

A MESSAGE FROM OUR TEAM

Our LiFEsports year of 2023-2024 was a powerful one! While delving into our annual report, we invite you to discover how LiFEsports harnesses the power of sport to equip youth for life and leadership in Central Ohio and beyond.

Over the past year, we've sustained our outreach programs and served seven communities in Ohio. Our focus on educating and training youth development professionals has been revitalized and expanded through Coach Beyond, a partnership with the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and school districts across Ohio. Coach Beyond is dedicated to training coaches throughout Ohio to support student-athlete mental health, wellness, and overall development, both on and off the field. This year, we continued to publish and lead research efforts in fields of sport-based positive youth development, coaching, and sport social work.

We hope this report inspires you to join us in our mission to make quality sport experiences accessible to youth in Central Ohio and beyond, as we continue to grow and meet increasing demand. Together we also can strengthen the overall sport system by ensuring quality in alignment with our tag-line, #morethansport!

Sincerely,

The LiFEsports Team

JEROME DAVIS, PHD

Co-Executive Director

DAWN ANDERSON-BUTCHER, PHD, LISW-S, CMPC

Co-Executive Director

REBECCA WADE-MDIVANIAN, MSW, LISW-S

Associate Director

SAMANTHA BATES, PHD, LISW

Samantha Bates

RL Wade-Md

Director of Research

WHO WE ARE

MISSION

To prepare youth for life and leadership through sport

VISION

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

OUR 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
- Student-Athlete Life and Leadership Seminars

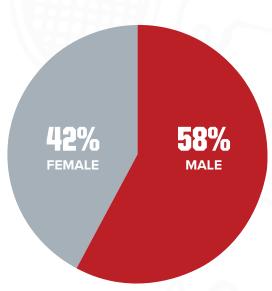
RESEARCH:

Research and share best practices in sport-based youth development

- Student-led research
- Faculty-led research
- Dissemination of evidence-based practices to inform youth sport policy and practice

