The Power of YOU

We say it all the time. It is likely you have said it, or heard it, too. It sounds something like this...

"More TV coverage will grow the game! Making the sport more affordable will grow the game! Community-based lacrosse grows the game! Professional lacrosse will grow the game!"

While these concepts do enable the game to grow, they are mostly the result of the game's growth. The real key to growing the game of lacrosse is, and always has been, you.

TV coverage is a result of growth in popularity led by you. Affordability is, in part, a matter of economics driven by you and what the market will bear. Community-based lacrosse fills a need and your desire to give children the opportunity to play. Professional lacrosse is viable when you attend the games.

The ability of US Lacrosse to fuel the sport and enrich the experiences of others through lacrosse stems from your love of the game, and our collective compulsion to share the game. You propel the game further. You provide the possibilities. In response to your desire to introduce the game at a lower price point in a more engaging environment, we developed the TryLax program in 2018. As a result, 70 TryLax clinics introduced lacrosse to 4,423 children in a 90-minute clinic full of fun, fundamentals and future laxers in the Fall of 2018 and the Spring of 2019.

Because you wanted coaches to be more qualified in training your children, we held 660 Coaching Development Program clinics from 2018 through the Spring of 2019, exposing 10,308 coaches to the art of effective lacrosse coaching through our nationally-recognized program.

Because you decided that lacrosse was an important vehicle to enrich the lives of others in underserved communities across the country, we provided 293 new programs with $1.468 million worth of equipment over the last 15 months.

To our coaches, officials, players, parents, administrators, donors, US Lacrosse members, volunteers and fans, you are the powerful force that makes dreams like Makena Carter’s possible. Check out her story in the sidebar.

YOU'RE POWERING TEAMS AND DREAMS!

Makena Carter’s lacrosse dreams came true thanks to your support of the US Lacrosse First Stick Grant gifted to Hamilton High School in Los Angeles.

Mak’s high school program received the equipment grant four years ago and she is the first player to sign a college lacrosse scholarship as a result. She will be playing at Fort Lewis College in Colorado next year.

By the way, she finished this season with 146 goals!
Sustainable Growth

Edward P. Nordberg, Jr. | Chair, US Lacrosse Foundation

One of the key pillars of US Lacrosse is to foster the sustainable growth of the sport. While our game has continued to grow in recent years, overall participation in youth sports has declined. Challenges to participation include competition for kids’ attention from video games to the increased cost of participation in youth sports. US Lacrosse has met these challenges head on with two game-changing initiatives: LADM and TryLax.

The Lacrosse Athlete Development Model, or LADM, is a new, research-driven philosophy for teaching the game of lacrosse to young athletes. LADM is creating a fun, children-centered environment of smaller field-sized games with lots of free play. At US Lacrosse, we are excited about this initiative and the early results are encouraging-kids love it.

The other major initiative we recently developed is TryLax—a low-cost introduction to the sport launched in 2018. Seventy clinics were conducted in twenty-three states since last year’s rollout, enabling more than 4,400 kids ages 6-12 to enjoy lacrosse for the first time. Each participant received a stick, a ball, T-shirt and US Lacrosse membership for just $35. We could not pursue these initiatives without you—your confidence in and continued support of US Lacrosse is vital to our game’s sustainable growth.

PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

Player Retention

Steve Steensen | CEO and President, US Lacrosse

There is nothing more fundamental to our mission than expanding lacrosse participation. In the 20 years since US Lacrosse was founded, lacrosse has been one of the few sports to experience significant growth. But an alarming trend of flattening growth has emerged in some markets, and the churn rate of young players—the duration of their participation in the sport—is accelerating. While we often prioritize participation growth as a goal, player retention is equally important. Sadly, a primary reason kids leave the sport is because they are not enjoying the experience.

In many ways, our sport has never been less accessible...a realization that fuels our mission to provide every kid the opportunity to enjoy the experience.

focus and an innovative mindset. US Lacrosse programs and resources are lowering the barriers to entry for thousands of families each year, and our development strategies are driving positive change throughout the sport. Thankfully, generous donor support fuels our mission to provide every child with access to a positive lacrosse experience.

With an eye toward providing high-level training for the nation’s top young players that ultimately will expand the talent pool for the U.S. National Teams participating in World Lacrosse competitions, US Lacrosse is excited to launch the National Team Development Program (NTDP) this summer.

This extended pathway for elite high school players is a way to be a part of the pipeline of potential national team athletes, as well as an opportunity for lacrosse athletes around the country to be exposed to holistic, elite-level training and development, pillars of the National Team brand. With the potential of lacrosse in the Olympics on the horizon, the need to develop those athletes is now.

The NTDP is a three-phase journey throughout one year, starting with a regional tryout, followed by an invite-only combine event at US Lacrosse, and finally leading to U15 and U17 USA Select Teams. In the first phase of the selection process, US Lacrosse along with the Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) and Women’s Professional Lacrosse League (WPLL) will be hosting regional trials throughout the country. The top 150 boys and girls from all regions will be invited to the national combine where final selections will be made for the USA Select Teams.

