LiFEsports™
at The Ohio State University

YEAR IN REVIEW
June 2022-May 2023
MORE THAN CAMP.
MORE THAN SPORTS.
LiFE
As you read our annual report, we invite you to learn about how LiFEsports utilizes sport to prepare youth for life and leadership across Central Ohio and beyond. Over the past year we have continued to grow our outreach programs to now over five communities in Central Ohio. Our emphasis on teaching and preparing youth development professionals has taken on a new life through Coach Beyond, a partnership with the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA). Coach Beyond focuses on training coaches all over Ohio in how to support student-athlete mental health, wellness, and overall development on and off the field, court, pool, etc. Finally this year, we were able to complete the first-ever randomized control trial exploring outcomes associated with the LiFEsports’ camp intervention – and the good news, it works! We hope this report inspires you to join us in our commitment to making quality sport experiences accessible to youth in Central Ohio, especially as we grow to meet the demand locally and beyond.

Sincerely,

The LiFEsports Team

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JEROME DAVIS, PHD
Co-Executive Director – Service/Outreach

DAWN ANDERSON-BUTCHER, PHD, LISW-S
Co-Executive Director – Teaching/Research

REBECCA WADE-MDIVANIAN, MSW, LISW-S, CMPC
Director of Operations

SAMANTHA BATES, PHD, LISW
Director of Research
MISSION
To prepare youth for life and leadership through sport.

VISION
To be the national exemplar in sport-based positive youth development programming.

OURS GOALS

SERVICE AND OUTREACH
Provide quality sport-based positive youth development programming, especially to those youth from vulnerable circumstances.
- Camps
- Clinics
- Youth Leadership Academy

TEACHING AND LEARNING
Prepare and train tomorrow’s sport-based youth development workforce.
- Undergraduate & Graduate Student Experiences
- Coach Beyond partnership with OHSAA

RESEARCH
Research and share best practices in sport-based youth development.
- Student-Led Research
- Faculty-Led Research

Since 2009, LiFEsports has grown to address the ever-changing needs of our community’s youth and the field of sport-based positive youth development (PYD). Today, LiFEsports is nationally recognized as a premier model for sport-based PYD. Most of our work involves using sport to impact the lives of those who need it most. Our Initiative’s continued focus on teaching has continued to impact the sport-based PYD field by developing tomorrow’s workforce. Our research demonstrates how sport can make a difference in the lives of youth and other stakeholders.
WHO WE SERVE

GENDER IDENTITY

- 40% FEMALE
- 60% MALE

RACE

- 86% BLACK
- 9% WHITE
- 5% OTHER

LIVING IN POVERTY

- 74%
GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

Since 2009, LiFEsports has provided quality sports-based programming to over 10,000 youth across Central Ohio. In 2022-23 alone, we served 778 youth and are primed to serve over 1,000 during the summer of 2023.

OUR YOUTH AND FAMILIES COME FROM:

21 SCHOOL DISTRICTS
182 SCHOOLS
42 ZIP CODES
CHALLENGES FACING OUR YOUTH

YOUTH SPORT ACCESS
Low-income youth are less likely to participate in sport than their more affluent peers. Only 1 in 4 youth ages 6-12 and living in homes earning less than $25,000 annually play on a team sport (Sports & Fitness Industry Association, 2021). On average, families across the U.S. are paying $883 annually in one child’s primary sport (Aspen Institute Project Play, 2022). LiFEsports promotes access to sport among underserved youth, as well as allows youth to sample multiple sports (many of which they may have never been exposed to such as tennis and lacrosse).

GROWING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS
Over the last decade, there has been a 40% increase in anxiety, depression, and thoughts of self-harm among youth in the U.S. (CDC, 2021). Schools are reporting a 20% increase in behavioral mental health concerns among students, with 63% of those in need of services in Ohio not receiving treatment (Hope Futures Campaign, 2022). LiFEsports equips youth with key social-emotional skills necessary to navigate challenging life circumstances and community violence.

LACK OF TRAINED COACHES:
Coaches are being asked to do more with less. We know our youth are struggling with mental health concerns, however only 18% of coaches feel highly confident in their ability to link athletes to mental health resources (National Coach Survey, 2022). LiFEsports prepares coaches to support student-athlete mental health, while also connect youth and their families to needed community-based resources.