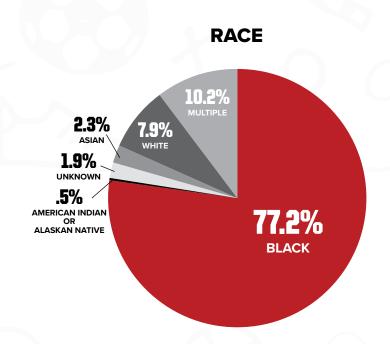
WHO WE SERVE





756 YOUTH

76% LIVING IN POVERTY

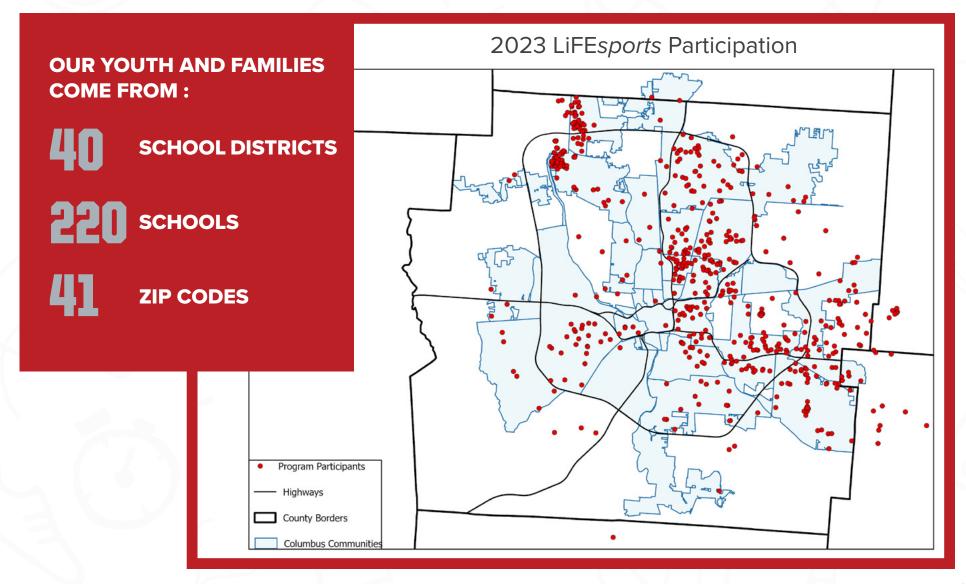






GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION

LiFEsports evolved from the National Youth Sport Program (NYSP) which operated on Ohio State's campus since the late 60's. We rebranded as LiFEsports in 2008. Since we have provided quality sports-based programming to over **11,000** youth across Central Ohio. In 2023-24 we served 756 youth through 5 summer camp programs, our year round sport clinics and the Youth Leadership Academy.



CHALLENGES FACING OUR YOUTH

Youth are facing new challenges. LiFEsports aims to be a solution. We have proven results, demonstrated through our research outcomes such as improved social and life skills, improved motivation for college and career, increased fundamental motor skills and sport competence, enhanced fitness and healthy lifestyle behaviors, and decreased risky behaviors. All of these outcomes contribute to positive outcomes for youth. LiFEsports makes a big difference!

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 a team sport (SFIA, 2023). 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). Sport sampling is an ever-growing priority in youth sport in the United States.

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.

EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE:

Unfortunately crime is on the rise in Columbus. Data from 2023 documents increased incidents of crime and domestic violence (City data cited in Sheikh, 2024). The urban youth we serve are more likely to suffer from violence exposure and associated mental health concerns (i.e., anxiety) than their non-urban peers (Borg, Rabinak, & Marusak, 2021). Programs such as LiFEsports not only provide alternative activities to deter crime to keep youth safe, but also teach critical social skills to help navigate sticky social situations.

LACK OF TRAINED COACHES:

Coaches are being asked to do more with less. We know our youth are struggling with multiple life stressors and mental health challenges, 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 connecting 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 and sports to improve young people's social and economic mobility (Ohio School Report Cards, 2022). LiFEsports exposes youth to careers and the college experience, as well as provides role models who exemplify their future possible selves, institute hope, and foster aspirations.

ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES THROUGH OUTREACH, TEACHING, & RESEARCH

Our outreach programs focus on teaching youth four critical social skills:

SELF-CONTROL EFFORT TEAMWORK SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES THROUGH OUTREACH, TEACHING & RESEARCH

LIFEsports SUMMER CAMP

In 2023, LiFEsports operated **7** summer camp opportunities – our traditional campus-based program and six community-based sites located at Adams Community Center, Beatty Community Center, Linden Community Center, Davis Middle School in Dublin City Schools, and Starling Pre-K – 8 School and Georgian Heights Elementary School in Columbus City Schools. Additionally, Clark State Health District operated one licensed LiFesports Summer Camp.

Lifesports CLINICS

18 different sport and enrichment clinics were hosted by LiFEsports both on campus and in the community. These clinics introduced youth to basketball, track, volleyball, futsal, lacrosse, art, STEM, baseball/softball, strength & conditioning, field hockey, recreational sports, ice hockey, wrestling, golf, and soccer. Clinics were done with partners such as the Ohio State Men's Soccer Team, OSU Men's and Women's Track & Field Team, Grandview Heights High School Wrestling Team, OSU Women's Lacrosse Team, For The Love Basketball, Plaskolite, Redefining Athletic Standards (RAS) at OSU, Columbus Futsal, Kenyon College Field Hockey Team, OSU Women's Club Volleyball Team, The First Tee of Central Ohio, Columbus Blue Jackets GOAL, and Flag Football Fanatics. These clinics serve as "boosters," as relationships are continued during the academic year and youth are reinforced for applying the S.E.T.S. learned at LiFEsports year-round in other social settings, such as at school, home and in the community.





ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES THROUGH OUTREACH, TEACHING & RESEARCH

OHIO STATE'S MEN'S SOCCER TEAM FACILITATES A LIFEsports SOCCER CLINIC

Social Responsibility is not only taught at LiFEsports but also modeled. This year, our OSU Men's Varsity Soccer Team put social responsibility into action by volunteering to host a soccer clinic for LiFEsports youth. Coach Brian Maisonneuve ("Mais") and his team led youth through drills to improve not only their dribbling skills, but also their confidence with the ball. The team even took some time to show off their soccer ball control tricks! At the end of the clinic, each team member awarded a golden button to youth who went above and beyond showing S.E.T.S. throughout the clinic! Coach Mais and his team are excited to come back next year!



LIFEsports YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (YLA)

The YLA is dedicated to preparing past LiFEsports campers who are now in high school youth 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. Some Youth Leaders also serve as junior counselors during the summer months at camps. They are the best role models!

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. In addition, LiFEsports engages in outreach to prepare current practitioners, including coaches, athletic directors, volunteers, and parents/caregivers, on best practices in PYD. We also provide learning opportunities for high school student-athletes to facilitate life and leadership skill development through sport.

UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCES 228 students engaged in internships, coursework, volunteer events, research and/or employment. Additionally, 49 OSU student-athletes gave back to their community through experiences with LiFEsports this year! We even had some past OSU student-athletes give back, such as Katie Smith (serves on our Advisory Council), Cardale Jones and Lorenzo Styles Sr. (hosted a fundraiser), and Maurice Claurett (spoke at an event). Coach Kevin McGuff, OSU Women's Basketball Coach, also created a Public Service Announcement to spread the word about LiFEsports and the value of sport and "coaching beyond."

COACH TRAINING Our Coach Beyond Initiative, a partnership with the OHSAA and 17 partner school districts across the state, continues to provide free and accessible coach trainings on PYD across Ohio. Since June of 2023, our team has trained 7,500 coaches. Further, through our online webinars, in-person trainings, and online mental health training, we've reached coaches in 191 Ohio school districts – that is 31% of districts across the state! Coaches attending our trainings report a 50% to 60% increase in knowledge, skills, or awareness related to helping youth develop life and leadership skills through sport. Now, in an exciting endeavor, we will expand our Coach Beyond work to three additional states: Maryland, Indiana, and Kansas.

STUDENT-ATHLETE LIFE AND LEADERSHIP SEMINARS In the 2023-2024 school year, the Coach Beyond team engaged in partnerships with Granville Exempted School District, New Albany-Plain Local Schools, Worthington Kilbourne High School, Hamilton Township High School, Hilliard City Schools, and Circleville School District to implement our Life and Leadership Through Sport curriculum. At each school, student-athletes were nominated to participate in the small-group programming. Session topics mirrored our coach trainings and were gamified to help student-athletes learn new skills, manage stress and pressures associated with sport, and excel in sport, school and life.



DISCOVERING WHAT WORKS

What makes LiFEsports stand apart from traditional sports-based 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 and evaluation studies.



RESEARCH INVOLVEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



COACH BEYOND



In 2023, LiFEsports faculty, staff, and students, as well as members of our Coach Beyond State Team, published an innovative paper using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to co-design and pilot trainings on mental health for coaches. The paper, published in the International Journal of Sport Sciences and Coaching, describes two years of public impact and social change efforts to improve coach education and training in Ohio. We want to coach "beyond the Xs and Os." Our "Coach Beyond" processes and outputs showcase how CBPR can lead to transformative action and social change to re-orient sport as a context focused on the holistic health, wellness, and development of student-athletes.

