

# CLUB BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL

## Canadian Club Champion

IT'S NO WONDER THAT  
GOODLIFE FITNESS'  
MAUREEN 'MO' HAGAN  
IS ALSO IHRSA'S 2016  
WOMAN LEADER OF  
THE YEAR





2016 Woman Leader of the Year:  
Maureen Hagan

34

## Features

### 34 Canadian Club Champion

Maureen Hagan's nickname, "Mo," is short for Maureen, but it might also stand for "more" — as in, this woman does *more* than you could possibly imagine. She oversees some 4,000 instructors for GoodLife Fitness, Canada's largest club chain; was instrumental in the founding of canfitpro, which has 25,000 members; is IHRSA's Woman Leader of the Year ... and so much *more*.

### 38 CrossFit Crossover

Clubs are wooing the hardcore workout

### 44 Cloud-y Club Days

The cloud reconceptualizes club operations

### 53 Guide to Greatness:

The *IHRSA Health Club Consumer Report*

### 59 Program Notes

A quarter of imaginative new programs



GoodLife lady:  
Maureen 'Mo' Hagan

# Maureen “Mo” Hagan

IHRSA’s Woman Leader of the Year has spent 32 years striving to provide a GoodLife for all of the citizens of Canada

**By Patricia Amend**

**CBI: An obvious place to start: At IHRSA 2016 in Orlando, you were presented with the Julie Main Woman Leader of the Year Award. What does that mean to you?**

**MAUREEN “MO” HAGAN:** It means, among other things, that I have an obligation to provide, to the best of my ability, what Julie Main offered —inspiration, leadership, personal commitment, and support for others. To pay it forward, I’ve created “The Role MO-del Influencer” award and scholarship, which will be presented to a deserving GoodLife associate. The recipient will attend IHRSA 2017 in Los Angeles with me.

**CBI: Did you ever have an opportunity to meet Main? ... For industry newcomers, she was the co-owner and president of the West Coast Athletic Clubs, in California, and a former president of IHRSA. She died in 2009 following a long and courageous battle with cancer.**

**MH:** Yes, I attended her convention sessions, and was blessed with a number of opportunities to meet her at IHRSA social events. I was always impressed by her kindness, patience, and eagerness to help her peers.

**CBI: In your acceptance speech at IHRSA 2016, you gave special credit to the mentoring you’ve enjoyed. How important are mentors?**

**MH:** They’re critical. Mentors have helped, guided, and taught me as I developed professionally. Fortunately, I’ve had many inspiring role models since I entered the industry in 1983. The first was Lynne Brick of Brick Bodies Fitness Services, Inc., and Planet Fitness Growth Partners, LLC. I’ve learned so much from her vision, leadership approach, and the confident way she’s conducted herself in what was once a male-dominant industry.

I’ve also learned a great deal from Jane Riddell, the COO of GoodLife, who’s been called the “architect” of our corporate culture—one that’s predicated on core values such as caring, passion, and personal fitness.

And, of course, David Patchell-Evans, or “Patch,” the founder and CEO of GoodLife, has inspired me, and encouraged me to take risks I wouldn’t have taken otherwise.

**CBI: Speaking of Patch, he’s one of the most ambitious, energetic, and successful individuals in the industry. What’s it like to work with him?**

**MH:** You can only imagine! It’s an education in itself, and I mean that in the most positive way. He’s a hard-driving entrepreneur who looks to the future, and, while he expects others to work hard too, he’s never asked his people to do anything he wouldn’t do himself. Patch has always made himself available—and still does—as much as he can. He’s encouraged me to bring ideas forward and to seek out new ways of doing business. →

## Highlights

- » Woman Leader of the Year
- » The value of role models
- » Six leadership principles
- » Hopes for a healthier future

**Maureen “Mo” Hagan** studied at the University of Western Ontario (now Western University) in London, Ontario, which also is the corporate home of GoodLife Fitness. She received a bachelor’s degree in physical education in 1983, and a bachelor of science degree in physiotherapy in 1987. She began her career as a hospital-based physiotherapist, and still maintains her license. Hagan joined GoodLife in 1984, and developed the group fitness programs it now offers at its more than 365 clubs across Canada, and helped it establish canfitpro, Canada’s fitness certification body. She holds certifications from canfitpro, Les Mills International, and the American Council on Exercise (ACE), and has been honored with numerous industry awards. Among them: Europe’s BodyLife Educator of the Year (1996); the IDEA International Program Director of the Year (1998); the IDEA International Fitness Instructor of the Year (2006); CAAWS Top 20 Most Influential Women in Sport & Fitness (2014); and IHRSA’s Julie Main Woman Leader of the Year Award (2016). ←

The GoodLife work environment is dynamic, if not always easy. In the end, though, it's *always* rewarding.

**CBI: Looking back, what prompted you to choose a career in fitness?**

**MH:** My start in life wasn't easy. I was a very premature baby, a twin, and had to fight to gain weight and catch up to my sister as a toddler. Early on, I developed a deep desire to become healthy, strong, and fit. I didn't want to be defined by my doctors or society; I wanted to define myself.

In high school, I was inspired by my physical education teacher, and discovered that fitness could help me develop the skills I needed to make the cut for

such as step aerobics—and I just *knew* I couldn't miss out on being a part of this emerging global movement.

While it meant leaving a secure job to work for a position that didn't yet exist, I seized the opportunity that Patch offered me to contribute to his goal of creating a national chain of clubs. GoodLife is now the largest club company in Canada.