MOTIVATION FOR COLLEGE/CAREER
Only 27% of youth from Columbus City Schools enter college within two years of graduating from high school, demonstrating a need to intervene beyond the classroom to improve students social and economic mobility (Ohio School Report Cards, 2022). LiFEsports exposed youth to careers and the college experience, as well as provides role models who exemplify future possible selves, institute hope, and foster aspirations.
Our outreach programs focus on teaching youth four critical social skills:

SELF-CONTROL
EFFORT
TEAMWORK
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
LiFEsports SUMMER CAMP

In 2022, LiFEsports operated 5 summer camp opportunities – our traditional campus-based program and four community-based sites located at Adams Community Center, Beatty Community Center, Linden Community Center, and Riverside Elementary in Dublin City Schools. Additionally, Clark State Health District operated one licensed LiFEsports Summer Camp.

LiFEsports CLINICS

16 different sports clinics were hosted by LiFEsports both on campus and in the community. These clinics introduced youth to basketball, track, volleyball, futsal, dance, lacrosse, art, baseball/softball, strength & conditioning, field hockey, recreational sports and street hockey. Clinics were done with partners such as the Ohio State men’s soccer team, Columbus Futsal, and Flag Football Fanatics.

PARENT TESTIMONIAL

“LiFEsports Summer Camp has been the BEST choice I made for my kid’s summer experience. From the moment I signed up at the registration event at the Beatty Park & Rec Center, excellence customer service, a personal touch, passion & heart driven leaders is what I felt from day one and throughout the entire summer! My children absolutely loved the hands-on experience and not only “just” sports but sports with structure! My daughter, Nina was introduced to track and field during summer camp in 2022. She loved it so much after she learned about the sport and how even at her age, she was more than capable of being a runner, including becoming an AAU All-American in 2023! We pay a special thank you to LiFEsports for opening her eyes to all the possibilities and motivating her to be great!! As a parent of 5 kiddos, I value the diversity in programming so that it reaches every kid! This program is a blessing to the community!”

Taja Hammond, LiFEsports Parent
ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES THROUGH OUTREACH, TEACHING, & RESEARCH

LiFEsports YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The YLA is dedicated to preparing past LiFEsports campers who are now in high school for college and careers. We work on developing key skills related to communication, public speaking, and citizenship, as well as engage youth in service and leadership opportunities at LiFEsports and in the community.

SPORT IN A BAG

This past year, the Lindy Infante Foundation and LiFEsports partnered together to distribute bags of at-home sports gear to youth experiencing poverty across Central Ohio. Each bag included a jump rope and either a basketball, football or soccer ball, as well as a “LiFEsports At Home” Instructional Guide inclusive of activities for kids to stay active and be healthy. Over 2,000 bags were distributed in 2022!
Hollyn Tillman has participated in LiFEsports for the last seven years. We have enjoyed seeing Hollyn grow from a camper into a participant in our Youth Leadership Academy (YLA). As a camper, Hollyn displayed a natural ability to lead through example. We’ve loved watching Hollyn grow in her leadership skills over-time, especially in her verbal communication skills. According to Hollyn, “LiFEsports and the YLA greatly impacted my life by making high-school a lot easier than what it had been. They give me something to look forward to when I have nothing to do. Both programs helped me with my social anxiety and allowed me to become confident in my voice. Throwing away that shell of anxiety has allowed me to take advantage of so many opportunities I would have missed.” Hollyn has not only been a tremendous leader in YLA, but also on the track. She competes in the 100, 200 and 400 events at Reynoldsburg High School, where she has placed 5th at the state level. Hollyn recently accepted a full scholarship at Tiffin University and will join its track and field team and study sports medicine.

