



# Giving LACROSSE

FUEL THE GROWTH ★ ENRICH THE EXPERIENCE ★ FIELD THE BEST NATIONAL TEAMS

## California DREAMING

With LA28 on the Horizon,  
USA Lacrosse Making a  
Difference in Los Angeles

BY BRIAN LOGUE

### ONE STICK. ONE DONOR. ONE ORGANIZATION. ONE DEDICATED VOLUNTEER.

The multiple powers of one have helped lacrosse gain a foothold in the Compton area of Los Angeles.

A gift from a USA Lacrosse Foundation donor helped accelerate conversations Gabe Fowler, USA Lacrosse's Southwest Regional Manager, was having with the Los Angeles Boys & Girls Club about offering lacrosse.

The missing ingredient was boots on the ground in the form of a lacrosse ambassador. Fowler knew right where to turn – Dayton Gilbreath, a former college lacrosse player from Air Force who helped start a youth program when he was stationed in Okinawa, Japan and has become a fixture in the L.A. lacrosse scene. Gilbreath runs the Palisades Lacrosse Club, about 45 minutes from Compton, while helping to coach the men's club team at UCLA and the girls' team at Palisades High School.

"I kind of put my hand up and said, 'Hey, I've got extra bandwidth and I've got a whole community in Palisades that wants to support it,' Gilbreath said. "I've got a coaching staff that really wants to share it because a lot of my coaches were scholarship kids. I was a scholarship kid when I first started [in Washington state]. Why not share the game that has brought me all over the world and gave me opportunities?"

Following an introductory USA Lacrosse Sankofa Clinic in June at the Watts Willowbrook Boys' & Girls Club, Gilbreath helped launch a summer program that



ultimately reached 150 new players in the Compton area.

"We put on a roadshow for five weeks," Gilbreath said. "Every week we would go to a different Boys & Girls Club and show them the basics of lacrosse. We got them from learning what the sport is, to scrimmaging and doing short-sided unpadded sixes. The kids loved it."

The next step is finding a pathway for the players to continue exploring the sport. Gilbreath is starting a rec program – the Gateway Rays – trying to open the gateway to more communities in the area. The biggest challenge currently is finding field space, but Gilbreath is confident it will get done.

"This doesn't start without USA Lacrosse," Gilbreath said. "USA Lacrosse coordinated all the efforts from the gear to setting up the connections with the Boys & Girls Club. The responsiveness of everyone involved has been phenomenal. When we're having an issue, they always come back with either an answer or will help you find the answer."

- ▶ The USA Lacrosse Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that serves as the philanthropic arm of USA Lacrosse. The Foundation helps drive the three main pillars of the USA Lacrosse mission: 1) Fuel the growth; 2) Enrich the experience; 3) Field the best national teams. Supporting the foundation provides thousands of children across the country the opportunity to experience the gift of lacrosse. To learn more about the USA Lacrosse Foundation, please visit [usalacrosse.com/foundation](https://usalacrosse.com/foundation)





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## MARC RICCIO PRESIDENT & CEO

**BY NOW I HOPE YOU** have heard the BIG NEWS - the International Olympic Committee formally approved the Los Angeles organizing committee's recommendation to add lacrosse to the Summer Games in 2028. It's a monumental milestone for the sport.

In some ways, it feels like we've reached the finish line with so many people working towards this goal for so many years. In reality, this is the beginning of a bright new future. The Olympics gives our sport the platform to achieve unprecedented growth.

**VISIBILITY** is key - if you see it, you are more likely to try it.

Appearing on the world stage will expose more people to lacrosse, increasing the number of people interested in trying the game, which will increase participation. Increased participation is the gateway to popularity and stability for a sport.

**ACCESSIBILITY** matters - the Olympic discipline for men and women will be Sixes, an effective entrance to the game. Sixes aligns with Flex6 Lacrosse — a version of the game USA Lacrosse introduced in 2018, that lowers the barrier of entrance and makes the first lacrosse experiences easy and fun. It is a great fan, TV and athlete experience.

**INVESTMENT** is critical - Olympic recognition will result in lacrosse investment in the U.S. and by other nations. Many nations will now be eligible for funding from their government to establish the game because of the sport's Olympic status. In the U.S., Olympic sports do not receive government funding — your Olympic lacrosse teams will be fully and solely funded by USA Lacrosse. However, competition at the Olympic level will attract new donors, members, sponsorship, and media opportunities for USA Lacrosse.



Over the past 25 years USA Lacrosse has seen many changes as an organization and within the sport itself, but remains steadfastly committed to growth and excellence. Through all of the introductory clinics, equipment grants, certifications for coaches and officials, and support for our national team, there has been a common thread - YOU! The amazing, generous community who continue to support the efforts of the USA Lacrosse Foundation to fuel the growth, enrich the experience, and field the best national teams. And we are just getting started... there are many exciting years ahead!

We are looking ahead to the next twenty-five with enhanced growth initiatives to double participation in the sport by the end of the decade, a new event strategy that will bring new opportunities to the lacrosse community throughout the entire country, and an increasingly competitive world stage.

We THANK YOU for the last twenty-five, and look forward to the next twenty-five - **TOGETHER!**

# National Scope, LOCAL IMPACT

The USA Lacrosse Grants Program is committed to providing support to organizations working to grow the game and introduce the sport to as many youth players are possible. The grants offered include equipment, player clinics, and financial. During the 2023 grant cycle, over 300 applications were submitted representing a potential impact of \$1.9 million.

