

2024

Annual Report



SYSA Mission Statement:

"To provide sports activities for all youth where everyone plays, develops skills, and learns good sportsmanship and the value of being a team player."



Executive Director's Address

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on another remarkable year at the Spokane Youth Sports Association (SYSA), I am filled with gratitude and pride. Our 60-year history is a testament to the power of youth sports in transforming lives, and this record-setting past year has been no exception. Thanks to our dedicated staff and passionate board, we've witnessed incredible growth and engagement within our community. Every day, we work together to foster a nurturing environment where kids can thrive, build confidence, and create lasting friendships through the joy of sport.

Youth sports are about more than just games – they are a vehicle for change, empowerment, and community wellness. This year, we've taken significant strides in our mission-driven work, ensuring that every child in Spokane has the opportunity to play. Our exciting new partnership with the *Together Spokane* initiative, launched last month in collaboration with the Spokane Parks Department and Spokane Public Schools, exemplifies our strong commitment to inclusivity and collaboration. Together, we are creating more avenues for children to engage in physical activity, learn valuable life skills, and experience the lifelong benefits of sports.

Looking ahead, I am thrilled to share SYSA's vision for development over the next three years, focused on expanding both indoor and outdoor spaces for our young athletes. It's an ambitious plan, but one worth pursuing for the sake of our community's youth. By investing in facilities and programs, we aim to ensure that every child has access to a safe and supportive environment where they can be active and play.

Thank you for being a vital part of our journey. Your support empowers us to continue this important work and enrich the lives of countless kids in our community.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Ben Walker
SYSA Executive Director



Meet Our Team



BEN WALKER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
May 2023

Fundraising, Sponsorships,
Partnerships, Oversees All
Operations



DEB BROCK
SPORTS DIRECTOR
June 2017

Soccer Programming, Oversees
All Sport Programs



RENEE SOLT
OFFICE MANAGER
April 2014

Bookkeeping, Coach Screening,
Customer Service



MANDIE ORNE
ADMIN ASSISTANT
January 2025

Speed & Agility, Rookie Programs,
Peak 7 Programming,
Administrative Support



TAYLOR MCBRIDE
SPORT COORDINATOR
March 2023

Flag Football, SIYBS Recreational
Baseball & Softball



SAMMI KENNEDY
SPORT COORDINATOR
June 2024

Basketball, SIYBS Competitive
League & Tournaments, Spokane
Public School Programming



KRISTEN BURKE
SPORT ASSISTANT
July 2024

Soccer Assistant, Track & Cross
Country, After School
Programming, Summer Camps,
Academies





2024 Program Highlights

Soccer

SYSA's youth outdoor recreational soccer program is thriving like never before! With more young athletes hitting the field, our program continues to grow, fueled by an incredible passion for the game. From outdoor and indoor leagues to dynamic academies and action-packed summer camps, we're offering more opportunities than ever for kids to develop their skills and love for soccer. And to top off an amazing outdoor season this spring, we're thrilled to bring back an **exciting soccer tournament**—get ready for the ultimate competition!

Flag Football

SYSA flag football leagues served **1,078 kids** in a 7v7 passing league format. This league utilizes volunteer coaches to teach athletes sportsmanship, fair play, and football fundamentals in a safe and fun environment. We are excited to have kicked off a new indoor flag football format running during the winter of 2025 to keep kids active during the off months.

After School Programs

SYSA teamed up with Spokane International Academy to bring after-school sports to local elementary schools! We introduced kids to flag football, volleyball, speed & agility, basketball, cheer, and soccer, reaching nearly 20% of the K-5 student body—and that number's still growing! We are excited to be partnering with Communities in Schools in 2025 to reach more Spokane elementary schools.

Summer Camps

In 2024, SYSA hosted 11 action-packed summer camp sessions, offering basketball, soccer, flag football, volleyball, and cheer that served 432 kids. These camps gave kids a chance to get active in an educational environment, with fun as the top priority. SYSA is excited to grow these numbers even more in 2025.

Basketball

SYSA basketball is growing! We've expanded 1st–4th grade programs with the Jr. NBA curriculum and jerseys they love. Our PreK and Kindergarten athletes continued building fundamentals through our Basketball Skills program, allowing them to work on basics and teamwork. On the high school level, our High School League continues to be a fun spot for athletes to stay active with friends during the winter months.

Track & Cross Country

In 2024, SYSA provided a recreational opportunity for K-6 athletes to compete in Track & Field in the spring and Cross Country in the fall, engaging 234 and 130 participants respectively. SYSA teamed up with Active4Youth to send the top 50 athletes to the Active4Youth All-City meet, showcasing their hard work and talent!