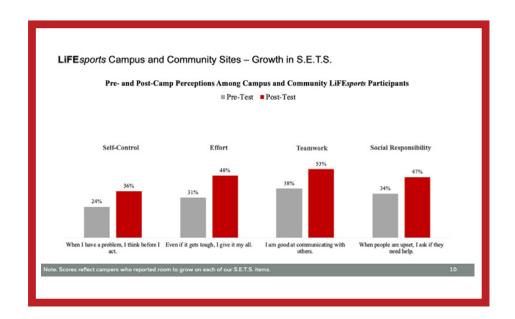
SYDNEY MACK

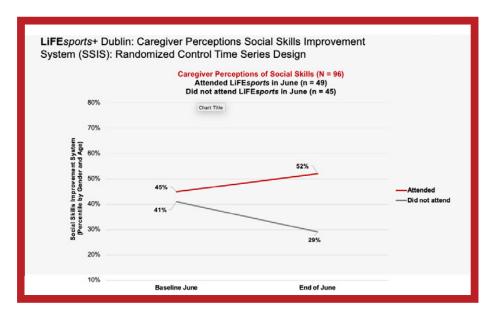




Sydney Mack, a PhD student in the OSU College of Social Work, defended her Master's thesis in 2023. Mack's thesis, entitled "Coach's Corner: An Exploration of Coach Stress, Burnout, and Need-Supportive Coaching Strategies," utilized data from 353 coaches to explore relationships among experiences of stress, burnout, and need-supportive coaching behaviors. Mack's findings revealed coaches are experiencing high levels of stress but low to moderate levels of burnout. Additionally, while stress and burnout were negatively correlated with needsupportive coaching behaviors, only burnout predicted coaches' use of these coaching behaviors. Results suggest that reducing stress and decreasing risks for burnout among coaches may be one way to support the development of life and leadership skills among youth after all, coaches are the linchpins of cultivating positive experiences through sport!

PROMOTING POSITIVE SOCIAL SKILLS AMONG YOUTH

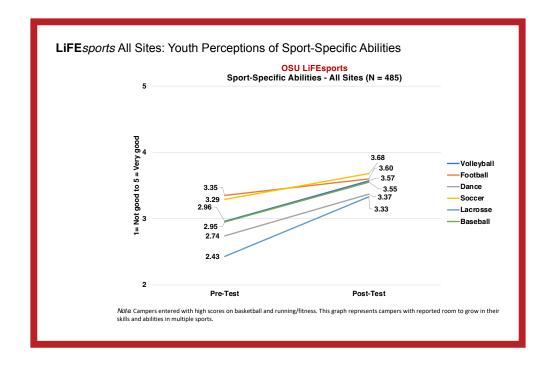




756 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN:

16

different sports at LiFEsports. An additional 262 community youth joined us at year-round sport and enrichment clinics. Data suggest that youth are not only gaining more access but also growing in their perceptions of sport-ability (a key determinant of future sport participation). We love exposing young people in Central Ohio to the power of sport!



INCREASING COLLEGE ENROLLMENT & CAREER ASPIRATIONS FOR OUR YOUTH

of youth in LiFEsports reported their "involvevement in LiFEsports made me want to go to college."

of Youth Leaders reported, "I am confident I could be accepted to college."



ZOE DIXON

Each year our Youth Leadership Academy is home to some of the best and brightest past LiFEsports campers. Zoe Dixon, a current high school junior and past camper, has shown tremendous growth as an individual and as a team player during her time with LiFEsports.

Zoe voiced frustration after working as a junior counselor her first summer, as she struggled with the skillset to handle situations that arose between some of the younger LiFEsports youth. Zoe took it upon herself to volunteer at multiple sports clinics throughout the academic year to better her skills with the younger youth. Armed with a greatly improved skillset, Zoe excelled in the role of junior counselor. This past year Zoe was elected by her peers to be the President of the YLA. In this capacity, Zoe has worked with the executive committee and other Youth Leaders to ensure the goals ad projects align with the mission and vision of YLA and LiFEsports.

While Zoe started out her time with YLA as a shy freshman looking for guidance, she has developed over the past three years into a confident young woman with the leadership skills to not only pave her own path to her future goals, but also to help her support other Youth Leaders in the program.

"Over the past three years, my involvement in the Youth Leadership Academy has taught me the power of community, leadership, and the importance of empowering youth to reach their full potential. Witnessing their growth and resilience has deeply impacted me."

7oe Dixon



IMPROVING THE SKILLS OF SCHOOL-BASED COACHES IN OHIO

In October 2023, Coach Beyond's online mental health training was approved by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addition Services. In alignment with House Bill 33, this training now serves as a premier mental health training for coaches every time they renew their Pupil Activity Permit. To date, over 2,000 coaches have completed this online training in Ohio. Subsequently, our team began a partnership with the United States Council for Athletes' Health (USCAH) to extend the reach of this online training to coaches nationally. Over the next two years, this training will be free to 25,000 U.S. coaches through USCAH's Athletic Health Space platform. Thanks in part to the Susan Crown Exchange, a foundation out of Chicago that funds Coach Beyond, LiFEsports continues to serve as a national exemplar and innovator in the field of sport-based positive youth development.

