

@athletesforhope



www.athletesforhope.org
contact@athletesforhope.org

2022 Annual Report



Contents

A Note from Team AFH	1
Mission & Vision	2
Our Partners	3
2022 Impact Scorecard	5
Athlete Impact Through Stories	6
Causeway Workshops	8
Athlete Program Summary	10
AFH University	11
AFH Fit	13
Hospital Heroes	14
Whole Being Athlete	15
Play for Good	17
AFH International Sports for Good Exchange	18
Educational Toolkits	19
Revenues & Expenses	20
Athlete to Athlete Panel Series	21
What Athletes are Saying	22

A Note from Team AFH

At Athletes for Hope, 2022 was a year of new beginnings, new opportunities and new ways to elevate the work that our organization has been doing for over 16 years.



As more in-person connections were able to take place, our programs – **AFH University**, **AFH Fit**, **Hospital Heroes**, and **Whole Being Athlete** – thrived with new ways for athletes to positively impact their communities while the combination of virtual and digital opportunities enabled AFH to reach more people than ever before across the U.S.

Advancements to our educational offerings were created through the introduction of our **AFH Toolkits** that addressed inclusivity in sport, climate change and gender equality. We also launched digital campaigns with best-in-class partners like **ESPN** and **Champs Sports** to amplify the voices of our AFH Athletes across the digital ecosystem.

As we do every year, we focused on breaking down barriers and helping athletes recognize their potential to make a difference.

We are endlessly thankful to enter our 17th year of bringing athletes together to educate, inspire, and empower. Thank you to the entire AFH network, particularly our partners and the professional, Olympic, Paralympic and collegiate athletes we work with on a daily basis. The incredible 2022 highlights outlined in this report would not be possible without you.

Here's to many more years of helping make the world a better place; let's make 2023 the most impactful one yet.

Team AFH

Mission & Vision

Mission

Athletes for Hope (AFH) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit that aims to educate, encourage, and assist athletes in their efforts to engage with community and charitable causes, to increase public awareness of and support for those efforts, and to inspire others to do the same. AFH empowers professional, Olympic, Paralympic and collegiate athletes to channel their energy for a common goal: to make the world a better place.

Vision

The athletic spirit is a powerful thing. Whether they're professional or amateur, young or old, all athletes have an innate desire to push the limits. They strive to achieve their full potential, elevate their sport and inspire others.

Along with our Founders, we are breaking down barriers and bringing people together. Through our work, we see a world where all athletes recognize their untapped potential to make a positive impact on the world and follow through by giving their time and energy to supporting the causes they care about.

“

Athletes for Hope helps me to be the person I want to be in my community.”

- Chris Paul, Washington Commanders



“

Athletes for Hope has taught me that I can use my platform to make a difference in the world and I am so grateful I've had the opportunity to do so through my work with them.”

- Kendra Chambers, USA Track & Field

Our Partners

In 2022, we deepened our relationships with existing partners such as Deloitte, Clorox, ESPN and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), and foundations such as the Arizona Community Foundation, the Gordon and Llura Gund 1993 Foundation, the Bender Foundation and the Pennington Family Foundation. We were also able to establish new partnerships with Under Armour, Washington Educational Telecommunications Association (WETA) and Champs Sports.

Thanks to all of our partners, we are able to sustain impactful programming that our AFH Athletes leverage each and every day to give back to communities all over the world. Below, please find select highlights of our partnership activations in 2022 where AFH Athletes shared their time and voices to address causes like mental health, gender equity and public health.

2022 Partner Highlights



HHS | AFH continued to be a steadfast partner of HHS' *We Can Do This* campaign throughout 2022. By leveraging our expansive network of athletes, teams, leagues, conferences, governing bodies, players associations, sports organizations and premier sporting events, AFH brought COVID-19 vaccine public education campaign messaging into communities all over the country via its *Sports Can Do This* initiative.

