

About Tracy Raoul:

I did not listen to my aunt and uncle when they introduced me to golf over 40 years ago. None of my friends played and I did not see people that “looked like me” – other than my aunt and uncle – playing golf. In hindsight, it was a missed opportunity to play a sport with fundamental values comparable to life.

Fast forward to today, I’m thankful I have learned the history and contributions of African American golfers and caddies; I’m thankful to be affiliated with organizations in the industry to bring about positive change; I’m thankful to be in positions to introduce, engage, promote, and support more women, men, and children, notably those that have been historically underrepresented and underserved, to play golf and pursue careers in the industry; but most importantly, I’m thankful I have a husband and three children that have all benefitted from this sport I now love.

I am a mother of three (Akila, Abdel, and Ahmad) whom my husband, Philip, and I have been able to support in an awfully expensive sport. We know the cost of equipment, membership in junior golf organizations, tournament fees, and travel expenses for playing opportunities. Sadly, many BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color) families do not consider golf because of the expenses and not observing people that “look like them” in the sport. My family has been extremely blessed through golf and our family has been deemed by our friends, “The First Family of Golf in Chicago.” We treasure the moniker with humility and honor as we share our golf experiences and wherewithal, when able, with others to continue growing the game.

I earned my B.S. in Biology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and my M.S. in Molecular Biology from Chicago State University. I worked for the Chicago Police Department Crime Lab as a Forensic Scientist in Drug Chemistry before “forensics” became a household name, TV series, or a career path for African Americans. I also worked at Rush Medical Center as a Technician in Osteopathic Medicine studying the effect of specific proteins on rheumatoid arthritis.

But it wasn’t until I began working at the University of Chicago Cancer Cytogenetics Laboratory that I found my niche and passion. I worked there for 19.5 years analyzing the chromosomes of primarily leukemia¹ and lymphoma² patients using conventional [cytogenetics](#)³ and molecular (fluorescence in situ hybridization ([FISH](#)) analyses. It was truly a rewarding and fulfilling feeling knowing my analyses and results helped physicians confirm diagnoses, determine prognoses, and design treatments for specific types of diseases in adults and children.

¹ Neoplasms (cancers) originating in the bone marrow from hematopoietic cells (e.g. blood cells).

² Neoplasms originating in lymph nodes or metastasizing and evolving in nodes.

³ Analysis of DNA at metaphase (chromosomes) stage of mitosis to determine the presence of any changes.

I am currently employed at Sterling Pathology Laboratories where I continue to utilize my experience in chromosome analysis for patients with hematological malignancies. My experience as a clinical cytogenetics scientist afforded me the opportunity to author my first book, [Cancer Cytogenetics Unraveled](#) (ISBN 979-8893831443).

I have a certification in Cytogenetics from the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, certification in Bioinformatics from the University of Illinois – Chicago, Clinical Laboratory Technologist III Licensure from the Florida Board of Clinical Laboratory Personnel – Florida Department of Health and Clinical Cytogenetics Scientist Licensure from the California Department of Public Health.

I am a member of America's second oldest African American women's golf club, Chicago Women's Golf club (CWGC); President, [Ebony Ladies Golf League](#) (ELGL) serving as a member since 2010; Board of Directors since 2020 for the Chicago District Golf Association – midwestern affiliate of the United States Golf Association; Board of Directors of the Illinois Junior Golf Association (IJGA) since 2021; Chairwoman/President of the Jackson Park Golf Association ([JPGA](#)), which has affiliations with many of the organizations and individuals that have played and supported the Jackson Park and South Shore golf courses for decades; in collaboration with Illinois PGA Professional and Maryville Golf Academy Instructor, Juan Espejo, I train and manage students in a caddy program; Chair of Parent Involvement for the Chicago Public Schools Student Science Fair, Inc., which allowed me the opportunity to author a [booklet](#) (ISBN 979-8893837803) to help students prepare for science fairs; and Founder/President of [Teach Our Children, Inc.](#) (TOC), a 501(c)(3) providing educational resources centered around cultural and historical perspectives for individuals of all ages.

As the President of ELGL, my mission is to grow the game by introducing more women to golf and helping them develop their skills through our "Development" Division. Under my leadership, our 2022 membership increased 62% from the previous year with 33% of the women being new golfers. Additionally, one of the League's goals for 2024 is to celebrate 50 years of ELGL making strides growing golf among African American women

The CDGA Directorship has afforded me the opportunity to have broader outreach and access to more underrepresented groups to help grow golf. It also allowed me to serve on the Board of the IJGA, the subsidiary of CDGA for junior golf. In this capacity, JPGA collaborated with IJGA to host junior tournaments at both Jackson Park Golf Course and South Shore Golf Course—first time at this course in the 57 year history of IJGA.

As Chair of the JPGA, I have partnered with golf leagues, clubs, individuals, and organizations to introduce more youth to the sport; I established the caddy program at the South Shore Golf

Course that employed African American youth for the first time in its 118 year history; I established our scholarship program which provides scholarships to high school graduates that played golf or caddied, sponsors collegiate golfers with scholarships, and sponsors young men and women adults trying to play professionally or pursue a career in the multi-billion-dollar golf industry. Through a collaboration with the [Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation](#), we have introduced golf to elementary public schools through their after-school program.

Due to the commitment, advocacy, and services my husband, Philip, and I have provided to underrepresented golfers over the years, we have been recognized and honored as inductees into the 2024 Class of the African American Golfers Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony was in West Palm Beach Florida on May 27, 2024.

Lastly, the story of African American golfers trying to overcome overt racism in the golf industry has occurred for centuries, which is why TOC is producing a documentary about the contributions of African Americans in golf with an impetus on roots in Chicago. I am the Executive Producer of the documentary, [ACCESS](#), and I embrace the responsibility of educating people about Chicago's "oldest public golf course west of the Alleghenies"; introducing some of the African American pioneers of golf, most notably, Joe Louis; and teaching about the Chicago South Side golf scene through the voices that played and supported golf through the 20th century and currently.

Golf transforms lives and I am a testament to that fact.

Peace and Blessings,
Tracy Raoul



Additional resources to learn about me and my family:

Chicago Park District:

file:///C:/Users/traou/Downloads/BetweenTheLeaves_Issue%20One_pages.pdf

Chicago District Golf Association:

<https://medium.com/@CDGAGolf/finding-the-pieces-5de15773b0df>

WTTW interview: <https://news.wttw.com/2019/08/22/tiger-woods-jackson-park-project-where-proposed-merger-stands>

<https://clubandresortbusiness.com/is-chicagos-jackson-park-project-now-in-hibernation/>

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2019/9/2/20841335/south-shore-golf-course-jackson-park-golf-association-letter-tracy-raoul-sun-times-letters>

https://www.hpherald.com/evening_digest/golf-season-in-full-swing-at-jackson-park-and-south-shore-courses/article_d4c06b1a-3182-11ee-8f10-7fce4760e12b.html

Akila Raoul:

<https://new.express.adobe.com/webpage/7bLV2d1Ok0DN6>