



Media Contact:

Clover McFadden
Communications Director, Midnight Golf Program
248-792-9438
cmcfadden@midnightgolf.org

Midnight Golf Program Celebrates Pinning of 246 Program Graduates, Announces over \$220,000 in Scholarships

Family, friends and mentors celebrate the successful completion of college readiness and empowerment programming for another outstanding class of graduates.

DETROIT, Mich., May 10, 2023 — The [Midnight Golf Program](#) held its annual pinning ceremony today for the 246 student graduates of the 2023 Class. Students completed a 30-week curriculum of mentoring and empowerment. The celebration included students' college selection announcements.

The Midnight Golf Program (MGP) also announced over 220,000 dollars in scholarships awarded to the Class of 2023. In total, MGP helps students access \$5 Million dollars per year in financial aid toward the pursuit of secondary education.

The Midnight Golf Program is open to youth across the city of Detroit and surrounding suburbs. MGP accepts 250 determined and under-served high school seniors each year (out of over 1,000 applicants) who are selected on their character and grit, not their GPA or test scores. Student groups gather with staff and mentors twice a week to learn life and professional skills: interpersonal skills, time management, public speaking, networking, financial literacy, college readiness and more. They also share a meal and learn how to play golf.

Why golf? Reneé Fluker, a native Detroiter, social worker and single mother who founded the organization in 2001, credits her son – an avid student golfer – as the inspiration. At one of his tournaments in Florida, she connected with Earnie Ellison Jr., the former director of business and community relations for the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) of America. Ellison noticed her commitment to her son and encouraged her to start a golf-based youth group in Detroit.

Fluker saw the positive impact golf had on her son's life – sportsmanship, discipline, networking – and with his encouragement and the help of others in the community, the Midnight Golf Program was born. The organization started as an outgrowth of Midnight Basketball, an initiative designed to

curb inner-city crime by engaging urban youth in late-night sports programming. Since then, the name has evolved, taking on greater meaning.

As Fluker sees it, “Playing golf at night is impossible unless someone shines a light. The program uses the game of golf to give young people a brighter vision of their future.”

Since its humble beginnings in 2001, the organization has helped more than 4,000 metro Detroit high school students navigate the challenges of college and move on to successful and rewarding careers. Of course, success wouldn’t be possible without mentors – adult professionals who dedicate considerable time and talent to the program. Mentors provide vital empowerment and guidance and become an important resource for support during our students’ post-secondary experience. From phone calls to visits, the mentors remain connected with MGP alumni through college and beyond.

The pinning celebration provides students with the opportunity to pledge to stay part of the Midnight Golf Program family forever. Fluker is blown away by the number of former MGP students who give back – they become mentors, show up at events and donate to the program.

“You stay with us, we stay with you,” said Fluker.

About Midnight Golf Program

The Midnight Golf Program was founded in 2001 by Reneé Fluker, a social worker and single mother who noticed the impact golf had on her son’s life. Today the program annually serves 1,500 college students and early career professionals as well as 250 new high school seniors who participate in a 30-week curriculum to learn the game of golf, build relationships with mentors and develop life skills. Midnight Golf helps seniors enter college and continues mentoring throughout college and into the graduates’ professional careers. For more information, visit www.midnightgolf.org. You can also follow Midnight Golf on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

###