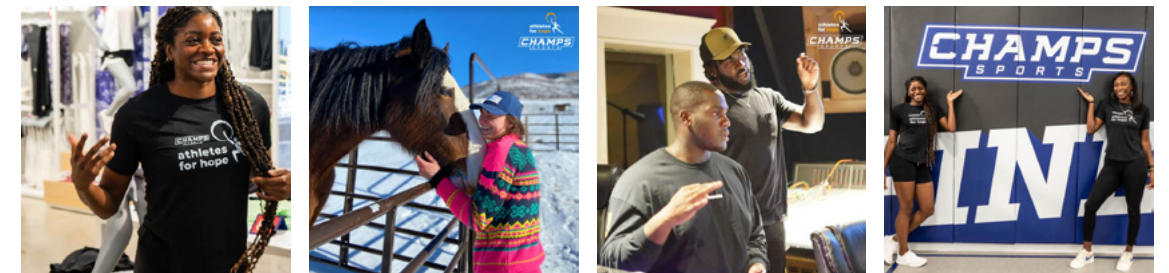


Activations in 2022 included the creation of sport-specific public service announcements that were distributed via social media and in stadiums, while high-profile athletes reached out to their fans to encourage them to get vaccinated. *Sports Can Do This* created partnerships or initiated COVID-19 vaccine-related activations with the following events and organizations in 2022:



Champs Sports | In honor of World Mental Health Day on October 10th, AFH teamed up with Champs Sports to help shatter the stigma of mental health. The social media campaign featured AFH Mental Health Ambassadors like Washington Commanders Offensive Lineman Chris Paul and Olympian and World Cup Alpine Ski Racer Alice Merryweather.

Champs Sports hosted a Mental Health Day event at Champs Sports Homefield in Pembroke Pines, FL on Sunday, October 9th for local high school and college athletes. The events consisted of yoga, mindfulness and meditation sessions led by ambassadors Kendall Ellis and Rachel McNair.



As part of the partnership, Champs Sports donated \$30,000 to AFH in support of our education, training and resource creation efforts related to athletes' mental health.

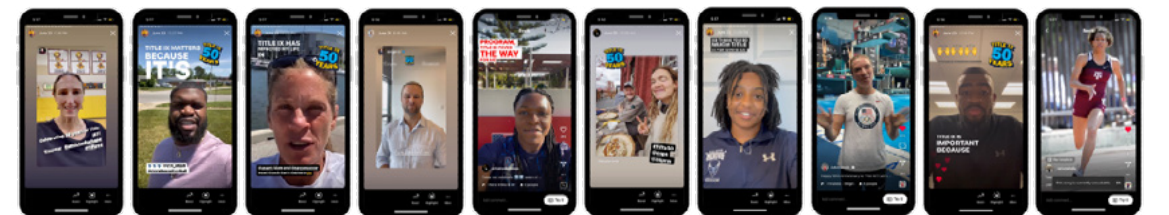
6 AFH Mental Health Ambassadors featured on Champs Sports Instagram

4 Different Sports Represented

64.3k Social Media Impressions



ESPN | AFH was proud to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Title IX along with the rest of the sports community. To reflect this historic milestone, we partnered with ESPN and their Fifty50 campaign to highlight the ways Title IX has made the world a better place by granting equal opportunity for women and girls in sports.



47 AFH Athletes Participated

14 Different Sports Represented

1M Social Media Impressions

Check out what athletes across sport, gender, background and level had to say about Title IX's 50 years [here!](#)

2022 Impact Scorecard

AFH Athlete Impact


Includes professional, Olympic, Paralympic and collegiate athletes



On average, AFH connected


5 Athletes Each Day

to service and advocacy opportunities




1,000+

Athletes engaged in AFH service connections, advocacy efforts or digital activations



778,743

Underserved children were positively impacted through AFH programs



32

Communities Served



1,505

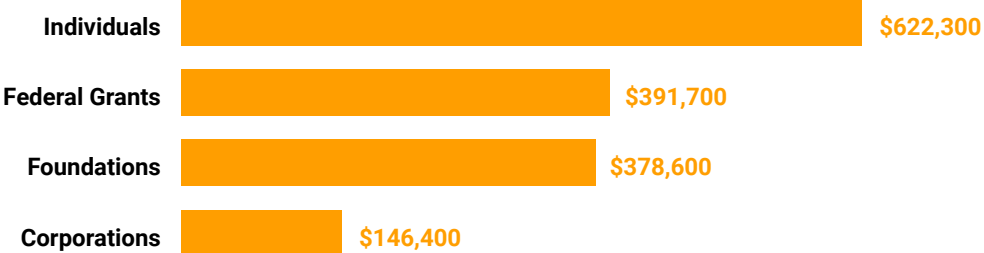
Athlete Visits with Community Partners

1,120,369

Reach Across Digital Platforms

\$1,539,000

Total Revenue



Survey Results

AFH Fit

9.25/10

Overall AFH Program Rating (10 = Excellent)

