

Introducing Heir Links and Connecting Links

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It is not uncommon for members of The Links, Incorporated to bring their children, affectionately known as Heir Links, and their spouses—Connecting Links—to Links events, including art programs, fundraisers, speaker series, and—the most anticipated program—national assembly, which is held in a different city every other year.

Children from first grade through high school are welcome to attend these assemblies with their mothers and participate in age-appropriate group activities, visit historical sites, and enjoy other events, including dances and ice cream socials. Just as Links members connect and form lasting relationships with others around the country, so, too, do their children, who often exchange addresses and phone numbers. Many maintain contact long after everyone returns to their respective homes. As long-distance friendships form over the years, some youth even reconnect when they head to college. After college, it is common for Heir Link daughters to follow in their mothers' footsteps and join a Links chapter wherever they end up settling.

Roxanne Givens is a perfect example of this. Her mother, Phebe Givens, was a member of the Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN) Chapter, making the younger Givens an Heir Link. Givens, who was

the first African American woman developer in the State of Minnesota for several decades, today oversees The Archie Givens Sr. Collection of African American Literature at the University of Minnesota. The local chapter supports this collection as part of its focus on the arts.¹

A second Heir Link who became a Links member is Atty. Gaye Adams Massey. Her mother, Dolly Desselle Adams, was a national president of The Links, Incorporated. Adams Massey is CEO of the YWCA St. Paul. She credits her parents for shaping her commitment to giving back to community.²

Other current members who are Heir Links include Dr. Cheryl Beal Anderson, D'Juana Ballard, Mercedes Henderson Clark, Atty. Shawn Renee Kennon, Meredith Moore, and Fawn Wilderson.³

Spouses of Links members get to join in the fun and benefits as Connecting Links. While the women attend member-only meetings at assembly, their significant others enjoy their own special tours, participate in golf and tennis tournaments, and reconnect with college classmates. They also often cohost meetings at their homes, assist with community service efforts, and escort their wives to balls.

NOTES

1. Roxanne Givens, biographical information, 2021, Links, Inc., records, RCHS.

2. Gaye Adams Massey, biographical information, 2021, Links, Inc., records, RCHS.

3. Lorraine Griffin Johnson, email communication with editor, January 15, 2022.