

**Children's Organ Transplant Association®**

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

# **COTA Golf for Life**

*Tee Off for Transplant-Needy Kids*



## **Fundraising Event Guide**

2501 West COTA Drive  
Bloomington, Indiana 47403

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COTA.org

The **COTA Golf for Life Fundraising Event Guide** has been designed by the Children's Organ Transplant Association for Miracle Makers, like The American Legion, wishing to raise funds for COTA.

## **COTA Miracle Makers**

COTA has been blessed with thousands of Miracle Makers across the country -- including The American Legion, who have contributed to COTA to assist with transplant-related expenses. You may visit [COTA.org](http://COTA.org) and perform a quick search by zip code to find COTA kids in your area.

COTA Miracle Makers should read this fundraising guide and then contact [MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org](mailto:MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org) for event planning assistance and information. Every contribution benefits the mission of COTA: *To help children and young adults who need a life-saving transplant by providing fundraising assistance and family support.*



## **If you could help make a life-saving difference for a transplant family, would you?**

The question is as simple as that. If your answer is 'Yes,' then we invite you to join the hundreds of thousands of volunteers and contributors who since 1986 have generously donated their time and money to the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA). These volunteers and financial supporters are COTA's Miracle Makers, a group of committed individuals who are helping give children and young adults across the country a second chance at life.

COTA is a national nonprofit organization that helps children and young adults who need or have had a life-saving transplant by raising funds for transplant-related expenses. Transplant families look to COTA for assistance and support.

Over the years, COTA has helped raise millions of dollars for transplant-related expenses. COTA is a 501(c)3 organization; therefore, contributions to COTA are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. COTA is the premier national organization supporting transplant families because *100% of all funds raised in honor of patients are used for transplant-related expenses*. COTA does not charge a fee or retain a percentage of the funds raised.

Please check out the ideas and resources included here for golf events you can hold in your community.

Keep reading and start turning your 'Yes ... **I want to make a life-saving difference**' into action.

## **Getting Started**

### ***Planning Your COTA Golf Outing***

A golf outing is a fun and entertaining fundraising event. You will attract experienced golfers who are serious about the game as well as those who play only occasionally and want to support this important cause. This guide will assist you as you plan your event, keeping in mind that it is important to have something for everyone.

Some of your golfers have paid to golf as an individual while others are there as part of a foursome because their company is an outing sponsor. It is important that all of your golfers know they are playing a round of golf that will make a life-saving difference for COTA families. To help remind your players of the importance of their round of golf, provide your volunteers with basic information about COTA patients' transplant journeys. You will also want to have photos of COTA patients posted in the registration area. COTA can connect you with a family whom you could invite to the golf outing. You will also want to share information about COTA; brochures are available to explain how COTA helps transplant-needy patients and their families.

#### ***Select a Golf Course***

The first step in planning the golf outing is to secure a location. Many golf courses are experienced at hosting charity golf outings, and the staff can be a valuable resource as you plan your event. In most instances, the staff will be able to provide guidance on the timing and format for your COTA Golf for Life event. They may be willing to help promote it as well. You will want to contact the golf course at least 10-12 weeks before your anticipated event. Do not set a date for the golf outing before checking with the course.



#### ***Determine the Best Format***

The next step is to determine what format would work best for your fundraising event. The number of golfers you anticipate, as well as the expectations of your community, will help you choose the best option. One of your challenges will be finding the right format that allows the 'social' golfer to have fun without becoming frustrated, while allowing the more experienced golfers to move at a pace that satisfies them. The Scramble is often the best option. In Scramble play:

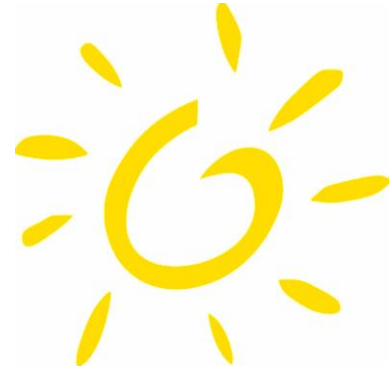
- Each foursome will be playing one ball together as a team to obtain a score.
- Each golfer hits a tee shot; the best shot is then selected and the team members pick up and move their balls to that spot to hit again.
- Play continues in this manner with each stroke being played from the best position until someone puts the ball in the hole.

