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14 Youth Sports and Recreation Projects Awarded \$281,000 in Grants to Improve, Expand Programs

Rochester Area Community Foundation is awarding \$281,060 to 14 local youth sports and recreation programs from its **Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Legacy Fund for Youth Sports**. The fund, created by the private foundation of the late founder and owner of the Buffalo Bills to benefit the Greater Rochester region, has now invested more than \$1.8 million in local programs over the past seven years.

The 2024 grants range from \$7,500 to \$25,000 and support projects that will have a direct impact on thousands of youth in Monroe County. Twelve projects were fully funded and two received partial funding.

The 2024 grant recipients and details on their projects are:

AutismUp: A supportive and accessible bowling league will serve 120 individuals ages 15 to 30 through a structured program to improve physical fitness, increase social interaction, develop cognitive skills, and practice emotional regulation for those with autism spectrum disorder. \$18,500

Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Greater Rochester: The Sports Buddies program, for youth and teenagers ages 8 to 18, provides one-on-one mentoring that is focused on sports, recreation, and play. The adults and youth meet weekly and the program also includes monthly events for all participants. \$20,560

Black Men Achieve of Greater Rochester, Inc.: An Outdoors Explorer program will allow up to 150 youth, ages 8 to 19, to sample a variety of outdoor activities that include hiking, canoeing, kayaking, caving, boarding, fishing and field day games. The goal is to learn about the outdoors and develop new skills. \$25,000

Boys and Girls Clubs of Rochester, Inc.: The Weekend Free Sports program will provide 75 non-club individuals ages 6 to 22 with access to safe and engaging activities that will include basketball, rock climbing, flag football, weightlifting, and golf on Saturdays. Along with sports, the club will offer conflict resolution training. \$25,000

Equicenter, Inc.: The Horticulture and Equine Active Learning program at this Honeoye Falls ranch will offer nature-inspired free play activities, hands-on interaction with horses and other farm animals, exposure to gardens and other outdoor environments for 450 youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities between the ages of 5 and 12. \$25,000

Garth Fagan Dance: This dance troupe will offer a moderate-to-rigorous dance program for up to 15 youth of African heritage between the ages of 10 and 18 and from low-income households. Students participate in 200 hours of physical activity from August 2024 through June 2025. \$13,000

Jazz Network, Inc.: A Girls Sports Sampling Camp at the Trenton and Pamela Jackson R-Center in Rochester will provide instruction in basketball, lacrosse, and flag football to 40 girls in grades 3 to 8 over a three-week period in July to improve basic fundamentals and understanding of these sports. \$25,000

Monroe Community College Foundation: This funding will support the purchase of new equipment, staff training, and dedicated staff for a Free Play Initiative for 150 Rochester second graders. Campers experience group and individual sports, academic enrichment, social-emotional learning, and leadership skill development. \$14,300

Nkugwa Team Impact: A Girls' Sports Fundamentals program will offer free basketball and soccer camps throughout the year at the Rochester Community Sports Complex to teach fundamentals to 150 girls ages 7 to 13. The goal is to build skills for participation in school and community sports teams. \$7,500

Primetime585: A planned Sports Collaborative will serve 460 youth ages 7 to 17 from the City of Rochester and surrounding suburban communities through a series of summer sports camps focused on basketball, soccer, lacrosse, tennis, and golf. Camps also include a life skills workshop on topics ranging from mental health, bullying, and how gangs affect youth, to body image and the benefits of academics. \$22,500

Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts: Supports building of one full-sized soccer field and one youth-sized sports field and replacing outdated basketball backboards with ones that are automated and height-adjustable. \$15,450

Rochester Accessible Adventures: The Adaptive and Inclusive Youth Sports Development program seeks to serve 100 youth ages 6 to 18, including 25 with disabilities, to increase access to adaptive equipment and sample sports like wheelchair basketball and lacrosse. This program also provides disability inclusion training for coaches. \$25,000

Research Foundation for SUNY College at Brockport: Supports Camp Abilities, a week-long summer sports camp for up to 55 children with visual impairments to help them develop sports skills and self-advocacy. \$23,750

YMCA of Greater Rochester: Supports Love-15, free tennis instruction for 250 youth ages 7 to 17 in the City of Rochester. \$20,500