



# 2022 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT







# GAME ON!

When the vision for the Ottawa Sports & Entertainment Group (OSEG) and Lansdowne was born, our goal was to recreate once again a central gathering place for our community. A place where new generations could come together to continue to make memories with their families and loved ones.

As partners in OSEG, it was important to us to also have a platform to be able to give back to the community. The OSEG Foundation is the central piece of this goal, with a specific focus on empowering the children and youth in our community. Our future generation deserves to have the tools and skills to reach their full potential and accomplish their dreams.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to scale back these efforts in the best interests and safety of everyone. We are incredibly proud that in 2022, regardless of the setbacks we faced, we were able to return to 100% capacity. Delivery of our programs, Girls on the Run and REDBLACKS Mentorship Program, along with our many community partnerships returned, and we were once again able to host our donors and corporate partners at our signature events. With their enthusiastic support, we've begun an expansion of our programs and partnerships, resulting in 2,227 children and youth participating in our programming and charitable activities in 2022-23.

As we look forward to 2023-24, we are excited to celebrate the stories of success from the inspiring children and youth in our community. We know that sports-focused strategies engage youth, and teach them important leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills – these are all things that will enrich not only their lives, but our entire community.

## **ROGER GREENBERG**

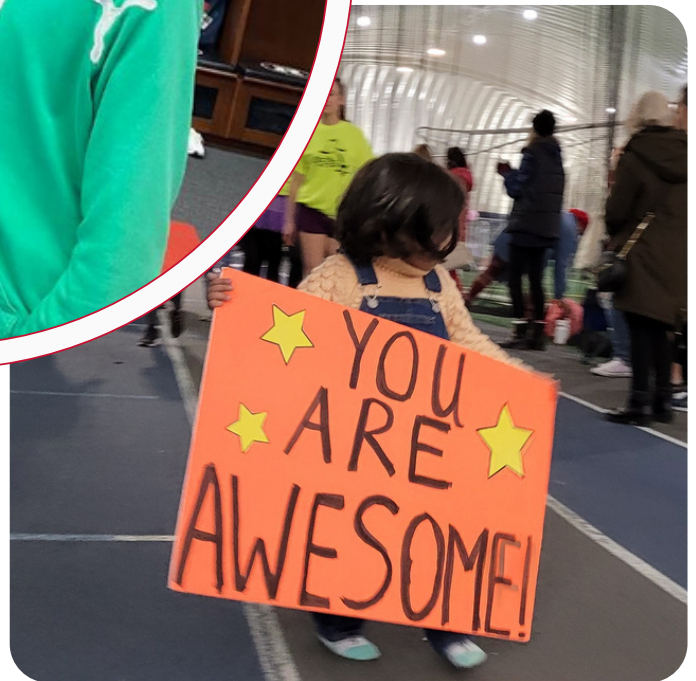
Chair, OSEG Foundation  
Board of Directors

## **JANICE BARRESI**

Vice President, Brand and Social Impact  
Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group  
Executive Director, OSEG Foundation







# OSEG FOUNDATION SIGNATURE PROGRAMS



# 2022 HIGHLIGHTS



**2,227**  
children  
& youth  
impacted by  
programming



**11,307** hours of  
programming

**23** trusted  
community partners



**158**  
volunteers





# REDBLACKS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

PRESENTED BY



The REDBLACKS Mentorship program aims to help at-risk youth from vulnerable communities develop the skills, abilities, and competencies needed to graduate from high school and become successful adults by engaging them in a mentorship program with professional athletes. The program is designed to build on existing youth programs at Carlington Community Health Centre that address the 42% “failure to graduate rate” of students living in 5 priority communities in Ottawa.

During the 2022-23 season, 15 youth were paired with 15 players from the Ottawa REDBLACKS. Mentor/mentee pairs participated in weekly 1:1 calls and outings, monthly group activities, and attended an Ottawa REDBLACKS home game during the season.



# TESTIMONIALS

”

I am working on my social connections and Lewis really helps me with these goals. I feel like after every event/meeting with my mentor, I am closer to reaching my goals!