Because the social aspect and speed of play are the advantages of the scramble format, most golfers will be more interested in enjoying the day than 'winning.' This format also provides a great opportunity to connect with others and share COTA patients' stories. You may prefer a different format, or the golf course may suggest one with which they have had great success. The most important consideration is to select the format that will appeal to the most golfers.

At most golf outings, winning teams are given prizes. Talk with the golf course staff to determine if pro shop gift certificates can be provided as prizes and included in the registration fees they will charge.

### ***Recruit Corporate Sponsors***

The best way to ensure a profitable COTA Golf for Life event is to secure corporate or individual sponsors. With support from local businesses, organizations and individuals, you will be able to keep registration costs reasonable for participants and provide giveaways, which are common at golf outings. Consider businesses with whom volunteers have relationships.



Some examples of sponsorships include:

**Title Sponsor:** This would be your largest sponsorship, and depending on the size of the event, could generate \$5,000. A Title Sponsor is supporting the entire event. Some benefits might include using the business name in title of event (i.e. COTA Golf for Life in honor of Patient Name, sponsored by ABC Company), allowing two foursomes to participate at no additional cost, providing special recognition at the event or creating a large sponsor sign for the registration area.

**Beverage Cart Sponsor:** Most golf outings include volunteers driving golf carts around the course to provide beverages to golfers. The Beverage Cart Sponsor would help cover the cost of the beverages and should generate \$500 - \$1,000 per cart. Benefits for this sponsor might include having a sign with sponsor name on the beverage cart, listing the sponsor's name on promotional materials, allowing one foursome to participate at no additional cost, etc. *At some courses, the beverage cart might provide alcohol. Check local laws to ensure compliance with providing and serving alcohol. The golf course should provide advice and counsel regarding this issue.*

**Hole or Tee Sponsor:** This is a great opportunity for local businesses and organizations to support the cause for a smaller sponsorship of \$100 - \$250. There can be up to 18 Hole Sponsors” and 18 Tee Sponsors – one for each hole and each tee on the golf course. Benefits for these sponsors might include a sign at ‘their’ hole as well as listing the sponsor names in promotional materials.

**Dinner Sponsor:** If you choose to have a dinner following the golf outing (and we suggest that you do), enlist the support of a Dinner Sponsor. This could even be the catering company if they will provide the food as a gift to the COTA community campaign, or provide it at a deep discount. Sample benefits might include a sign at the dinner as well as acknowledgement in promotional materials. (If you host a morning round of golf, a luncheon is a great option as well.)

### ***Enlist Volunteers***



One of the keys to a successful COTA Golf for Life Event is to recruit enough volunteers. You will need help identifying and securing sponsors, soliciting giveaways and prizes, registering golfers the day of the event, driving the beverage carts, planning the dinner, etc. As you plan the event, make sure there are enough volunteers so the day runs smoothly. Make a list of those areas in which you need assistance and ask volunteers to select those where they feel most comfortable serving.

Make sure you provide adequate communication with your volunteers so there are no surprises on the day of the event. Host regular meetings and share updates by email. All volunteers will appreciate hearing progress updates, and you will find that many volunteers will have great ideas to share as plans are developed. If volunteers feel they are part of the process, they will commit themselves to the success of the event.

### ***Plan the Budget***

A golf outing will require fundraising expenses. You will have golf course fees and catering costs, as well as other expenses for items that you will not be able to get donated.

### ***Promote, Promote, Promote***

Once you have confirmed the golf course, selected the date and recruited sponsors and volunteers, the most critical step in planning your COTA Golf for Life event is promotion. Most golf courses require a minimum number of participants to host a golf outing, so you will want to have a plan to recruit as many golfers as the course will allow.

Brochures (that include a registration form) as well as flyers will be important tools in promoting your event. Ask volunteers to distribute these within the community, and always remember to provide several brochures to the golf course as well.

Remember to promote your COTA Golf for Life event on websites associated with The American Legion. You can use social media, like Facebook, to amplify your promotional efforts and direct interested parties to the appropriate website(s) for additional information and registration.