100%

Of teachers observed sustained or improved student motivation for physical activity for students

100%

Of teachers reported sustained or improved understanding of leadership for students

AFH University

94%

Of student-athletes increased their knowledge about community involvement

98%

Of student-athletes stated they are more likely to give back as a result of their time with AFH U

100%

Felt inspired to volunteer and empowered to do more in their communities

100%

Of AFH U partners said they would work with student-athletes and the program again

Athlete Impact Through Stories



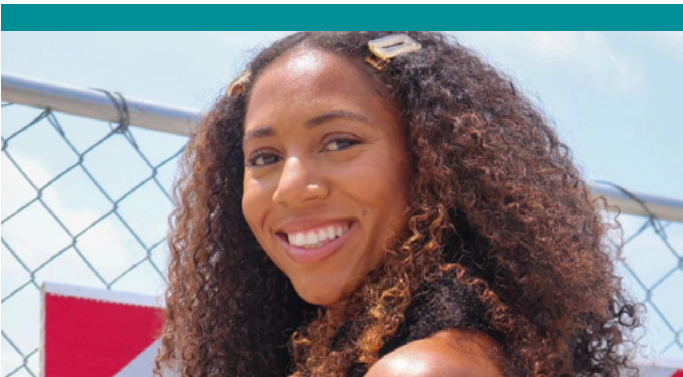
In our Mental Health Athlete Spotlight, Whole Being Athlete Ambassador and former Rutgers Swimmer Cat Salladin reflects on how the weight of her success in her sport heavily impacted her mental health.

Read more about Cat's Mental Health journey



In our Pride Month Athlete Spotlight, NWSL Goalkeeper Erin Mcleod shared why she supported Athlete Ally's Playing For Pride campaign and why it is important to her to continue to be outspoken about the LGBTQ+ community.

Read more about the power of unconditional love



In our Community Hero spotlight, Track & Field World Champion Kori Carter takes service to a new level through women empowerment in sports.

Read more about the work Kori is doing in her community



In our Mental Health Athlete Spotlight, former collegiate soccer player Mattis Koch gave words of encouragement to athletes who have been forced to retire from their sport due to injury.