”

When I was meeting with Shaq, he made me feel heard. It's nice to talk to someone who feels the same way and knows the same struggles.





# Mentorship Matters!

## Ty's Story

Becoming a mentor was an easy decision for Ottawa REDBLACKS player Ty Cranston. Upon joining the team in 2022, Ty was familiar with the REDBLACKS Mentorship Program and knew that it was something that he wanted to become involved with. “It’s something that I knew they [OSEG Foundation] did here when I first came to the REDBLACKS, and it was something that I wanted to be a part of. It’s something that I don’t think a lot of other teams in the league do so it was kind of a unique opportunity.” Supporting the desired outcome of the program, to support at-risk youth who may be at a higher rate of not graduating high school, was something that Ty really wanted to be involved with. “I think it’s a big responsibility, especially with the at-risk population that we take on. I don’t think it’s something that you take lightly.”

Growing up, Ty had a strong support system of mentors including coaches, family members, and other people in the community, but he knows that his situation isn’t the norm for many youths, who struggle to find an adult role model that they can count on. “Those people all had a belief in me and gave me confidence to be who I was as a person. They encouraged me to take on new challenges and provided support when I found myself in difficult situations.”





Having role models that helped lead him in a successful direction is why Ty believes that programs like the REDBLACKS Mentorship Program are so important. "I think there are a lot of people in our community who, for better or for worse, don't have the same opportunities as other people. If we can, in our privileged positions, bring people to a place where they might not feel welcome or feel like they would otherwise be able to come to, I think it just opens doors for people to realize there's a larger world out there, that they can be a part of it, that they belong, and they can access things that they might not have otherwise been able to access."



As Ty and his mentee, continue to get to know one another, Ty's goal over the next few months is to be consistent in showing up for them and supporting their growth. Ty also acknowledges his own growth because of participating in the program. "Being a mentor has taught me that my life experiences can be valuable to another person and that the life lessons I've learned can be passed down to someone else who may be going through similar situations. It has also taught me to listen and be curious about someone else and their life experiences/stories. Even though I'm older than my mentee, there is a lot she's taught me and will continue to do so!"

*"I love the Mentorship Program! I feel like I've built a lot of confidence this year, and Ty really helped me with my confidence and making positive changes in my school life." - Stephanie*



# GIRLS ON THE RUN OTTAWA

Helping girls unlock their power and potential!

The OSEG Foundation is the first charitable organization in Canada to bring the Girls on the Run program to its local community. Launched in 2021, 242 girls have participated in the program since its inception. This past season, 128 volunteer coaches at 16 sites led our girls through a season of powerful and fun lessons.





# TESTIMONIALS

”

My favourite part was learning about Star Power. You can activate other people's star power by saying nice things about them – like they're awesome - and by including them in your activities. It's important to activate other people's star power so they're happy and feel good about themselves.



”

GOTR is an important program because the girls are learning important life skills and how to interact with each other. It creates a sense of community and by the end of the program they're ok with working with girls who weren't initially their friends. They're learning through themselves and through the games and discussions.





# Girl Power!

## Girls on the Run empowers girls beyond the finish line

For Sara, becoming a Girls on the Run Ottawa (GOTR) coach was an easy decision. As a PhD student with a focus on Positive Youth Development (PYD) programming, she instantly knew that GOTR was going to be a match made in heaven due to its use of running as a platform to teach life skills and promote healthy behaviours. Over a 10-week period, GOTR coaches deliver intentional curriculum of skill building activities, which support positive social, psychological, and physical outcomes.

Sara believes that GOTR coaching is a valuable experience because she's part of a community that is coaching girls to be the best version of themselves. Selfishly, it has also allowed her own self-confidence to flourish. "I'm that cheesy person who thinks that the world would be a better place if everyone stepped forward to give back and volunteer. Volunteering provides an opportunity for you to give back to your community and possibly girls who are getting their first experience participating in some kind of organized sport, and I take that responsibility really seriously. I want them to leave the program feeling confident and being able to be their true self".

