

Boston Youth Wrestling



FOUNDED: 2012
CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET: \$221,050
CONTACT: Bior Guigni, Executive Director
PHONE: 617.297.8079
EMAIL: bior@bostonwrestling.org
WEB: www.bostonwrestling.org

Investment Opportunity

Boston Youth Wrestling (BYW) is seeking an investment of \$570,000 over the next two years to increase its impact for youth in the City of Boston. Over the next two years, BYW will hire a licensed clinical social worker, increase the number of partnerships with Boston Public Schools, and establish partnerships with youth-serving state agencies and organizations. The investment will enable BYW to provide more intensive programming and services to high-risk youth and to serve more students.

Boston Youth Wrestling (BYW) was established out of a need to offer the most vulnerable middle and high school youth attending Boston Public Schools (BPS) an opportunity to build their physical, mental, social, and emotional skills and strengths through training, coaching, mentoring, and leadership development.

- BYW students live in neighborhoods where 75% of Boston’s homicides take place and have the highest concentrations of poverty.
- BYW targets those students of color with a high probability of dropping out of school.
- BYW wrestlers are primarily youth of color – 85% of wrestlers in BPS partner schools identify as a person of color (POC).
- In Boston Public Schools, only 1% of the budget is allocated towards sports, limiting athletic opportunities for youth.

Boston Youth Wrestling helps students “wrestle with their circumstances,” specifically crime, poverty, lack of access to education, and obesity. Its program aims to give all students the tools to succeed both on and off the mat.

Two-Year Goals

- Hire a licensed clinical social worker and program manager
- Increase the number of BPS and community partnerships from 21 to 27 to serve more youth
- Establish partnerships with the Departments of Children and Families and Youth Services to deliver programming to youth in foster care and the juvenile justice system

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$50,000 funds a full-time licensed clinical social worker
- \$50,000 funds a full-time program manager
- \$15,000 funds one program year for a BPS school

IN-KIND

- Wrestling equipment (mats, head gear, shoes, uniforms/singlets)
- Marketing and promotions consulting and graphic design
- 100 laptops and/or ipads for students
- Larger office space to accommodate administrative and program staff

Leadership & Governance

José Valenzuela, M.Ed, BPS teacher, and former wrestler, founded Boston Youth Wrestling in 2012, applying his personal, academic, and professional experience to create a trauma-informed sports-based program.

Bior Guigni, Executive Director and a former wrestler, first joined BYW as a program director. Bior is dedicated to creating opportunities for underserved youth in Boston through trauma-informed sports-based youth development.

BYW is governed by an active nine-member board, which includes former wrestlers who are committed to supporting BYW in achieving its goals.

“

I can use these skills in the classroom, in sports, and in life because I know what leadership looks like!

”

ALEX, AGE 16

BYW Coach in Training



BOSTON YOUTH WRESTLING'S MODEL



Boston Youth Wrestling partners with Boston Public Schools to identify students grades 6-12 who are considered vulnerable and struggling academically, behaviorally, and/or socially-emotionally.

Engage, Enrich, and Evolve (E3) is BYW's core program in which students are engaged in an interactive basic introduction to wrestling, receive enrichment through weekly wrestling training and skills-building sessions, and evolve into a full season of wrestling in a 12-17 week program that includes physical, academic, and social and life skills development. Students are first introduced to the sport through in-class sessions with a coach and teacher to gain understanding of the techniques, challenges, and intensity of the sport. They practice these skills while focusing on improving their academic performance with the support of a teacher staffed by the partner school.

- Each summer, BYW hires up to 10 youth through the **Coaches in Training (CIT)** Leadership Development program. They receive leadership, coaching, and mentorship training to work with young people at camps run by BYW and hosted by community partners across the city. This approach has created a participant-to-coach pipeline which sustains BYW's coaching ranks with former participants who best understand the needs of the youth.
- Students receive support from coaches and volunteer professionals in the **Mentorship and Training Time (M.A.T. Time)** program. They participate in small group and one-on-one mentoring sessions with their mentors, developing interpersonal and life skills while building positive, trusting relationships with adults.
- BYW's **Wrestle(H)er** program provides coaching and support using a gender-sensitive focus. The program is led by BYW's girls' development director who not only coaches girls to train and compete, but also to build their confidence and self-esteem while participating in a male-dominated sport.



Through wrestling we have been able to provide an outlet for some of our most difficult-to-engage students. We have seen a decrease in behavioral issues and an increase in academic performance.