Read more about Injuries, Recovery, and Mental Health

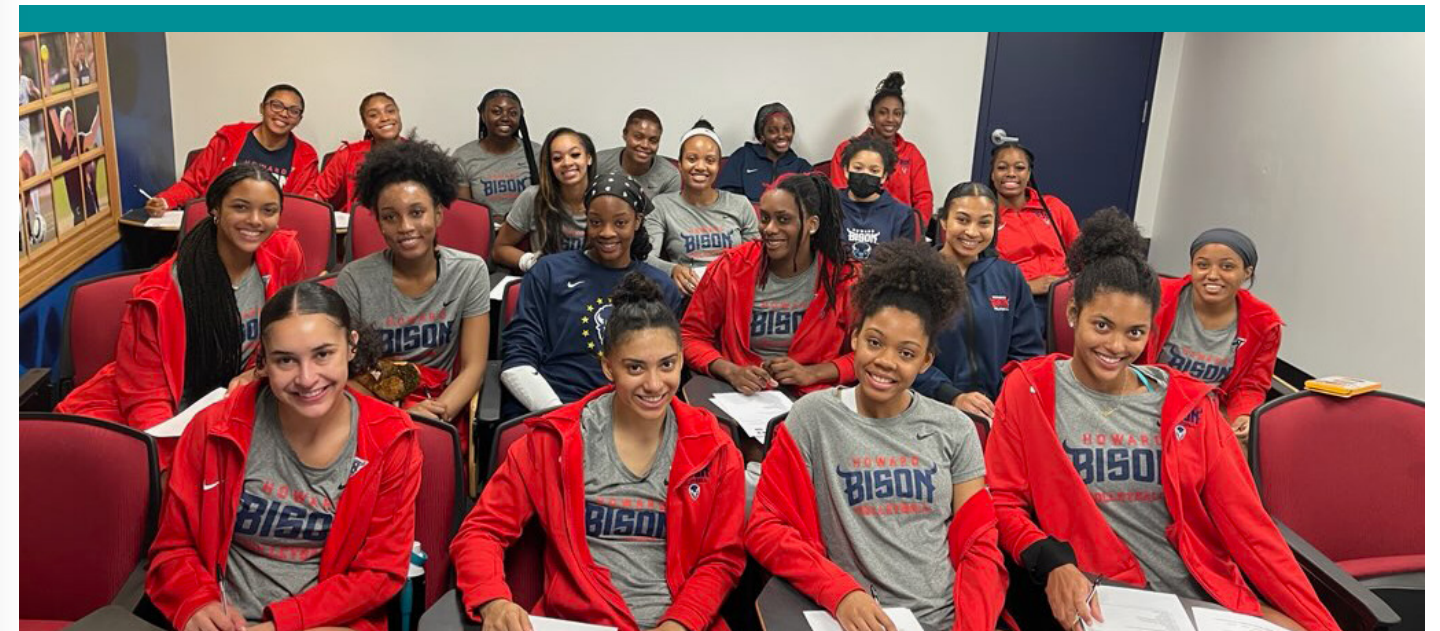


Causeway Workshops

In 2022, AFH continued to make education a key part of an athlete's charitable journey. For the 7th year, we conducted our workshop for the 130 NFL prospects at the Senior Bowl as part of their player development program. We also educated the rookie class for the Washington Commanders during rookie training camp.

AFH U conducted 12 workshops at 8 universities, educating more than 230 student-athletes in sports philanthropy.

Moving into 2023, AFH looks to facilitate its new workshops on mental health and athlete advocacy with all of our team, association, and league partners.





Athlete Program Summary

Throughout 2022, AFH continued the work of existing and successful programs like AFH University, AFH Fit, and Hospital Heroes, and Whole Being Athlete.

On the following pages, learn about each program's impact.

AFH University

Since its inception in 2013, Athletes for Hope University (AFH U) has continued to educate student-athletes through workshops, panels, and service opportunities. Approximately 1,313 student-athletes volunteered with community organizations and schools for more than 3,341 hours in 2022, positively impacting more than 31,182 underserved children and individuals in communities across the U.S.

“

Community service to me is all about creating meaningful connections. Giving back is a great way to strengthen ties with an amazing community that has given my team and I so much.”

- Southern Softball player, Londyn Lau



Addressing unmet community needs continues to be a focus area for AFH U, where campuses held large service events throughout the year. Our largest AFH U community is in Baton Rouge, and LSU and Southern held a weeklong campaign to combat food insecurity over the holidays. A separate food drive at Bowie State University in Bowie, MD collected over 50 pounds of food for the community. AFH U student-athletes continue to support other community needs by volunteering with underserved schools, children's hospitals, senior centers, and advocating for the unhoused, mental wellness, animal welfare, and more unique charity partners.

We celebrated the launch of two new AFH U schools in 2022: Bowie State University, in Bowie, MD and Davidson College, in Davidson, NC. We also expanded our existing AFH U chapters at Clark Atlanta University, Emory University, and Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA. AFH U currently has campus liaisons at LSU, Southern University, Howard University, Bowie State and Georgetown University, while we also support the efforts of AFH U teams at Tulane, Michigan State, Ohio State, UCLA, USC and UVA.

“

It was just [so much] fun being able to play with kids who have nothing but pure joy for the game. They truly are an inspiration to remember to be grateful for every moment on the field!”

- Raquel Latta, Southern Softball



AFH Fit

AFH Fit is our organization's most popular program and we launched its 8th year in the fall of 2022. Building off last year's success, AFH and its athletes plan to deliver over **150 in-person and virtual AFH Fit visits** with underserved schools during the 2022-23 school year.

AFH Fit connects AFH Athletes to underserved schools around the country to teach kids the importance of daily physical activity through social and emotional learning exercises. In each AFH Fit visit, AFH athletes discuss the importance of leading healthy and active lifestyles, lead physical fitness activities, and emphasize character development through the C.H.A.M.P.S. curriculum, which is comprised of six monthly themes: courage, honesty, accountability, mindfulness, perseverance, and sportsmanship. To reinforce key themes, AFH Fit also has a series of videos and supplemental activities for participating schools.



“

What a great visit! These kids were so full of energy. I spoke about staying healthy, being positive, making good choices, and having courage.”

