakers, awards and updates on all our activities. Come out and enjoy an interesting and informative evening!

Please RSVP by June 10th to: info@promotionplus.org

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BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLF ASSOCIATION BCGA

The BCGA is dedicated to girls and women playing golf and proudly offers a variety of specific recreational and elite programs to encourage their participation.

Contact Us
Suite #2105
21000 Westminster Hwy.
Richmond, BC V6V 2S9
Tel: 604.279.2580
Toll free: 1.888.833.2242

Let's go Golfing Girls Club is a program designed for ages 7-18 to develop their basic golf skills in a girls only learning environment.

Playground to Fairway is a grassroots multi-level instructional program for elementary children.

The BC Women's Golf Fund provides financial support to girls and women interested in furthering their skills as a player, volunteer or coach.

BCGA Women's Clinics are provided annually to female golfers in order to improve their abilities and compete successfully at all levels.

www.bcga.org