### ***Consider Fun Activities on the Course***

Your golfers understand they are playing in charity golf outing, so they may expect on-course activities that provide additional fun, friendly competition and additional revenue for your COTA fundraising effort. Solicit prizes for these opportunities from local businesses to provide an extra incentive for participation and remember to announce the winners at the dinner.

Consider these on-course activity options:

#### **Longest Drive or Closest to the Pin Contest**

Select a different hole for each of these contests. The golf course staff can help you identify the best options. You will need a volunteer stationed at the hole throughout the day to measure and record results.

#### **Hole in One Contest**

Many golf outings include a Hole in One Contest sponsored by a local car dealership. Select an appropriate hole, with the help of the golf course staff, on which hitting a Hole in One results in the golfer receiving a new car. The local dealership will purchase an insurance policy to cover the cost of the vehicle in the event someone succeeds. Often the dealership will display the car at the COTA Golf for Life event.

#### **Mulligans**

At registration, provide golfers with the opportunity to purchase mulligans that allow them to replay a stroke without penalty. You will want to limit the number of mulligans per team, but most golfers will gladly pay for a few 'do-over's.'

## 50/50 Raffle

While a popular fundraising activity at golf outings is a 50/50 raffle, you will want to check your local gaming laws to determine the legality of a raffle. (Email [MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org](mailto:MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org) for assistance.) If raffles are allowed, golfers can purchase tickets at registration and before the dinner begins for their chance to win. In a 50/50 drawing, half of the proceeds go to COTA and half to the person whose ticket is drawn.

## *Celebrate with a Dinner (or Lunch)*

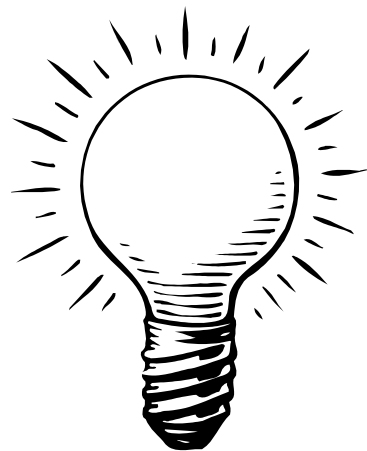
Conclude your COTA Golf for Life event with a dinner (or luncheon) to celebrate the success of the event and to recognize and thank the sponsors and participants. This also provides an opportunity to announce winners and to involve individuals who may not play golf. As you work with the golf course to plan your outing, you will have a reasonable idea of when it will conclude. Allow time for golfers to store their clubs and celebrate the great shots they made on the course. Then set a starting time for the dinner so those who do not golf will know when to arrive at the course to be part of the fun and fundraising.



The dinner program should be brief, but be meaningful and fun. This is an opportunity to share information about COTA, and if possible, introduce COTA patients and family members. You will also want to thank your sponsors and announce the winners of the outing and of the various on-course contests conducted throughout the day.

## *What about an Auction to Increase Proceeds?*

You may also want to consider an auction as a final opportunity to allow those who attend the dinner to support your COTA community campaign. A few theme baskets can generate additional proceeds and a great deal of fun during the dinner. Allow time for everyone to bid on the items and announce the winners at the end of the dinner. Remember -- these items do not need to be limited to golf or sports themes. Others may attend the dinner who would be interested in spa packages, travel opportunities or entertainment tickets. Because auction items will be contributed by local businesses, 100% of the winning bids will be additional proceeds for your COTA fundraising effort.



### *Tips for an Auction*

There are two major forms of auctions, and in both types of auctions, the high bidder wins.

**Live Auctions** feature an Auctioneer who calls for, and takes, bids on an item. Live auctions encourage bidders to have a lively and entertaining exchange as they bid against each other.

**Silent Auctions** utilize bid sheets and offer a chance for event attendees to place their own bids while challenging other bidders using bids taken during a pre-determined time period.