- Doug Brown, Professional Skateboarder

Hospital Heroes

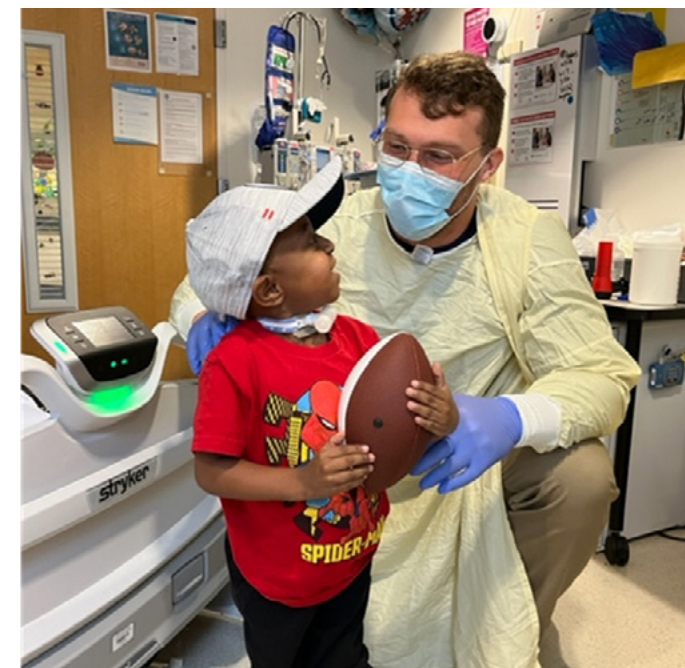
Since 2007, AFH has connected professional and Olympic athletes to children's hospitals around the U.S. In total, we've facilitated more than 800 in-person visits for AFH Athletes to more than 70 hospitals.

“

Giving back to children's hospitals is important to me because I value the time I get to spend with each and every kid I meet. I'm honored to have the chance and opportunity to make a difference in their day and to share a laugh or a smile with them.”

- Perris Benegas, USA Freestyle BMX

In 2022, AFH facilitated virtual and in-person hospital visits with our partners throughout the U.S., connecting athletes like **Cole Strange** (New England Patriots), **Eric Kendricks** (Minnesota Vikings), **Alex Rigsby Cavallini** (USA Women's Hockey), and many more.



Whole Being Athlete

Given the well-documented need for increased mental health resources and advocacy, and the growing demand from athletes who want to engage in this space, AFH launched the **Whole Being Athlete Program (WBAP)** in 2021.



“Advocating for mental health is important to me because I want other athletes to know that they don’t have to struggle alone and that they are more than just athletes. After struggling mentally throughout a big portion of my career, I want to use my experience to help as many athletes as possible”

- Kaitlyn Lyle, UC Davis Gymnastics & AFH Mental Health Ambassador

In 2022, the WBAP focused its efforts on four key areas within mental health: education, storytelling, advocacy, and convening:

Education | The AFH staff has invested significant time into building a comprehensive [Mental Health Resource Hub](#) equipped with resource guides, suicide prevention training opportunities, and mental health management tips. Additionally, AFH created a new youth mental health curriculum, named H.E.A.R.T. (Hope, Education, Action, Reaching Out, Teaching), which will officially launch through a national pilot program in 2023.

Storytelling | Athletes frequently want to share their unique mental health stories to help others who are struggling with their mental health, but they often do not know where to go. AFH is utilizing its powerful platform to share these stories, with the goal of changing the public stigma around mental health. In the past year, we have published a diverse array of athlete mental health stories that have resonated deeply with AFH’s community. We believe that by letting athletes and the general public know that they are not alone, we can help them find peace, speak out and seek help.

Advocacy | We are proud to announce that we have [20 Mental Health Ambassadors](#), who have begun to utilize their platforms to advocate for athletes’ mental health. Our Ambassadors have started to engage in monthly opportunities to serve on panels, facilitate workshops, and spread awareness about mental health campaigns.

Convening | In 2022, we brought together athletes, clinicians and the general public for a series of discussions on mental health. These discussions were primarily hosted on AFH’s platforms and featured our athletes and best-in-class mental health partners such as NAMI. We have several new exciting partnerships and convening opportunities that will be announced in 2023, so stay tuned!