In early December 2022, we hosted a lacrosse clinic at the Adventure Recreational Center (ARC) on OSU’s campus.... with huge help from our varsity Women’s Lacrosse Team! As the student-athletes facilitated several lacrosse activities, we instantly saw improvements in shooting, scooping, cradling, passing, receiving, and “push-pull” techniques among our youth. We even got to see some game action toward the end of the clinic. As youth played 6 vs 6 games, some of the lacrosse student-athletes joined in the fun. Others helped the youth play a lacrosse variation of Sharks and Minnows (called Thunder Dome)! Youth demonstrated so many examples of SETS throughout the clinic. They showed self-control by managing their emotions when struggling with new techniques, effort as they continued working hard even when they dropped the ball, teamwork when they encouraged their peers and worked together on teams throughout the clinic (especially during 6 vs 6). Huge shout out to OSU Women’s Lacrosse!
PREPARING SPORT LEADERS & COACHES

LiFEsports works year-round to provide teaching and learning opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students interested in the field of sport-based positive-youth development. Our Coach Beyond Initiative, a partnership with the OHSAA. Twelve school districts across the state are involved. This initiative is now helping to address the needs of coaches across Ohio and beyond. In 2022, we trained 4,739 coaches in Ohio in topics such as supporting student-athlete mental health, promoting positive team environments, and enhancing mental performance.

UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATES

228 students engaged in internships, coursework, volunteer events, research and/or employment.

OSU STUDENT-ATHLETES

49 gave back to their community through experiences with LiFEsports this year!
During the 2022-2023 school year, our Coach Beyond team piloted our Life and Leadership Through Sport Series at Hilliard Bradley, Davidson, and Darby High Schools. In total, 16 gamified educational sessions were offered to student-athletes and coaches. Sessions focused on health and wellness in sport including supporting student-athlete mental health, fostering a positive team environment, improving mental strategies for athletic performance, and managing stress and pressure. Across the three schools, 1,025 student-athletes and 120 coaches participated in at least one session. Results from the pilot program were promising, as 68% of student-athletes felt the sessions increased their valuation of wellness in sport; 72% of coaches reported gaining knowledge from the sessions; and 93% of coaches reported feeling more confident in providing emotional support to student-athletes. This work continues to expand to other schools and districts across Ohio!
DISCOVERING WHAT WORKS

What makes LiFEsports stand apart from traditional sports-based positive youth development programs is our specific focus on understanding how and why youth development programs and sports impact youth. Each year LiFEsports works to engage faculty, staff, and students from both OSU and partner universities in research.

RESEARCH BY THE NUMBERS

15 International, national, regional and local research presentations

6 Undergraduate students

4 Staff members

14 Community members

5 Master’s students

3 PhD students

7 Faculty research partners from 5 institutions

4 Commissioned evaluation reports

3 Published peer-reviewed journal articles
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON FORMER LS CAMPERS AND PARENTS

Travis Scheadler, a PhD student in the OSU College of Social Work, recently led an important study to better understand how S.E.T.S. and other skills learned at LiFEsports continue impacting campers as young adults. Travis interviewed 14 former LiFEsports campers and 19 parents/caregivers of past campers. His study found that former campers continue to use S.E.T.S. into early adulthood to support their overall health and well-being and interpersonal relationships. Former campers also transfer skills learned at LiFEsports to school, work, and community events. One former camper shared how he uses social responsibility, stating, “I started [an organization]. We’re partnered with Google, so and it’s focused on bringing cloud technology or bringing digestible cloud concepts to Black African Americans or Black Americans that wouldn’t have opportunities to those resources otherwise.” Travis’ research has helped us better understand how our campers take what they’ve learned and make a positive impact in the community!

NATIONAL COACH SURVEY

In 2022, LiFEsports partnered with the Aspen Institute, the Susan Crown Exchange, and Nike to launch the first-ever National Coach Survey. This survey collected data from over 10,000 coaches and provided important information about coach education and training in the U.S. One key finding that continues to support our work in Ohio and beyond was that coaches who participated in formative trainings in the past were significantly more confident in their coaching behaviors than those who had not participated in trainings. We are proud to have led this effort nationally as results continue to inform innovations and adaptations in the youth sport environment. This work is also tied to the Million Coach Challenge national work funded by the Susan Crown Exchange. We are proud to be part of this work.
OUR SUCCESSES

PROMOTING POSITIVE SOCIAL SKILLS & MENTAL HEALTH AMONG YOUTH
INCREASING ACCESS TO SPORT

778 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN:

different sports through our outreach programming. Additionally data suggest that youth are not only gaining more access but also growing in perceptions of sport-ability (one determinant of future sport participation).