Here is how to coordinate an auction fundraiser:

1. Contact local businesses and ask them to donate items for the auction. You need a wide range of items in order to have something that appeals to everyone. In exchange for their generosity, promote the businesses at the auction by including their names on display boards or on a banner at the registration table as well as at the dinner. *Tip:* It is important to create and maintain a “sellers' market” and avoid creating a “buyers' market”. To do this, count the number of unique bidders you will have attending your event. One couple or one individual attendee equals one buying unit. A good balance is to have one silent auction item for every one to three buying units. A higher ratio of bidders to items will increase yields, but the lack of items will reduce total income. A lower ratio of bidders to items will reduce the yield, meaning items will sell well under their potential value.
2. Display all auction items on tables neatly and spread the items out so they are easily viewed. For Silent Auctions, place a bid sheet that includes a description of the item, minimum bid, and the required bidding increments in front of the item.
3. Details for volunteers handling this area include:
  - Set up auction tables.
  - Design and display attention-getting packages of live or silent auction items.
  - Customize and print the bid sheets with item descriptions or a note card with each live auction item described for the auctioneer or dinner host to read as the bidding begins.
  - Provide a pen for each bid sheet.
  - Use note cards or a receipt book to record each winning bidder’s name and bid. Present this to the buyer to give to the cashier to make the purchase, and then to the volunteer who will help the buyer find the item after it is purchased.
4. Assign volunteers to work at each of the item tables to answer questions and to watch the bidding or to hold up the item as the Auctioneer/dinner host is ready to start the bidding. Depending on the value of the items, volunteers may also need to be stationed around various items for security purposes. ***Tip:* COTA suggests keeping gift certificates in a safe place and simply placing a copy of the certificate on the display table.** The buyer should receive the actual gift certificate from the cashier at check out.
5. Designate a time during the event that bidding will end. You must stop all bidding exactly at the same time. Generally auctions are held in conjunction with another fundraiser, such as the dinner following the golf outing. Have the auctioneer announce when the live auction starts or have volunteers make several announcements about when silent auction bidding ends to help build and maintain excitement.
6. Gather all bid sheets when the silent auction closes. During a live auction have at least one volunteer noting who the high bidders were and the amount of the winning bids. Hand the winning bidder a receipt. Keep the table volunteers at their stations so the winners can give them their receipts to claim their items.
7. Set up a checkout line for people to pay for their items. Mark their receipt so they can take it back to the table to claim their merchandise. Be sure to have plenty of volunteers working checkout because at this point in the event timeline, guests are ready to go home. They may get irritable if they have to wait in a long line.
8. Always thank your volunteers and auction item donors. Put one or two people in charge of writing and sending thank you notes after the auction fundraiser at the COTA Golf for Life event.



Here are some ideas to get you started, but use your imagination and work with whatever you are able to get donated. **Remember, if the item is donated, 100% of the bid will help the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) make a life-saving difference for transplant families.**

**Family Fun** – Gift certificates to movies, arcades, miniature golf, bowling, combined with dinner at a family friendly restaurant ...

**Pamper Yourself** (or your Pet) – Certificates for a day at the spa, pedicures, haircuts, pet grooming, cosmetics, lotions and potions ...

**Get-Away** – Overnight certificates to a resort or hotel in the area, winners can use it themselves or treat out-of-town guests. Add some chocolate mints for their pillow, a classic novel, a bottle of champagne and bubble bath ...

**Good Taste!** – A sampling of ethnic, gourmet, regional, sweets, or other cooking ingredients. Throw in a cookbook and some cooking utensils ...

**Sports Enthusiast** – Tickets, certificates for lessons or the 'latest' in equipment. Add items like a water bottle, duffle bag or binoculars to complete the package ...

**Other Options** – Celebrity autographed items ▪ electronics ▪ designer merchandise ▪ original art pieces ▪ jewelry ▪ memberships to fitness clubs ▪ certificates for services (beauty/barber/spa, lawn care, limousine ride, housecleaning, car detailing) ...



## It is Time to Tee Off!



You now have the information you need to plan a successful COTA Golf for Life fundraising event. COTA is ready to help you put your plans in motion and assist in any way to help ensure your COTA golf outing is a huge success.

Please complete the next page in this COTA Golf for Life Fundraising Guide and send it to COTA. You may scan and email the form to [MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org](mailto:MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org).

# Children's Organ Transplant Association®

The Trusted Leader Supporting Families ... For a Lifetime

**Yes! We are hosting a COTA Golf for Life event.**

*Please complete this first and send it via email to [MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org](mailto:MiracleMakerInfo@cota.org).*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of Event Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

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