Meet the AFH Mental Health Ambassadors

Uniting across sport, level and background, learn more about the athletes serving as Mental Health Ambassadors for the Whole Being Athlete Program [here!](#)



Ruth Axton
College Rowing



Maya Underwood
College Track & Field



Terra Lanteigne
Professional Hockey



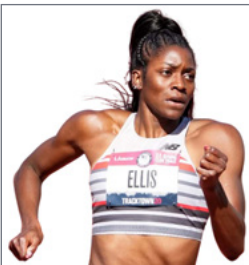
Jack Beer
Professional Soccer



Jenny Sichel
Paralympic Rowing



Lacey Henderson
Paralympic Track & Field



Kendall Ellis
Olympic Track & Field



Alice Merryweather
World Cup Alpine
Ski Racing



Chris Paul
Professional Football



Mariah Parsons
College Rowing



Edose Ibadin
Professional Track & Field



Samuel Fuller
College Baseball



Beverly Yanez
Professional Soccer



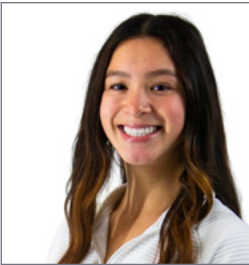
Rachel McNair
College Basketball



Natasha Hastings
Olympic Track & Field



Cat Salladin
College Swimming



Kaitlyn Lyle
College Gymnastics



Megan Ewoldt
College Diving



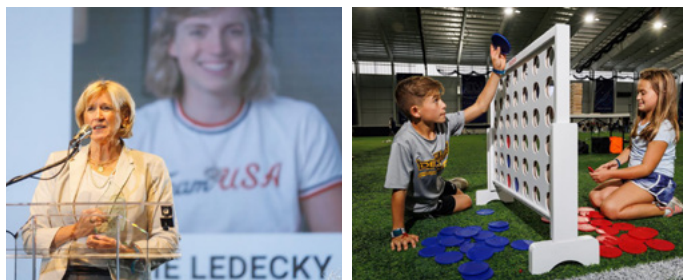
Tyree Washington
Professional Track & Field
and Professional Football



Taylor Miller
College Basketball

Play for Good

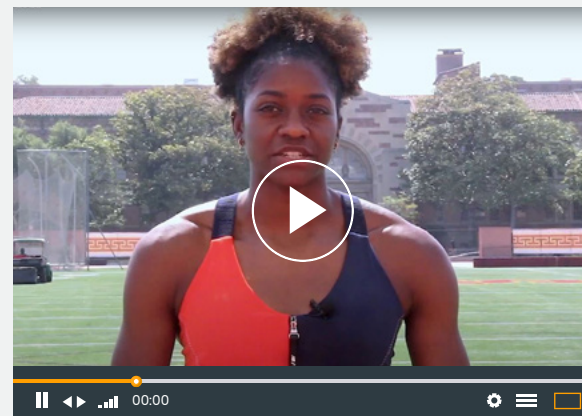
AFH was thrilled to host our first Play for Good event at the incredible St. James Sports Complex (Springfield, VA) in September! We are so appreciative of our community partners, sponsors, and volunteers for their support in hosting a successful event and raising over \$230,000 for AFH!



2022 Play for Good Highlights



Olympic swimmer Katie Ledecky was the 2022 AFH Community Hero Award Winner! [Watch](#) her acceptance speech and hear what Stephen Curry had to say when introducing her



Whole Being Athlete program featured at NAMIcon 2022! [Watch](#) the video featuring Track and Field Olympian and AFH Mental Health Ambassador Kendall Ellis that aired in June

Photos courtesy of Ricardo Reyes Photography

AFH International Sports for Good Exchange

In 2022, the AFH staff, World Learning, and a team of professional, Olympic, and Paralympic athletes traveled to Arusha, Tanzania as part of week-long trip to empower girls and young women through basketball and sport.

The seven-day outbound program included cultural and educational visits, and mental health and life skill sessions that utilized the AFH Fit and Whole Being Athlete mental health curricula in support of sports-based youth development projects in Tanzania. Each activity on the schedule was focused on increasing leadership skills, and encouraging positive mental health, confidence, inclusion, cross-cultural understanding, female empowerment, and youth development at the Orkeeswa School, in Monduli. This remarkable global experience brought attention to the critical needs around the world and identified opportunities for future sport diplomacy exchanges.

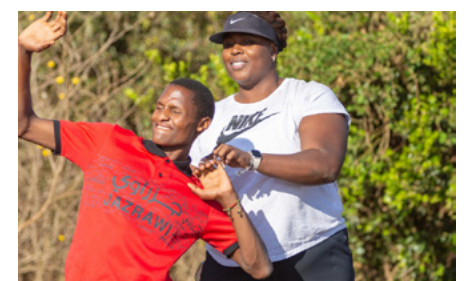
This two-way exchange project was a collaboration through the U.S. Department of State's Sports Diplomacy division in conjunction with World Learning and AFH. The initial inbound event included 10 members of the Tanzanian Junior National Women's Basketball team, who participated in cultural, educational and sport-related exchange opportunities while in the Washington, DC area in January 2020.