ANDREW ROLLINS, PRINCIPAL
Mildred Avenue School

Key Investors

- BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
- THE JAMES E. AND ALLYCE DARLING NESWORTHY CHARITABLE TRUST
- THE LENNY ZAKIM FUND
- SHANNON COMMUNITY SAFETY INITIATIVE GRANT

Partners

- BEAT THE STREETS (BTS) PROVIDENCE
- BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF BOSTON
- MASS MENTORING PARTNERSHIP
- UP2US SPORTS



TRAINING COACHES FOR THE WIN

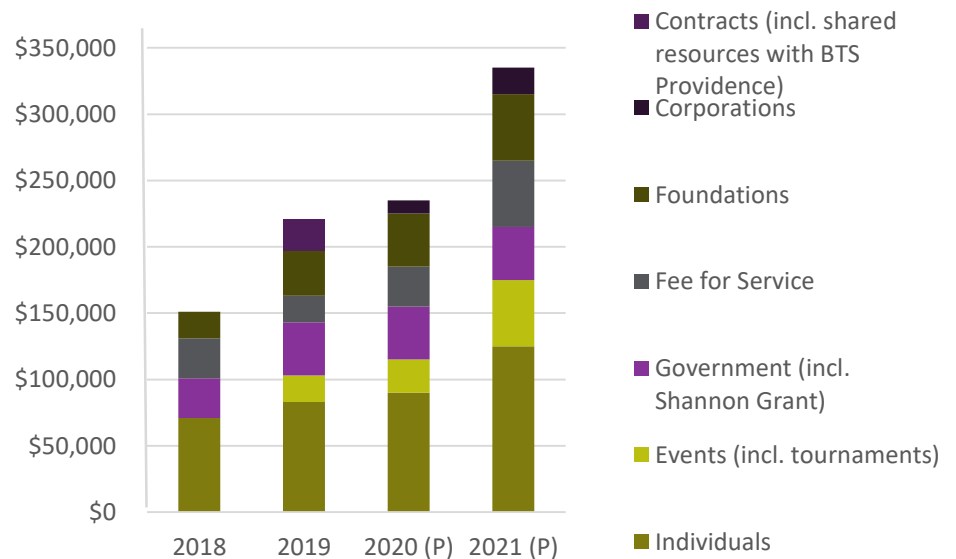
At Boston Youth Wrestling, the staff understands the importance of youth employment. The Coaches in Training (CIT) program has become a key component in BYW’s work with youth during the summer months. Youth are trained to work in the leadership development program as coaches and mentors. They take these skills to the community partners working with younger people at BYW’s mini-camps, teaching fundamentals of wrestling, and serving as role models.

The CITs become more focused and disciplined, both athletically and academically. They demonstrate increased determination to persevere and overcome the most challenging situations. The youth develop leadership skills, a sense of responsibility, and independence. As a result, some youth earn the opportunity of regular employment with BYW and gain transferable skills as they enter the workforce. This, in turn, provides a staffing pool of individuals that possess the skills and characteristics necessary to ensure participants are receiving the best possible coaching to achieve success.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Boston Youth Wrestling is a relatively young organization that has been growing steadily over the past seven years, relying on funding from individuals, foundations, and partnerships to support operations and programming. BYW partners with the Boston Police Department to receive continued funding through the Shannon Grant and with Up2Us Sports and AmeriCorps, which has helped to increase its staffing capacity. As the demand for the program has grown significantly, unrestricted funds will allow BYW to increase the number of partnerships.

Revenue by Source





Success Story: Tyler

As the primary caretaker for his mom, who is single and disabled, Tyler has experienced significant challenges in his life. He lost his older brother due to substance use and has not had a relationship with his father. He was struggling with behavioral issues in school where he was labeled as “disconnected,” “angry,” and “lazy.”

For Tyler, wrestling became a life-changing opportunity when he met José who was working at Tyler’s school. Tyler wrestled from grades 6-12 and was one of the first to participate in BYW’s CIT Leadership Development program.

Today Tyler works for BYW as a mentor and head coach of the program at the Dearborn STEM Academy and the Mildred Avenue School.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that BYW tracks to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, capture lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary.

	FY 2019	FY 2020 (P)	FY 2021 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Number of participants	600	800	1,000
Number of BPS and community sites	21	24	27
Program hours served by AmeriCorps coaches	7,300	7,400	9,000
Number of girls participating	46	100	150
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Number of full-time equivalent employees	1.5	3.5	5.5
Number of board members	9	11	11
Total revenue	\$221,050	\$235,000	\$335,000

SOCIAL IMPACT

In Boston and across the state, youth of color are being left behind. Instead of excelling at the highest levels in the best public schools, too many children of color are under-resourced, have fewer opportunities to motivate them, and face low expectations that leave them in a state of mediocrity. Below are indicators BYW will track to ensure that youth have the necessary tools to be successful in school and life.

INDICATOR	2018
Students reporting improved social and emotional health	80%
Students who exhibit improved academic performance	80%
Students who report trusting their coach for help or advice	85%
Decrease in ninth-grade drop-out rates	75%
Students increasing physical health and fitness	75%