I took the leap, and he entrusted me with the task of developing a robust group fitness program—one that's been an important factor in the company's growth and success. I'm proud to say it's the No. 1 driver of community and retention in our company, and, also, one of the leading programs in the world.

Today, I serve as the vice president

are genuinely interested in their students' fitness goals.

**CBI: You're also involved in canfitpro, the industry educational organization that Patch founded. Please tell us about that.**

**MH:** As he traveled to conferences around the world, Patch observed the proliferation of educational opportunities and the growth in attendance at these events, and decided that he wanted to offer more to his associates at GoodLife. In 1993, he established canfitpro to make fitness education available to the entire country, and, in the process, elevate industry standards.

Over the next few years, I coauthored the canfitpro Fitness Instructor Specialist and the Personal Trainer Specialist certification courses; there were very few such courses at the time. We now offer a wide variety of programs, and serve nearly 25,000 fitness professionals who are canfitpro members. Our annual world fitness expo is one of—if not *the*—largest annual fitness educational conference in the world, and we also produce five to six regional conferences each year.

Three years ago, I created Women Who Influence, a special one-day event that's held during the expo, which provides female leaders in the industry a unique opportunity to come together, network, and celebrate. It's grown very rapidly, and I'm proud of that.

**CBI: Canada and the U.S. are neighbors, but how do the two markets differ?**

**MH:** The need for health, fitness, wellness, and education is relatively the same. But while there are far more certification organizations in the U.S., in Canada there's a higher expectation that fitness professionals will hold *up-to-date* certifications. This, in part, explains why Patch created canfitpro.

**CBI: You've been successful in your career for 32 years. How have you managed to do this?**

“Passion and clarity of purpose, combined with drive and determination, and leadership and teamwork—they've all contributed to my success. That and the fact that GoodLife keeps growing and changing, providing me with incredible opportunities.”

the sports teams I tried out for. While I didn't become the greatest athlete, I fell in love with exercise. My ambition, then, became to have a career in fitness and travel the world.

My goal—my life's mission—is to improve people's lives, so the world can become a healthier and happier place.

**CBI: Now, a quick recap of your career, if you would.**

**MH:** I began as a part-time fitness instructor when I was still a university student. After becoming a physical health educator and licensed physiotherapist, I began working at what I thought was my dream career—as a physiotherapist in a large teaching hospital. But then I noticed everything that was happening in the fitness industry—this was the early 1990s when it was on fire with new trends

of program innovation and fitness development for GoodLife.

**CBI: You've built GoodLife's group fitness program from 10 instructors and a handful of classes to 4,000 instructors who teach hundreds of classes in GoodLife's 365-plus clubs across Canada. What makes a great instructor?**

**MH:** They're excellent communicators, coaches, and role models. They're confident in their skills, and strive to teach great classes. They actively promote the club, their own classes, and a positive lifestyle both in their community and on social networks. They also improve and expand their skill set by committing themselves to ongoing personal and professional development. Most importantly, they love people, enjoy building positive relationships with them, and

**MH:** With passion and clarity of purpose, combined with drive and determination, leadership and teamwork—they've all contributed to my success. That and the fact that GoodLife keeps growing and changing, providing me with incredible opportunities to contribute, teach, and influence. I get to do my best work every day as part of an incredible team.

As for myself, I'm committed to my own health, fitness, and wellness. I still teach classes, and work with a personal trainer on a weekly basis to keep my body and mind in the best possible shape. I'm determined to be a "product of the product." Lately, I've also begun to do personal meditation, which has helped me to focus more clearly, manage my stress, and sleep better, and I also make use of a career coach.

Ongoing professional development gives me the confidence and self-belief I need to power through to make things happen. As a trainer, speaker, author, and columnist for professional and con-

sumer organizations, I keep up to date, and, in some cases, ahead of the curve. And I haven't missed an IHRSA convention for as long as I can remember.

**CBI: You've mentioned leadership. Could you share a few of your own leadership principles?**

**MH:** Pleased that you asked—here are six: Know your passion to understand what drives you. Start with "why" to understand your purpose. Be persistent, believe in yourself, and do what it takes to achieve your purpose. Be a pathfinder: *lead thyself*. Assume a good posture, and be aware of your self-talk and self-walk. And practice what you preach.

**CBI: So, what's your grand goal?**

**MH:** I want to be part of a global movement that will help more people trade their sedentary lifestyles for a life of physical activity, healthy eating habits,

and a wellness-focused mindset. I start every day believing that I'll influence at least *one* more person. It's my way of striving to transform our industry into a wellness-lifestyle movement. My dream is that it will become a more credible and respected profession—one that consumers value as much as other healthcare offerings. Prevention and self-care will then be considered part of the medical spectrum.

Then, health, fitness, and wellness professionals will be in a position to educate more adults and children.

**CBI: How optimistic are you about this scenario?**

**MH:** Very. Like many others, I chose fitness to help people become the best version of themselves. While we have plenty of work to do, our industry is in good hands. There are so many passionate leaders among us! →

— Patricia Amend, [p.amend@fit-etc.com](mailto:p.amend@fit-etc.com)

TOGETHER WE CAN  
**BUILD A STRONGER BUSINESS**

With the competition for clubs increasing all the time, it's more important than ever to keep members motivated and engaged. By forming relationships beyond memberships, you'll help members fall in love with fitness and your club

To start building a stronger, more resilient business, get in touch with a member of our team today.

**RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND MEMBERSHIPS**  
LES MILLS

1.844.LESMILLS | [info.usa@lesmills.com](mailto:info.usa@lesmills.com) | [lesmills.com/us/relationships](http://lesmills.com/us/relationships)