The tryout process is built in line with the qualifying steps for the U.S. National Team. The experience will be challenging physically and mentally, exposing participants to the rigor associated with the highest level. Skill development will be a major focus, but the highest priority is to make sure participants have a great experience, by learning, having fun and walking away with a better understanding of the U.S. National Team culture. The NTDP will provide greater connectivity between the next generation of athletes and the sport’s highest playing honor, the U.S. National Team.

For more information, please visit uslacrosse.org/NTDP or contact Natalie Wills at nwills@uslacrosse.org or 410-235-6882 x166.

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The NTDP Regional Trial held in Boston, MA on June 2.

The U.S. Women’s U19 team will be competing at the World Lacrosse Women’s U19 Championship in Peterborough, Ontario from August 1-10.

The U.S. Indoor team will be competing at the World Indoor Lacrosse Championship in Langley, British Columbia from September 19-28.

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U.S. NATIONAL TEAMS

Expanding the Talent Pool

National Team Development Program

With an eye toward providing high-level training for the nation’s top young players that ultimately will expand the talent pool for the U.S. National Teams participating in World Lacrosse competitions, US Lacrosse is excited to launch the National Teams Development Program (NTDP) this summer!
**PE Workshops**

Bobby Laudig, longtime Coaches Development Program trainer and Lacrosse Athlete Development Model cohort member, went to Berkeley, CA in May to do a Physical Education workshop for nine teachers from the Berkeley Unified School District. Program Leader August Fern of the Berkeley Lacrosse Club said, “They should be all trained up and geared up to go out and teach hundreds of Berkeley kids the basics of lacrosse. We are excited! Thanks for making it happen!”

**Lacrosse Athlete Development Model (LADM)**

Lower Bucks Lacrosse in Langhorne, PA, is all in on the US Lacrosse Athlete Development Model and their participation numbers are reflecting the fun that they are having. In 2018, they increased their girls participation numbers by 48! They are now adding a TryLax program to introduce players from PreK through 2nd grade in a fun and safe environment with no equipment needed other than the stick included in the registration fee.

**College Club Lacrosse**

Lacrosse is often not a sport that many Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) offer. A group of ambitious men and women decided to change that and start a lacrosse club at Lincoln University in Oxford, PA, simply for the love of the game.

The impetus behind the Lincoln University men's and women's lacrosse clubs came from students Devin Adams, Natalya Coote and others who met with athletic director Harry Stinston. “After meeting with the students, we thought this would be an excellent way to increase sports offerings and the co-curricular experience.”

Brandon Olaya, head athletic trainer, said “The camaraderie that comes from being on a lacrosse team is unmatched. For myself, to this day, my closest friends are those I spent countless hours on a lacrosse field with in high school. I was very excited to be able to be a catalyst to allow the Lincoln students to have similar experiences that come with this great game of lacrosse.”

**First Stick Grants**

The Mountain Roundup tournament for boys and girls youth and high school teams from Montana, Idaho and Wyoming included several of the First Stick Program recipient teams that your support made possible: Rimrock High School and Spartan High School girls teams from Montana, as well as Rick Baker and his Sweetwater Lopes team from Rock Springs, WY.

**Soft Stick Grants**

Bill Casey introduced the game of lacrosse to students at Desert Palms Elementary School in Glendale, AZ, through a Soft Stick Grant given through your generosity.

**Growing the game in Cali through PE teacher education.**

Lincoln University students Devin Adams, Chase Evans (standing), Maria Maddox, Wade Burton (L-R)
WORLD LACROSSE:
A Brand New World

Six months after securing provisional recognition from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the international federation for men’s and women’s lacrosse took another significant step forward with the introduction of a new name, logo and brand platform: World Lacrosse.

This announcement came in May by World Lacrosse President, Sue Redfern, and Chief Executive Officer, Jim Scherr at SportAccord 2019, the largest annual gathering of leaders from across Olympic and international sport. US Lacrosse President and CEO Steve Stenersen is the VP of the World Lacrosse Board of Directors.

“The World Lacrosse brand captures the unique attributes that make lacrosse special — the rich heritage and traditions of our game; the excitement and energy of lacrosse; its growing, global appeal; and, the unique spirit of camaraderie shared the world over. Lacrosse is one of the fastest-growing sports in the world and membership in the international federation has more than tripled since 2000.