Joint Programming

SYSA continues its partnership with U-District PT to offer speed and agility courses to help athletes 8-13 boost their athleticism. We also teamed up with Peak 7 Adventures, offering rock climbing, paddle boarding, and snowshoeing adventures. Serving over 200 athletes between both partnerships, these unique opportunities are designed to diversify SYSA programs and create unforgettable experiences!

SIYBS Baseball & Softball

SYSA is partnered with Spokane Indians Youth Baseball & Softball (SIYBS) to provide recreational programming, competitive leagues, and tournaments for the greater Spokane area with athletes ages 6-18. In 2024, SIYBS served **4,992 athletes** during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. 2024 also brought the inauguration of the **Little Sluggers** program, a t-ball league anchored in Spokane Public Schools elementary schools, aimed at building camaraderie and pride within their future high school community.



Play it Forward

Donate to the SYSA “Play it Forward” Endowment Fund

SYSA has been providing youth sports opportunities in this community for more than half a century! We believe Spokane is made better by helping to develop children who learn the values of teamwork and sportsmanship, and our goal for this organization is to continue providing youth sports opportunities for another 60 years and beyond to all who seek it regardless of ability or financial circumstances. Will you consider joining us in this effort by including SYSA in your estate planning? The QR link provided here is one way to learn more about the SYSA Foundation. I hope you'll consider investing some time to learn more about SYSA, and consider joining us on this mission!



To learn more or
make a donation,
please scan the
QR Code

Board of Trustees

David Beaudine - Turner & Townsend Heery
Alan Coelho - Eastern Washington University
Anna Haugen - Anna Haugen Communications
Marit Jacobs - Spokane Sports Commission
Jon Jeffreys - NAI Black
Mark Kamitomo - Markam Group
Mark Mackin - Mackin & Little
Board President Scott Phipps - Avista Corporation

Karen Rickel - Gonzaga University
Thor Tangvald - Winston & Cashatt
Frank Tombari -
Steve Watterson - Principal Financial Group
Jamie Welsh - Garco Construction
Irv Zakheim - Zak Designs
Kevin Zenishek - Northern Quest Resort & Casino



If You Build It, They Will Come

SYSA is proud to announce an exciting new “Fields of Dreams” capital initiative aimed at revitalizing and expanding field space options for play in the greater Spokane area. For nearly 60 years, SYSA has been providing opportunities for kids to play regardless of ability or financial circumstance. We know that sports are a significant part of the cultural fabric of the Spokane community, providing avenues for growth and unity among youth and families. In addition to improving the physical, mental, and emotional health of young athletes, sports help to create thriving, flourishing neighborhoods. However, kids and families and communities cannot thrive in this way without enough safe fields and facilities. Spokane desperately needs more sports fields for the youth in our community! SYSA believes that by creating much-needed, quality indoor and outdoor playing fields, we can provide more kids with a safe and welcoming environment to pursue their passion for sports. With this project, we are confident that if we build it, they will come - and together, we can create a brighter future for the youth in our community. Look for an announcement and exciting news about this initiative on May 10th, 2025!

Main Event

Save the Date!

We are thrilled to invite you to join us at the SYSA “Main Event” Fundraiser and Game Night on May 10th, 2025 at Northern Quest Resort and Casino! Your presence and support will help us continue our mission of empowering youth through sports in our community for another 60 years and beyond. Together, we can help make a lasting impact on the lives of young athletes. Save the date, and join us for an evening of fun, games, and giving back! Help us create more “Fields of Dreams” making sports fun and accessible to all regardless of skill or financial circumstances. If we build it, they will come!

For sponsorships, donations, and other partnership options, please contact SYSA Executive Director, Ben Walker, at ben@sysa.com or 509-863-2992.

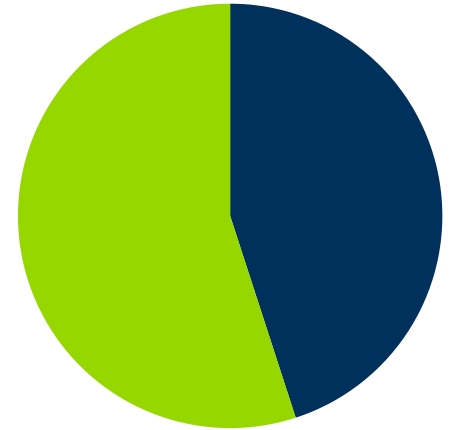


Financial Aid Statistics

At SYSA, we believe that every child deserves the opportunity to participate in sports regardless of their financial situation. Our mission-driven Scholarship and Financial Aid program is designed to break down barriers and provide essential financial support to children and families, ensuring that everyone can join in the fun of our leagues and camps each year. By promoting inclusivity and equal access to athletic experiences, we cultivate a vibrant community where all young athletes can thrive—both on and off the field. Through this program, we are not only investing in individual futures but also fostering teamwork, resilience, and lifelong friendships. Together, we can empower every child to discover their potential and enjoy the incredible benefits of sports!