SINCE 2009 LIFE 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
- 2023 Ohio State University Program of Excellence in Engaged Scholarship



MEETING COMMUNITY DEMAND

Over the past five years, LiFEsports has expanded from one camp to five. Despite this growth, there is continued demand for programming. Each year we have a waitlist! We've hence developed a licensed program model to allow community organizations, schools, and other colleges/universities to implement the LiFEsports model. Additional partnerships and funding are needed to meet the demand. As we move into the next year, we will test this licensed program model with programs in Utah and at the University of Maryland-College Park. We can't wait to learn what works!



COLLEGE/CAREER PROGRAMMING

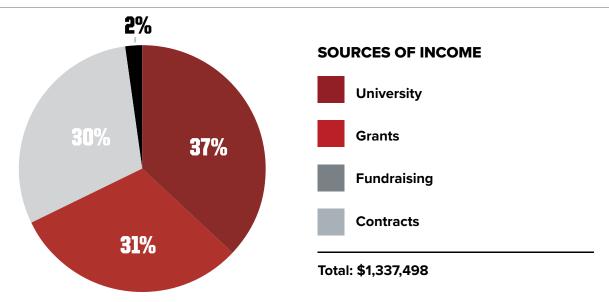
Our Youth Leadership Academy annually engages 40 diverse youth in leadership development programming. Currently most volunteer during summer camps as junior counselors. Given many of these youth are low-income, we are looking for additional ways to stipend and/or pay Youth Leaders for their time during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

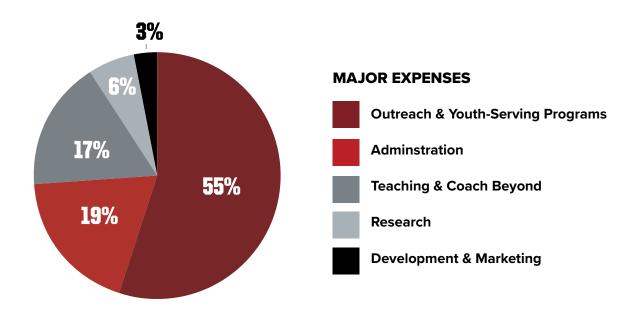


SUSTAINING COACH EDUCATION

Our coach education program, Coach Beyond, is funded through a time-limited grant from the Susan Crown Exchange. As this grant comes to an end, our team along with OHSAA are working to secure additional funding to ensure our coach education offerings can be provided free of cost to local sport ogranizations, schools and other youth-serving organizations. We are looking for partners to help us extend this work!

FINANCIAL REPORT









ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS (June 2023 to May 2024)

Hall of Fame (\$50,000+)

Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health (ADAMH) Board of Franklin County

City of Columbus, Department of Recreation & Parks

Columbus City Schools

Franklin County Jobs and Family Services

Hillsdale Foundation

Ohio Department of Mental Health &

Addiction Services

Ohio State University, Department of Athletics

Ohio State University, College of Social Work

Ohio State University, Department of

Recreational Sports

Susan Crown Exchange

The Lindy Infante Foundation

Champion (\$25,000)

Barbara K. Fergus Fund of the Columbus Foundation

Dick's Sporting Goods

Ohio State University Extension

MVP (\$10,000)

Dublin City Schools Huntington National Bank

Life Time Foundation

New Albany Plain-Local Schools

William H. Davis, Dorothy M. Davis, and

William C. Davis Foundation of the

Columbus Foundation

All-Star (\$5,000)

Phil and Ronda Anglim

Belron Ronnie Lubner Charitable

Foundation (Safelite)