“Our new brand has been designed to capture the spirit of optimism and excitement that permeates our sport,” Scherr said. The name captures the bold vision and ambition to continue expanding participation in lacrosse around the globe; to do so in a manner consistent with the Olympic ideals; and, to fulfill its responsibility as an active and engaged partner in the lacrosse and international sport communities. The logo is emblematic of the rich heritage of the game, a gift from Native Americans and revered for its healing qualities and power to unite people in a celebration of competition, camaraderie and excellence. The shape represents a handmade wooden lacrosse stick. The globe in the center, angled at the actual position of the earth at 23.5 degrees, represents the global appeal of lacrosse, but also hints at the uncharted territory and opportunity for continued growth. The colors depicted in the globe pay tribute to the Olympic ideals and reflect the aspiration of World Lacrosse to secure inclusion for lacrosse in the Olympic Games — the pinnacle of athletic achievement.

The new World Lacrosse organizational headquarters is in Colorado Springs, Colorado, a city often referred to as “Olympic City USA” as it is home to more than 50 national and international sport organizations. For more information, visit worldlacrosse.sport

INNOVATION INSPIRATION:
Courting New Ways to Lax

Putting sticks in the hands of kids in cities and other underserved areas is not a novel concept and remains at the core of several US Lacrosse initiatives. After all, it starts with a stick.

But with your support, US Lacrosse and other groups are innovating how the game is presented to these newcomers, while also coming up with solutions surrounding field space and access.

Khalid West, Brooklyn Lacrosse Club co-founder, invented a series of competitive games called WallGames, in which lacrosse is played on fenced-in handball courts. While there are few fields in Brooklyn, there are more than 600 handball courts that are free and open to the public. “It’s a constant battle to secure field space. It’s very competitive and drives us nuts,” said West. Seeking to use the under-utilized handball courts as lacrosse facilities for players, West developed six different games and several drills that help players improve on fundamentals.

All of the games involve a scoring system. Some have time limits. Most incorporate the use of a stick. Some have restrictions. All of the games are small-sided, meaning they can be played with one, two or three players a side. One of the by-products of WallGames has been increased exposure to lacrosse throughout the community and lots of flow from people walking through the parks and we get a lot of attention,” West said. The increased exposure on handball courts has helped fuel the club’s growth. Brooklyn Lacrosse Club is a USL grant recipient and has grown from 20 kids in 2012 to over 500 kids in 2019.

While increasing exposure is key for the success of WallGames, West realized it is not enough on its own.

“I am witnessing incredible growth in youth participation in box lacrosse. The kids love playing. The skills of Canadian box athletes playing field lacrosse at the NCAA level is not lost on many collegiate coaches now actively recruiting box players and encouraging their players to train with box programs. Layered on top of this is a strong group of recent NLL franchise owners, a league focused on better growth and development, and focused grassroots development to drive interest in indoor lacrosse.”

“Box lacrosse is at a crossroads point in terms of growth,” according to Olvier Marti, US Lacrosse Foundation donor and a coach who is passionate about indoor lacrosse. “The western expansion of collegiate lacrosse, the endeavors by the Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) and Women’s Professional Lacrosse League (WPLL), and the growth of the National Lacrosse League (NLL) are only part of the reasons I expect growth of the game to accelerate. The provisional recognition by the Olympic Committee and potential inclusion in the 2028 Olympics is a long overdue endorsement of the sport. Interest in box lacrosse is rising and this recognition will help fuel growth.”

“Ways to Lax:
Innovation:
Sovereignty:
Lyons:
Native:
Nations:
Oren:
Lyons:

AMERICAN EVOLUTION:
Stepping Inside the Box

The sport of lacrosse is at an inflection point in terms of growth,” according to Oliver Marti, US Lacrosse Foundation donor and a coach who is passionate about indoor lacrosse. “The western expansion of collegiate lacrosse, the endeavors by the Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) and Women’s Professional Lacrosse League (WPLL), and the growth of the National Lacrosse League (NLL) are only part of the reasons I expect growth of the game to accelerate. The provisional recognition by the Olympic Committee and potential inclusion in the 2028 Olympics is a long overdue endorsement of the sport. Interest in box lacrosse is rising and this recognition will help fuel growth.”

“The number of former pro-NLL players that are giving back and building programs for kids to play box lacrosse has been significant. Rink space is a large roadblock but as demand grows, that will change. Lacrosse players that want to play at the highest level and give themselves an opportunity to play professionally will need to make box lacrosse training part of their regular routine,” says Marti.

KEEPING THE FAITH:
Oren Lyons

Acting as the world’s conscience for indigenous rights and environmental stewardship for decades, National Lacrosse Hall of Fame member and Onondaga Nation faith keeper Oren Lyons was honored by 400 people at a gala in Syracuse in May. The lacrosse community was well represented, including tributes from National Hall of Famer Roy Simmons, Jr. and Sid Jamison, a Mohawk who served as the first head coach of the Iroquois Nationals. The gala transcended the sport, while also coming up with solutions surrounding field space and access.

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WORLD LACROSSE:
A A creative new way to play on handball courts in Brooklyn, NY.
Join us the weekend of October 19 in Sparks, MD for the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame Induction Celebration and Fall Classic featuring the U.S. Men’s and Women’s National Teams! For more information, visit uslacrosse.org/HOF.