
2021 - 2022

ANNUAL REPORT

UP:2US
SPORTS

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LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER & CEO



Dear Supporters,

Over 13 years ago, Up2Us Sports created a model for sports as a solution to the challenges young people in America face. Today, this model is stronger than ever, with studies and data reflecting what so many of us learned through experience: a great coach can be a life-changing mentor who can help youth connect to their potential on the field, in the classroom, and in the larger world.

Connection is a theme that runs through this report—specifically how Up2Us Sports’ programs and special initiatives work to remedy disconnection. Whether addressing the need for more mentors, the gender gap in sports, or career barriers facing young adults in underserved communities, Up2Us Sports exists to create more pathways to physical, social, and emotional wellbeing for youth and the coaches who serve them. The larger community ultimately benefits when its youth and young adults thrive—a reminder that lasting positive change takes place at a grassroots level, from the inside-out.

This year marks a new and exciting pathway forward. We have begun to explore how to apply our resources and tools to more and more schools across the country that are directly experiencing dropout rates, bullying, teen depression and suicide, and other challenges caused by the mental health epidemic. We know that a trained coach offers a unique opportunity for children to build relationships outside of the classroom that contribute to their connectivity to school and education. We know that the more sports we can provide in schools, the more kids will be physically active, enabling their bodies to regulate stress and their minds to be more receptive to learning. And most importantly, we know that our coaching program is focused on positive relationship building. The more positive relationships youth have in schools and communities, the more likely they are to connect with their full potential. This is a proven fact that has been demonstrated through over 30 years of research.

Sports is a solution. Up2Us Sports’ grassroots model for addressing mental wellness, gender equity, social justice and economic mobility in America’s most vulnerable communities is a proven methodology. Thank you for your support and for making this proof more evident now than ever.

Paul Caccamo



CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

Lack of mentors for youth



America's youth are facing a mentorship crisis at a uniquely challenging time in this country's history. Per mentoring.org, **one in three young people** surveyed did not have a mentor while they were growing up. Applying their experiences to the U.S. Census demographics for 8-18 year olds, it is projected that **16 million** young people, including **9 million** young people facing risks, will reach adulthood without connecting with a mentor of any kind. Mentored youth have statistically better school attendance, better attitudes toward school, and a better chance of going on to higher education.



Up2Us Sports' Coach program is a solution to the need for more mentors. We recruit, train, and place caring coach-mentors in schools, parks, and other youth-serving community organizations. Our sports-based youth development training prepares coaches to engage youth who may present with more complex interpersonal needs, as well as help youth cultivate resilience and translate sports skills into classroom and life skills.

In our most recent post-program survey of youth served by Up2Us Sports coaches, 81% of youth reported that they go to their coach for help or advice, 92% of youth reported that they trust their coach, and 90% of youth reported that the lessons and skills they learned at the program will help them in life.



AmeriCorps

*In 2021-22, with the support of AmeriCorps, we were able to place **264** coach-mentors in underserved communities.*

CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

Gender gap in sports and participation



Annually, boys have **1.13 million** more sport opportunities than girls (WSF). Per a 2019 Female Leaders in Sport Survey, **77% of female leaders** reported that lack of exposure to female coaches as role models limits girls' sports participation.



Up2Us Sports' She Changes the Game initiative is focused on increasing opportunities for women to coach and for girls to play sports: when a girl has a woman as her coach, she is more likely to stay involved in her sports program.

We work to create more opportunities for women to coach and are currently piloting a Coach Development Program in Philadelphia for girls entering their junior or senior year of high school. The program intends to strengthen girls' technical coaching skills and confidence, and support girls and young women as they transition out of their "athlete" role at their youth sports program into a potential "coach" role.



In 2021-22, with the support of the Philadelphia Foundation/S. Albert Fund, Up2Us Coaches served **569** female youth in Philadelphia.

CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

National youth mental health crisis following the pandemic



The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a mental health crisis among youth across the nation, with the need for mental health services vastly outpacing the current capacity of school providers. For instance, in Miami-Dade County, there is approximately one school psychologist for every **1,598 students** and approximately one school social worker for every **2,492 students** – the recommended national ratio is one for every 250 students.



Up2Us Sports works to address the mental wellness needs of youth through sports and coaching. Sports and physical activity are associated with better physical and mental health, and reduced risk of health-harming behaviors among youth (Steiner et al., 2000; Malm et al., 2019). We launched the Sports-Based Development (SBYD) Movement in 2010, recognizing that sport programming facilitated by trained coaches could be a unique youth wellness intervention.

Up2Us Sports recently completed a NYC-based pilot program in which coaches received Mental Health First Aid Training. We are now working with several cities to create a model for SBYD-trained coaches in the public school system. These coaches will serve public schools facing the highest need for supportive staff, ensuring that more youth have trained coach-mentors to support their holistic health and wellbeing.

Booth Ferris Foundation

In 2021-22, with the support of the Booth Ferris Foundation, they were able to fund **Game On! Coaching Sports for Mental Health in NYC.**

CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

Career barriers facing underserved youth



There is a [90% wealth gap](#) between white and black Americans. The median wealth for a black family is \$17k compared to \$171k for a white family (10x different). A [recent survey](#) found that [3.8 million](#) Americans aged 20 to 24 were not in employment, education or training.