This year's awardees include club teams as well as school-based, town, and parks and recreation programs. In total, 72 programs received grants: 58 equipment, 8 player clinic, and 6 financial. It is a privilege to work with so many amazing programs each year through the grant program.

We are continually impressed by the dedication of these program leaders and champions of the game at the grassroots level. From incorporating carpool and ride share, providing nutritional snacks, offering reduced or waived registration fees, and expanding programs to offer adaptive lacrosse, the innovation and spirit of inclusivity is inspiring.

The high demand is encouraging and illustrates the opportunities available to have an impact on the sport we all love. The USA Lacrosse Foundation is committed to raising the dollars needed to fund as many of these grants as possible. Philanthropic support from members, partners, and friends is critical in providing these opportunities for players, coaches, and officials in every region across the country.



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To support the opportunities through our Grant Programs, please visit  
[USALACROSSE.COM/GIVINGLACROSSE](https://usalacrosse.com/givinglacrosse)

## NTDP Program Continues Winning Formula

In August, USA Lacrosse welcomed 137 of the nation's top high school boys' and 148 of the nation's top high school girls' lacrosse players to its national headquarters for its National Team Development Program (NTDP) National Combine.

The players represented 30 states and were selected through regional tryouts, a virtual application and returning USA Select team members. From the national combine, 22 players each were selected for the men's and women's U16 and U18 USA Select teams.

The U16 and U18 Select Teams were recently featured at the USA Lacrosse Fall Classic, competing against teams from Ontario and the Haudenosaunee Nation for the Brogden Cup. Since launching in 2019, the NTDP has helped serve as a pipeline to the U.S. National Team Program, providing athletes with exposure to players, coaches, and training methods from the national team program.

For many of these athletes, participation in the combines wouldn't be possible without the aid of an NTDP scholarship. This year, in total, 25 scholarships totaling \$10,700 were awarded. These scholarships are made possible by generous supporters of the USA Lacrosse Foundation.

With LA28 on the horizon, the NTDP program will be in even higher demand. The pursuit of the Olympic dream is most likely already on the minds of these athletes, with gratitude for the support they receive reducing the barriers to participate. Thank you for continuing to support their dream!



For more information on the National Team Development Program (NTDP), go to [usalacrosse.com/national-team-development-program](https://usalacrosse.com/national-team-development-program)



# Stars SHINE

## at the USA Lacrosse Foundation Gala

> BY BRIAN LOGUE

The second annual USA Lacrosse Foundation Gala was held on June 7, at Gotham Hall in NYC. The event honored Legacy Award winners and coaching legends Jenny Levy and Bill Tierney for their outstanding leadership and contributions to the sport. The Gala serves as a key fundraiser to fuel USA Lacrosse sport growth initiatives.

Guest speaker Matt Hanna, former Johns Hopkins lacrosse player, shared his story of receiving a USA Lacrosse grant in 2009 that helped him both start a boys' lacrosse

program at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Baltimore and launch a non-profit, Next One Up. He was joined by Ronald Carney, an alum of the program who later served as a team captain at Ferrum College, who spoke about how much the sport impacted his life, all made possible in part due to USA Lacrosse.

The event also recognized the U.S. Men's National Team, which went on to win the World Lacrosse World Championships in San Diego in July, with the majority of the team in attendance.

“

*We should all tonight be very proud of what USA Lacrosse has done for the growth of the game. In my past 14 years at Denver we've had young men from 35 different states, and that's a credit not to me, but to USA Lacrosse and the game itself. The growth of it and just the excitement and the passion that it brings as you can see here tonight from all the walks of lacrosse, men and women, youth lacrosse and everything else.”*

— **BILL TIERNEY**  
USA Lacrosse Hall of Fame ('02)



“

*The last five years, I had a front row seat to the U.S. Women's National Team, as they not only left a mark, but created a vision for what is possible. Our goal was not only to be the first team to win gold on home soil, but to grow the game, inspire the next generation, and bring greater visibility and exposure to our U.S. Women's National Team program and players.”*

— **JENNY LEVY**  
Head Coach U.S. Women's National Team  
USA Lacrosse Hall of Fame ('22)



“

*It's not just lacrosse anymore, it's life, it's sports, it's academics, and it's a question of where you want to be when you're 30. So our program begins at 12 years old, it doesn't end. And in September we'll open the doors of a \$3M rec center that'll serve 200 kids. And as these doors open, I'll never forget what USA Lacrosse did when I was just a young coach with a lot of heart and some passion for these young men and putting sticks in their hands.”*

— **MATT HANNA**  
Founder, Next One Up



“

*So as we're here tonight to celebrate 25 years of USA Lacrosse, let's also think about how we can continue to pay it forward so that more people get the experience, the invaluable lessons that we've all been blessed to experience.”*

— **RONALD CARNEY**  
Next One Up Alumni

## Thank You FOR SUPPORTING OUR NATIONAL TEAMS!

What an amazing year for our Men's National Team – winning GOLD on home soil at the World Lacrosse World Championships in San Diego in July. Their success represents the culmination of years of hard work and dedication. Your support of USA Lacrosse allows us to continue to field the best National Teams.



For more information on the U.S. National Teams go to  
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