Whether intentional or not, girls are often put into these boxes of who they're supposed to be from a really young age. Often what Sara sees in programming is that the girls start the program believing that they need to be aspiring to be the caretaker and they shouldn't take risks or experiment. "Girls who are 8-13 are at a pivotal age where they're developing who they are and what they stand for. Girls on the Run helps to build up these layers of self-confidence, which gives them more tools as they transition to high school."





Sara witnessed firsthand the confidence that GOTR can instill in the girls. “At the beginning of the program, one of our girls had just transitioned back to in-school learning after being virtual for two years and was having a hard time readjusting to the environment. It was clear to us that she was anxious, and this was being manifested in more aggressive behaviour with her peers. My co-coaches and I made it a point to give this girl more leadership opportunities like collecting supplies, handing out snacks, or calling on her to lead discussions, which gave us the opportunity to provide her with lots of positive reinforcement.”

Girls on the Run culminates with a 5k event that gives girls a tangible sense of accomplishment and joy. Prior to the celebratory 5km race, Sara made the decision that she was going to be this girl’s run buddy for the day to make sure she had a positive experience. “We danced, and we sang, and we would race each other around groups. She had a smile on her face that whole day like nothing I had seen throughout the program. As her coach, I was so proud.”

Sara believes that GOTR and PYD are so important because when youth are faced with a challenge that they need to work towards overcoming, in this case completing the 5k event, it really solidifies that sometimes life is going to be super hard, but if you commit to working hard, you can literally achieve anything. She hopes that this particular lesson is one that the girls carry with them long after the program is done.



# OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Far too many children and youth in Ottawa do not benefit from sports and miss out on learning valuable life lessons that sports teach. There are numerous barriers that limit their involvement in sports, including financial, health-related, gender or cultural. Together with our community partners, we strive to eliminate these barriers so that the children and youth in Ottawa can experience the power of sports to excel and achieve their full potential.







## Our Huddle Includes Everyone

The National Capital Amateur Football Association (NCAFA) provides youth with affordable pathways to participating in amateur sports. Thank to this partnership, over 2,000 youth have joined contact and non-contract programs, including the introduction of a Girls Tackle Program in 2022.

## 67's Blind Hockey

Prior to 2019, when the OSEG Foundation partnered with Blind Hockey Canada, there were no formal programs in the capital region to give blind and visually impaired youth the opportunity to try and play hockey. With the growth of the program, 25 youth participated during the 2022 season, positively building their physical, emotional, and mental health.



## Campership Fund

Every child deserves the opportunity to experience camp! Working with local summer camps, we provided children and youth, who may be otherwise unable to attend, with this experience. In 2022, we were able support the Debra Dynes Family House and Britannia Woods Community House to ensure that their summer camp programs could run in priority neighbourhoods in Ottawa.





## First Assist

First Assist’s programming uses sports to advance educational outcomes for Indigenous youth. By leveraging the power of sports as a motivational tool, First Assist participants demonstrate better attendance in school, increased classroom engagement, and overall healthier life habits.

## EDI GRANTS

The newly launched OSEG Foundation Equity through Diverse Impact (EDI) Grant is dedicated to supporting Ottawa-based organizations that align with our mission of using the power of sport as a catalyst for social change to improve the lives of children and youth facing barriers to sport and recreation programs. In spring 2023, we granted to 16 projects that included initiatives to address gender equity, access to sport programming in priority communities, and inclusive experiences for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and youth with disabilities.



"It was an enjoyable experience to teach young kids to play the game that I enjoyed so much at their age. I had my children participate in the camp, allowing them to create new friendships and meet other kids in the neighbourhood."

- Debra Dynes Camp Councillor



# 67's Blind Hockey Program

## Violet & Jack's Story

**Throw a teddy bear... skate, skate, skate... throw the bear again...**

The first time Violet put on a pair of hockey skates at only four years-old, this was the only way her parents could persuade her to move. They'd throw a loved stuffed toy down the ice, and she'd shuffle forward until she could reach it. Watching her fly around the ice today, you'd never guess that Violet has low vision due to albinism (OCA1), which results in no pigment in her hair, eyes, or skin.