Note: Campers entered with high scores on basketball and running/fitness. This graph represents campers with reported room to grow in their skills and abilities in multiple sports.
INCREASING COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & CAREER ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR YOUTH

LiFEsports IN THE COMMUNITY

81% of LiFEsports youth report their involvement in LS made them want to go to college.

100% of Youth Leaders report they are confident they will be accepted to college.
INCREASED COACHES TRAINED IN POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4,739 COACHES TRAINED IN 2022-23

The majority of coaches trained in-person engaged in our Supporting Student-Athlete Mental Health module. This 1-hour training continues to demonstrate significant impact as reported by coaches. For instance, only 20% of coaches felt knowledgeable about strategies and resources to support student-athlete mental health BEFORE attending our mental health training, whereas 82% of coaches feel confident in this domain AFTER attending this training.

COACHES ALSO REPORT LEARNING:

• “Techniques to help identify and probe for mental health issues.”

• “Different ideas on how to do think, pair, share with athletes.”

• “How open-ended questions are much more effective in developing dialogue and knowing what is happening with our student-athletes and coaches.”

SINCE 2009, LiFEsports HAS RECEIVED BOTH LOCAL AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION FROM:

• 2012 NSLA Excellence in Summer Learning Award

• 2018 Ohio State University’s Distinguished Community Engagement Award

• 2020 W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Engagement Scholarship Award

• 2020 Aspen Institute Project Play Champion

• 2021 American Camp Association Accreditation

• 2022 National Youth Sport Strategy Champion

• 2022 National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics Community Service Award
MEETING COMMUNITY DEMAND

Over the past five years, LiFEsports has expanded from one camp to five. Despite this growth, continued demand for programming. In 2022, over 100 youth were waitlisted for our camp programs. LiFEsports has developed a licensed program model to allow for other community organizations to implement our camp model. Additional partnerships and funding are needed to meet the youth demand.

HIGH SCHOOL WORK SUPPORT

Our Youth Leadership Academy annually engages 40 diverse youth in leadership development programming. Currently these youth volunteer their time during summer camps. Given many of these youth are low-income, LiFEsports would like to find additional ways to stipend and/or pay youth for their time during the summer. This would allow more youth to participate in this programming instead of having to find summer work.

SUSTAINING COACH EDUCATION

Our coach education partnership, Coach Beyond, is funded through a time-limited grant from the Susan Crown Exchange. As this grant ends in 2024, LiFEsports will need to secure additional funding to ensure that our coach education offerings can be provided free of cost to local sport organizations, schools and other youth-serving organizations.
FINANCIAL REPORT

MAJOR EXPENSES

- Outreach & Youth-Serving Programs: $217,416
- Teaching & Coach Beyond: $1,031,223
- Research: $82,876
- Development & Marketing: $100,803
- Administration: $217,416

Total: $1,591,407

FY23 FUNDING

- Grants: $539,009
- Philanthropic Gifts: $416,625
- Department of Athletics: $379,420
- Extension: $107,301
- College of Social Work: $96,542
- Department of Recreational Sports: $45,866
- Office of Outreach & Engagement: $21,861
- Office of Diversity & Inclusion: $5,000

Total: $1,611,624
Hall of Fame ($50,000+)
The Lindy Infante Foundation
Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health (ADAMH)
Board of Franklin County
City of Columbus, Recreation and Parks Department
Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority
Ohio State University, Department of Athletics
Ohio State University, College of Social Work
Ohio State University Extension
Ohio State University, Department of Recreational Sports
Columbus City Schools
Susan Crown Exchange

Champion ($25,000)
Dick’s Sporting Goods
Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family Services

MVP ($10,000)
Dublin City Schools
Fitzsimonds Charitable Trust
Life Time Foundation
Northwoods Foundation
Ohio Ophthalmological Society
Ohio State University, Office of Outreach and Engagement
Pitney Bowes
United Way of Central Ohio
Stanley Steemer
William H. Davis, Dorothy M. Davis, and William C. Davis Foundation of the Columbus Foundation

All-Star ($5,000)
Phil and Ronda Anglim
Cameron Mitchell Restaurants
Clark County Combined Health District
Columbus Equipment Company
Columbus Youth Foundation
Do It for 19, LLC
Encova Foundation of Ohio
Honda of Marysville
Impact60
Patricia J. Appold Family Charitable Fund of National Philanthropic Trust
Ohio State University, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
The Rusty Bucket Restaurant and Tavern
Safelite