[See more highlights from the trip here!](#)



Athlete participants included:

- **Michelle Carter**
Olympian, USA Track & Field
- **Awvee Storey**
Coach, WNBA/NBA G League and retired NBA
- **Chastity Melvin**
Retired WNBA
- **Zavier Moore**
Southern University Baseball
- **Lacey Henderson**
Paralympian, USA Track & Field
- **Megan Montefusco**
NWSL, Orlando Pride



Educational Toolkits

Education has always been at the core of what we do at AFH and in 2022, we took that approach to a whole new level. By launching our digital toolkit series, our goal is to help athletes of all levels better understand the causes they are interested in by making the information accessible, succinct and applicable to the sports world. Check out the highlights below.



Adaptive Ally

This toolkit was created for athletes beginning their work in disability-focused spaces. Many of our athletes have an interest in working with kids, teens or adults with special needs, but don't always know where to start.

[View the Adaptive Ally Toolkit](#)



Sports & the Environment

It has never been more important to protect our planet and we can do so through the power of sports. This toolkit was created for athletes with tips, info and resources on how to get involved.

[View the Passion for the Planet Toolkit](#)

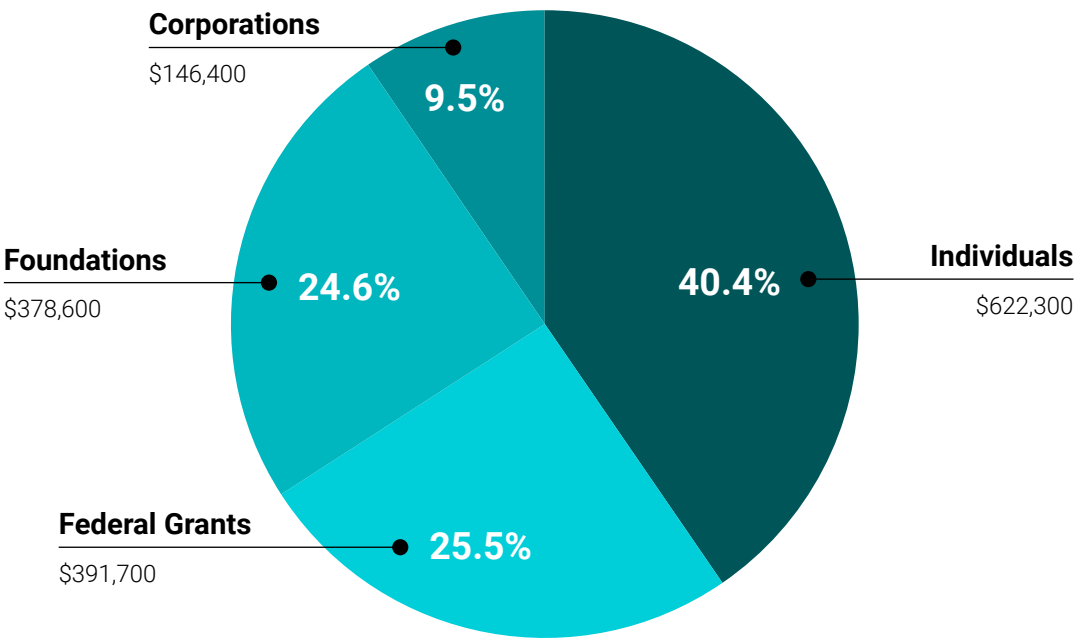
Title IX

In 2022, we celebrated 50 years of Title IX, but we learned that not all athletes knew what it was or how it helped even the playing field for women and girls in sports. Learn more about this transformative piece of civil rights legislation.