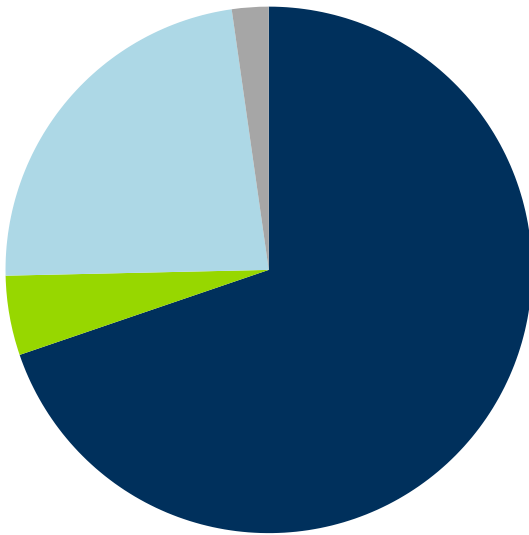
Who?

- Female Athletes - 45%
- Male Athletes - 55%



What?

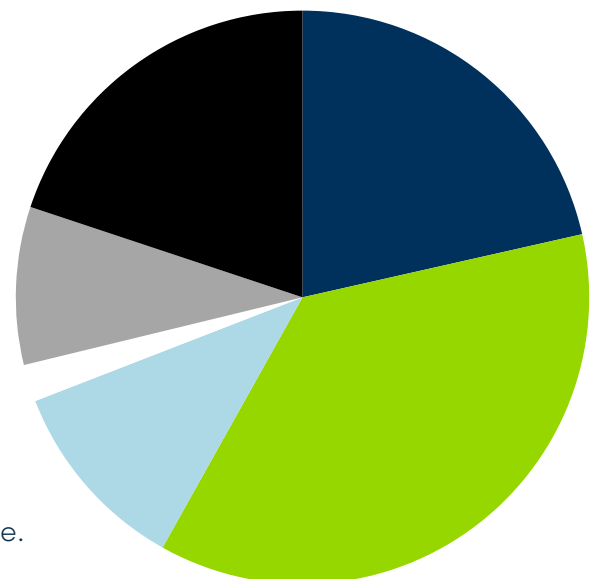
- Soccer - 70%
- Flag Football - 5%
- SIYBS - 23%
- Other - 2%



2024 SYSA Scholarship and Financial Aid Support—Over \$40,000 to nearly 200 families in 24 different zip codes in Spokane and Spokane County.

Where?

- Mead/Mt. Spokane - 21.5%
- Northwest Spokane - 36.6%
- Northeast Spokane - 11%
- Other - 2.1%
- Spokane Valley - 8.9%
- South Spokane - 19.9%



Some other impressive SYSA stats:

- Since 1966, SYSA has given out nearly a million dollars in scholarships and financial aid.
- SYSA served nearly 14,000 last year alone.
- SYSA volunteers amass over 150,000 hours annually.
- Over 50,000 volunteers and coaches have helped SYSA manifest its mission since its inception.
- Since 1966, SYSA has served nearly 1,000,000 young people.

Sponsors & Partners



Spokane Public Schools



JUBILANT
HOLLISTERSTIER



City of Spokane
**PARKS
& RECREATION**



AIRDOME
NORTHWEST



jr.nba



SPOKANE
VELOCITY



cornerbooth
MEDIA

Mackin
& Little
MECHANICAL

WA529
WASHINGTON COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANS



AVISTA



Washington
Trust Bank
Member FDIC

SuperTots
SPORTS ACADEMY

zak!
EVERYDAY
SMILES



FLAG

NAI Black

amazon

BSN SPORTS

INNNOVIA
FOUNDATION

GOJOE PATROL
JOE WILL BE WATCHING



EVERY SEASON STARTS AT
DICK'S
SPORTING GOODS

fortitude
FINANCIAL

AMERICAN
ON-SITE
SERVICES
509-244-8404
"ONE CALL TAKES CARE OF IT ALL"



Communities
In Schools

GARCO

Skyhawks
Teaching life skills through sports

SPOKANE
INDIANS
YOUTH BASEBALL & SOFTBALL