



MetroLacrosse Awarded 2018 Sports 4 Life Grant by Women's Sports Foundation and espnW

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation joins the effort to empower young girls of color through sports

Boston, MA – Today, the Women's Sports Foundation and espnW, in partnership with the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, announced MetroLacrosse as a 2018 recipient of the Sports 4 Life initiative, a national effort to increase the participation and retention of African-American and Hispanic girls in youth sports programs.

Sports 4 Life, cofounded by the Women's Sports Foundation and espnW, and supported by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation in regions including Southeast Michigan and Western New York, supports programs that help girls in four foundational areas – leadership, self-esteem, confidence and perseverance – with the expectation that growth in these areas will also support girls' physical and emotional health and academic success.

"Our vision is that one day, all girls will have the opportunity to reach their full potential through the transformative experience of sports," said Deborah Antoine, CEO of the Women's Sports Foundation. "Even more than we believe in the power of sports, the Women's Sports Foundation believes that all girls – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ability, zip code or family income – deserve equitable access to the lifelong benefits of sports. We're proud to partner with espnW and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation to make that vision a reality."

"In a few short years of commitment and focused attention, we have seen the tangible positive results that Sports 4 Life has brought to lives of girls of color across the country," said Laura Gentile, ESPN senior vice president, espnW and ESPN Business Operations & Content Strategy. "This program demonstrates the universal value and appeal of sports, and it is an integral piece of the espnW mission. We look forward to continuing to empower girls to realize their full potential through sports."

Since the initiative's inception in 2014, Sports 4 Life has nearly 200 grants totaling \$1.1 million, reaching more than 50,000 girls nationally. With WSF's support, MetroLacrosse and other community and regional partners have been particularly successful in increasing opportunities for girls of color: more than 85% percent of girl participants identify as African-American or Hispanic.

Meet all the 2018 Sport 4 Life grant recipients and learn more about them [here](#).

About MetroLacrosse, Inc.

MetroLacrosse is a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster positive life enrichment, character development, academic success and healthy life choices among urban youth and teens through enhanced participation in the team sport of lacrosse. Since 2000, lacrosse-based sports-learning programming serves more than 800 at-risk youth and introduces more than 5,000 urban youth to the sport of lacrosse each year, a traditionally underserved market within the lacrosse community. MetroLacrosse offers a unique integration of lacrosse, youth development and educational activities that build strong relationships with underserved student/athletes, creating a complete support system to truly change life trajectory for boys and girls 3rd – 12th grade from urban neighborhood; 80% of whom attend public schools, more than 34% have ESL households, 23% have a family income under \$20,000, 51% live in homes with income under \$40,000, and 75% live in homes with income under the minimum Boston cost of living. Despite these challenges, MetroLacrosse student/athletes have achieved 100% high school graduation rate since 2014 with 85% of graduates have gone onto college; while boarding & private school scholarship opportunities are provided for younger student/athletes. Today, MetroLacrosse is the largest and most comprehensive urban lacrosse and youth development program in the US.

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