Big Lots Foundation of the

Columbus Foundation

Cameron Mitchell Restaurants

Clark County Combined Health District

Do It For 19, LLC

Encova Foundation of Ohio

Fitzsimonds Charitable Trust

Flag Football Fanatics

Northwoods Foundation

Ohio State University, Office of Diversity

& Inclusion

Pitney Bowes Inc World Headquarters

Southeast Lions Club

The Rusty Bucket

Worthington Kilbourne High School

Starter (\$1,500)

Matt Andreas

Todd Barnhouse

Circleville City Schools

Mark and Nicole Flesch Charitable Fund of the

Renaissance Charitable Foundation

Jeffrey and Theresa Heaphy Charitable Fund of

Schwab Chartiable

Alicia Maynard

Don & Beth Miller

Debbie Pfeiffer & Jeffrey Kramer

Tara Talgar

Marsha & Virgil Temple

Rookie (\$750)

Dawn Anderson-Butcher and

C.D. Butcher

Scott Arthur

Bruce & Patricia Auerbach

Kristina & Matt Daiker

Ryan & Kari Dietsch

Michael & Lisa Fitzpatrick

Library Design Assocs Inc

Tigran and Rebecca Mdivanian

Mid-State League

James Sauter

Streetsboro High School

Worthington Industries

Foundation Fund of the

Columbus Foundation

First Round Draft Pick (\$250)

Katy Acerra

Brian & Jodi Bergere

Michelle Brenner

Steven Bretherick

La Dwyna Evans

Julie & Darrell Fletcher

Rachel Friedman-Webb

Kacy & Andrew King

Ryan Logan

Matt & Lisa Ludwig

Ryan Schmiesing

FACULTY, STAFF & PHD STUDENTS

Dr. Jerome Davis | Co-Executive Director

Dr. Dawn Anderson-Butcher | Co-Executive Director

Dr. Samantha Bates | Director of Research & Coach Beyond

Rebecca Wade-Mdivanian | Associate Director

Catelen Ramsey | Assistant Director, Outreach Programs

Dr. Kylee Ault-Baker | Assistant Director, Coach Beyond

Joe Ingram III | Senior Program Manager/Linden Site Manager

Tommy Papotto | Senior Program Manager/Campus Site Manager

Taylor Pack | Coach Beyond Manager/ Starling Site Manager

Obidiah Atkison | PhD student

Sydney Mack | PhD student

Emily Nothnagle | PhD student

Quinten Kimble | Adams Site Manager

Chelsea Moore | Beatty Site Manager

Claire Sobecki | Dublin Site Manager

Mackenzie Rector | Georgian Heights Site Manager

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

Dr. Kevin Dixon

Retired ADAMH Board of Franklin County

Lisa Durham

Assistant Dean of Strategic Initiatives Ohio State University College of Social Work

Dr. Shawnté 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

Dr. Thomas Gregoire

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

Dr. David Jenkins

Dean

The Ohio State University College of Social Work

Melissa Kass

Philanthropist

Dr. Ameena Kemavor

Vice President of Advocacy & Engagement

OUR ADVISORY COUNCIL & LEADERSHIP TEAM (CONTINUED)

Kacy King

Director

The Ohio State University Student Athlete Support Services Office

Ryan Logan

Senior Purchasing Manager Worthington Industries

Andre Love

Director

Ohio State University Department of Recreational Sports

Todd Markiewicz

President and General Manager CBus Media Group; WLVQ, WSNY, WNND, WVMX

Bill Nolan

Partner, Barnes & Thornburg LLP

Brianne Parnell

Extended Learning Supervisor, Columbus City Schools

Debbie Pfeiffer

President

Pitney Bowes Presort Services

Erik Porfeli

Chair

Ohio State University Department of Human Sciences

Jim Sauter

Vice President & Operating Partner The Rusty Bucket

Ryan Schmiesing

Vice Provost, Ohio State University Office of Outreach and Engagement

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

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 192 volunteers who mentor youth, fundraise, provide strategic expertise and guidance, support research, provide internships for our students, market our programs, contribute financially, and more!

Thanks to our large LiFEsports Family!



at The Ohio State University®

SPONSORED BY