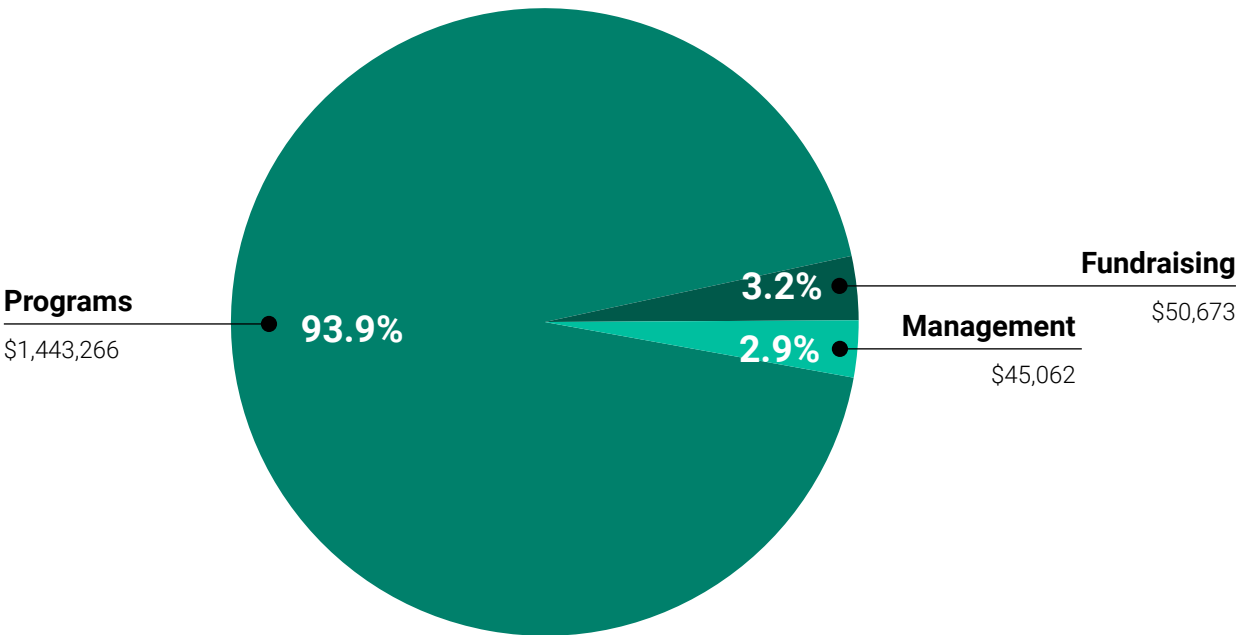
[View the Title IX Toolkit](#)

Revenues & Expenses

Revenues



Expenses



Athlete to Athlete Panel Series

*In 2022, AFH expanded its digital presence with digital conversations between athletes of all backgrounds. Our two core series focus on **Black Athletes in America** and **Sports & Mental Health**. We look forward to expanding each of these in 2023 and adding new ones to our media mix.*

As part of our Whole Being Athlete Program, AFH hosted a series of interviews with athletes of all levels that focuses on their own mental health, why athlete mental health is important, and ways we can come together to end its stigma in sports.

Whole Being Athlete Series: Mental Health



AFH joined forces with NBA Veteran and Writer Etan Thomas to host an inspirational and educational panel series. Featuring student-athletes from HBCUs and professional and Olympic athletes, these conversations highlight the ways they are making a difference in their communities, their perspectives on what it means to be Black in America, and how they use their platforms to make the changes they hope to see.

A special thank you to the Rainbow PUSH Coalition who donated copies of Etan's new book, Police Brutality and White Supremacy: The Fight Against American Traditions, to students and athletes as part of this panel series.

AFH & Etan Thomas: Black History Month Panels 2022



What Athletes are Saying



"Athletes for Hope has taught me that I can use my platform to make a positive impact in the world and I am so happy to work with them."

- Beverly Yanez, Assistant Coach Racing Louisville FC



"Athletes for Hope gets us involved in organizations and charities that we are truly passionate about so we can spend our time impacting communities across the county."

- Katie Walker, Paralympic Cycling



"Athletes for Hope is a great resource for athletes. It gives us a chance as athletes and former athletes to reach our communities in a way we don't necessarily have the resources for."

- Britney Henry, Former Track & Field Athlete



"As athletes, we spend so much time focusing on ourselves, but giving back to others is so selfless. Athletes for Hope helps us to use our platform to give to others."

- Tiombe Hurd, Track & Field Olympian



Get Involved. Be Inspired.

Athletes for Hope

2 Bethesda Metro Center
Suite 1320
Bethesda, MD 20814

(301) 276-9970
contact@athletesforhope.org
www.athletesforhope.org

@athletesforhope