Violet, now 13, and her brother Jack (9), who also has albinism, are both active participants in the 67's Blind Hockey Program. In partnership with Canadian Blind Hockey, the program is a variation of ice hockey for athletes who are blind or partially sighted. The sport uses some modified rules and equipment, most notably the adapted puck that makes noise and is larger than a traditional puck.





Their mom, Allysun, is grateful for the confidence that this program has instilled in both of her children. Allysun has a “try it and if you need an accommodation, we’ll figure it out” mentality when it comes to their personal development. With the 67’s blind hockey program, however, the accommodation is already built in, so their confidence has soared as a result. “This program has built their confidence to do things that they may not have otherwise. It’s given them a sense of normalcy. Violet is taking on a leadership role and has started to help coach, and Jack played sighted hockey this past season”.



Availability of this type of programming is incredibly limited and often difficult to find. Many of the families who participate have significant financial costs associated with their children’s needs, which would make paying for traditional recreational programming a challenge. “Without this program, it wouldn’t be financially manageable for us. To have these community supports is incredibly helpful. Plus, the kids are so proud to say that they play for a 67’s program”. Bigger than the financial supports, however, is the opportunity for her children to participate in something that’s inclusive. “Playing with other kids who are like them makes them so much more confident. They don’t have to talk about their disability and explain to their teammates. They are taught to work with it, instead of against it and be ok with it. They get to go out and just have fun and be kids in a way that’s been tailor made for them.”

*“A lot of people don’t realize that blind hockey is a thing. The kids are super proud to participate. Jack brought his jersey and a puck to school with him.”*

# Stronger Together

As a part of our 2021 alignment with the Ottawa-Gatineau Youth Foundation (OGYF) we were honoured to continue their legacy by providing young people and their families with free access to physical activity, mental wellness and social development opportunities thanks to 16 Rink of Dreams sites located across Ottawa and Gatineau and in the Towns of Arnprior, Smiths Falls and Lac-Cayamant.







# HOW TO GET INVOLVED

## DONATE TODAY

You can provide opportunities for children and youth in our community to play, learn and develop through sports by making a one-time gift or a monthly donation.

Donate online at [osegfoundation.ca/donate](https://osegfoundation.ca/donate)



## BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Help provide opportunities for children and youth to play, learn and develop through sports by hosting your own fundraising event!

Contact the OSEG Foundation at [foundation@oseg.ca](mailto:foundation@oseg.ca) to learn more.

## ATTEND OR SPONSOR A SIGNATURE EVENT

Our signature events offer a unique way to get involved with the OSEG Foundation while helping children and youth experience the power of sports.

Contact the OSEG Foundation at [foundation@oseg.ca](mailto:foundation@oseg.ca) to learn more.



## 50/50 RAFFLE

50/50 raffle draws are held by the OSEG Foundation for all Ottawa REDBLACKS, Ottawa 67's, Ottawa BlackJacks, and Atlético Ottawa home games at TD Place.

Play online at [osegfoundation.ca/50-50](https://osegfoundation.ca/50-50)



# Upcoming Events



**Thursday, August 17, 2023**



**Tuesday, September 12, 2023**



**Breakfast with Santa**

**Sunday, December 17, 2023**





THANK YOU!

# 2022 Leadership

**TO ALL OUR DONORS**, volunteers, community event organizers and partners, and the Ottawa REDBLACKS and Ottawa 67's players and coaches – thank you for believing in our mission and helping bring positive change to our communities by leveraging the power of sport to improve the lives of children and youth.

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# 2022 Program Partners

## REDBLACKS Mentorship Program Partners



## Girls on the Run Ottawa Program Partners



Canada Post  
**Community  
Foundation**

**Fondation  
communautaire  
de Postes Canada**



Fondation TELUS  
pour un futur meilleur



# OSEG *FOUNDATION*



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