Starter ($1,500)
Tony Amorose
Rachel Friedman
The Milburn Family Charitable Fund of Schwab Charitable
United Way Worldwide

Rookie ($750)
Dawn Anderson-Butcher and C.D. Butcher
Bailey Cavalieri
Todd Barnhouse
IGS Energy
Interstate Gas Supply Inc.
Thomas Katzenmeyer
Lifetime Quality Roofing
Ryan Logan
Tigran & Rebecca Mdivanian
Bill & Alicia Nolan

Tommy & Elizabeth Rowlands
Marsha & Virgil Temple
TEGNA Foundation
Dave & Sara Van Slyke

First Round Draft Pick ($250)
Aspen Energy Corporation
Randy and Tracy Bates
Jerry & Kim Bean
Christopher Brady
Tasha Childs
James Craft
Leo Alfred Jewelers, Inc.
Lisa Durham
Greenbaum Giving Fund
Tony Groh
Robert & Eileen Papatto
Michael & Nancy Scoliere
Ryan Schmiesing
James and Jessica Sauter
Abbie Sharp
Julia Tyre
OUR ADVISORY COUNCIL & LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Phil Anglim**  
Retired  
JP Morgan Chase

**Todd Barnhouse**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Agency

**Jon Berniger**  
Financial Strategist  
First Financial Group

**Kirk Bloir**  
Director, 4-H Youth Development  
Ohio State University Extension

**Michael Childs**  
Vice President, Community Development Director  
United Midwest Savings Bank

**Kenton Curtis Jr.**  
Assistant Director  
City of Columbus Department of Recreation & Parks

**Kristi Daiker**  
Venture Partner  
Refinery Ventures

**Kevin Dixon, PhD**  
Lecturer - Ohio State University College of Social Work  
Retired - Vice President - ADAMH Board

**Lisa Durham**  
Assistant Dean of Strategic Initiatives  
Ohio State University College of Social Work

**Shawnte’ Elbert**  
Associate Vice President  
Ohio State University Office of Student Life

**Corinne Evans**  
Executive Director, Engage Central Ohio

**Nettie Ferguson**  
Community Prevention Manager,  
ADAMH Board of Franklin County

**Matt Flamer**  
Vice President  
Huntington National Bank

**Rachel Friedman-Webb**  
Founder/CEO  
TENFOLD

**Thomas Gregoire, PhD**  
Associate Professor  
Ohio State University College of Social Work

**Kevin Griffin**  
Associate Vice President of Brand Engagement, Services, & Partnerships The Ohio State University Department of Athletics

**Tony Groh**  
National Account Manager  
The AZEK Company

**Stephanie Infante**  
President  
The Lindy Infante Foundation

**David Jenkins, PhD**  
Dean  
The Ohio State University College of Social Work

**Melissa Kass**  
Philanthropist
Ameena Kemavor, PhD  
Vice President of Advocacy & Engagement  
ADAMH Board of Franklin County

Kacy King  
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Ryan Logan  
Senior Purchasing Manager  
Worthington Industries

Andre Love  
Director  
Ohio State University Department of Recreational Sports

Todd Markiewicz  
President, The 1870 Society

Bill Nolan  
Partner, Barnes & Thornburg LLP

Brianne Parnell  
Extended Learning Supervisor, Columbus City Schools

Debbie Pfeiffer  
President  
Pitney Bowes Presort Services

Erik Porfeli, PhD  
Chair  
Ohio State University Department of Human Sciences

Jim Sauter  
Vice President & Operating Partner  
The Rusty Bucket

Ryan Schmiesing, PhD  
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Katie Smith  
Assistant Coach, Minnesota Lynx

Ralph Smithers Jr.  
Assistant Vice President of Equity, Inclusion and Community Relations, Encova Insurance

Dave VanSlyke  
Associate Attorney, Plunkett Cooney

Yolanda Zepeda, PhD  
Assistant Vice Provost, Ohio State University Office of Diversity & Inclusion
The work of LiFEsports would not be possible without the countless hours of time given by our over 204 volunteers who mentor youth, fundraise, provide strategic expertise and guidance, support research, provide internships for our students, market our programs, and more!