Up2Us Sports' Coach program and Career Readiness initiative is a solution to the career barriers facing youth in historically marginalized and underserved communities. We focus on recruiting coaches from the same communities as the youth we serve, where a high percentage of young adults are disconnected from formal education and/or the workforce.

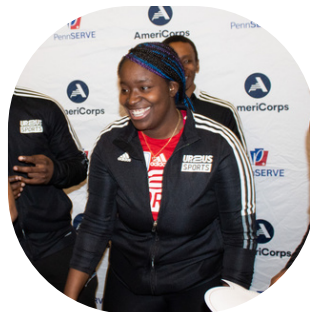
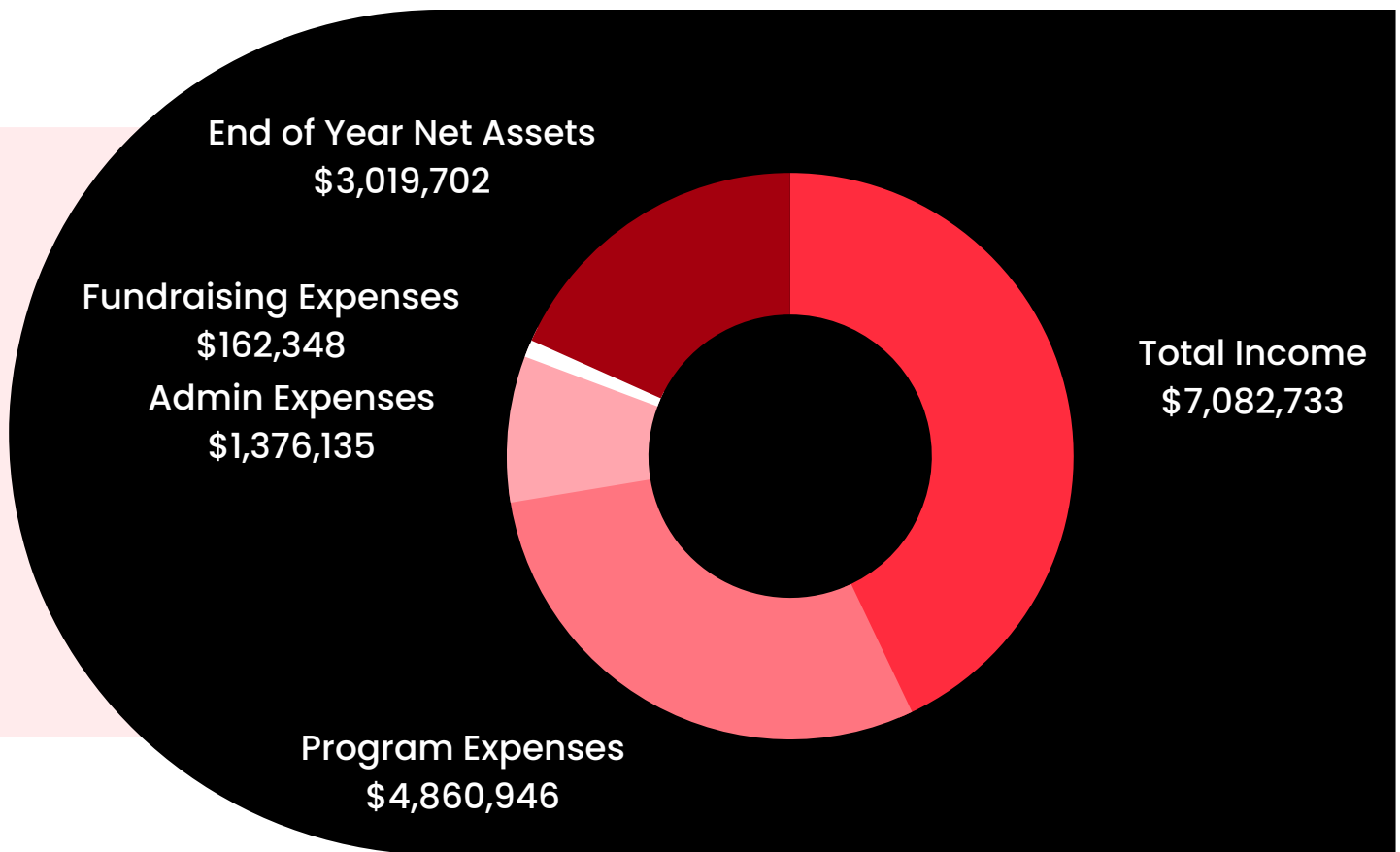
Our Career Readiness framework—which involves career mentoring, job shadowing, and the development of “soft” and “hard” job skills—then helps coaches leverage the experience of national service and connect with pathways towards meaningful employment.



*In 2021-22, with the support of the Allstate Foundation, we were able to **leverage the career barriers** facing our youth.*

FINANCIALS

FY22 Audit





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Up2Us Sports appreciates all those whose financial and in-kind support during FY 21 (Sept 2021-August 2022) made our work possible.

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