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Urban Squash CLEVELAND



2019-2020 Annual Report



Let's Continue Working Together

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Wick Ballard – Squash Coach

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* Founding Board Member

Letter from the Board President

Thank you for your extraordinary support in challenging times. Without your generosity, Urban Squash Cleveland would not have been able to help our students and their families meet some of the many hardships posed by Covid-19. But thanks to you, Executive Director, Iago Cornes, and Program Director, Katie Kohn, had the resources required to step up, convert challenges into opportunities and ensure that Urban Squash Cleveland students continued to access, virtually and in person, the very best in academic, athletic and wellness programming.

Our virtual programming includes team bonding sessions, fitness classes, high school and college entrance exam preparation, and healthy cooking classes led by our partners in Squash Health, Ben Bebenroth and Steve Baker from Spice Field Kitchen. There is, however, simply no substitute for connecting in person with our students. Small groups of eight students--four in class and four on court--gather in our pristine facility, observe our robust Covid-19 protocols, and receive an unparalleled level of attention from, and connection with Iago, Katie and our exceptional interns and volunteers.

Just as our leadership team stepped up, re-imagined our programming, and forged closer bonds with our students, so, too, have you, our donors. You stepped up your giving, embraced us when we needed it most and forged closer bonds with Urban Squash Cleveland. We'll remember your commitment and kindness long after the pandemic is over. Please continue your loyal support of our wonderful program in this uncertain and demanding time. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Joe Juster

Board Chair



What is Urban Squash Cleveland?

Urban Squash Cleveland ("USC") is a youth development organization that empowers youth to reach their potential through academic support, the sport of squash and enduring life skills.

Our program is designed to prepare students for the future. USC is a long-term, rigorous and rewarding commitment, full of exciting possibilities and opportunities.

Squash: Through regular practice and competitions, students develop endurance, coordination, physical and mental awareness, and discipline. The fascinating game is a wonderful vehicle that helps open doors and connects our team with meaningful opportunities for personal growth.

Academics: Students engage in homework help, literacy development, financial skill-building, ACT & SAT tutoring and college support as they cultivate a lifelong love of learning and pursue meaningful post-secondary opportunities.

Enrichment: Team members participate in unique culinary and agricultural experiences, field trips, internships, camps and travel to cities and colleges across the country as they form relationships with mentors, volunteers and one another.

USC is part of the Squash & Education Alliance (SEA), which is a network of 20 programs nationwide and 5 programs internationally. 95% of SEA students who stay in member programs graduate from high school and enroll in post-secondary schools.



Currently serving a total of 47 students from between 4th and 12th grades and 11 alumni, Urban Squash Cleveland plans to grow steadily over the next seven years to ultimately serve a total of 80 children each year. Our newly implemented recruitment plan will allow USC, by 2023, to graduate 5-7 team members from high school each year and enroll in a post-secondary pathway of their choosing.



Academic Advancement

During a challenging school year, USC team members continued to graduate from high-school & middle school and obtain meaningful scholarships to high-schools and colleges of their choice.



Tahneja Gaiter

College/University:

Case Western Reserve University

Major: Psychology

Minor: Spanish

Joined Team: 11th Grade

Fact: Tahneja was one of five students selected for the Squash & Education

Alliance Booster Scholarship. She was selected based on her demonstrated leadership, resilience and academic achievements.

"Urban Squash Cleveland means community to me. Bringing so many different students together to play a fun and intense sport that we wouldn't get to play at our schools is something I will always cherish this program for."

Zoey Mitchell

School: 9th Grade Student at St. Martin de Porres High School

Joined Team: 5th Grade

"Urban Squash Cleveland made me realize that hard work pays off and success is never given."



Keziah Dorroh

School: 9th Grade Student at Hawken

Joined Team: 5th Grade

"Urban Squash Cleveland provides a great way for me to travel and explore new parts of the country. It has even helped me

become more social and open to other people."

Fernando Hokello

School: 9th Grade Student at University School

Joined Team: 5th Grade

"Urban Squash Cleveland means playing as a team. I am happy to help my teammates and teach them new habits and skills to improve as students and athletes on and off the court."



A Year Unlike Any Other



The organization adjusted programming to deepen its focus on social-emotional development. We incorporated meditation, arts & crafts and team building activities into USC's workshops. Small group, socially distant gatherings such as ice cream and pizza parties enable students, alumni and families to feel loved, valued and supported during this extraordinary time.

Adapting during the Spring

- When the world changed in March 2020, USC doubled down on its commitment to strengthening the mind, body and soul of team members through fitness classes, team bonding experiences and regular communication.
- Students participated in 1:1 academic tutoring, life skills & fitness challenges, SAT & ACT preparation classes, career exploration and the SEA Guest Speaker Series.

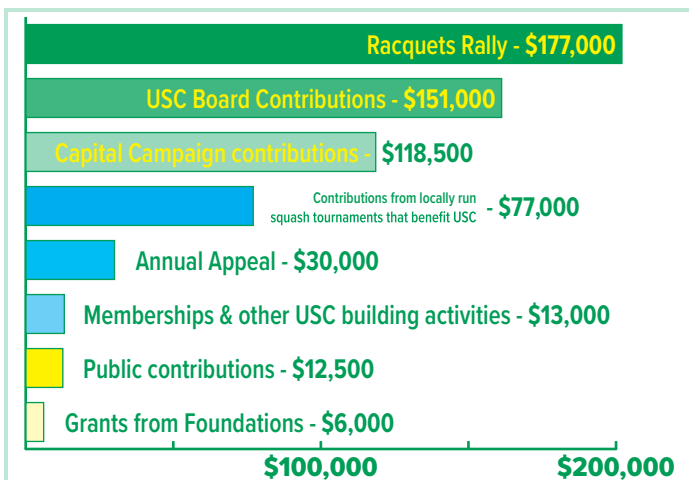
- In partnership with Teach For America - Greater Cleveland, team members led a Town Hall focused on their experience with remote learning, racial equity and social justice.

Summer of 2020 & Beyond

- USC adapted to the needs of students to ensure that they can participate in meaningful, fun and energizing learning experiences.
- Small group, socially distant sessions include fun squash play, indoor cycling and gardening. Hands on activities include robot building, circuit creation and painting.

Fundraising

2019-2020 Income



Total Funds Raised: **\$585,000**

In addition to raising funds for operations, Urban Squash Cleveland is starting an endowment fund with The Cleveland Foundation.

To learn more about financially supporting USC, please contact Executive Director Iago Cornes: 216-315-2258, or iago@urbansquashcleveland.org





Enrichment Activities



Success on the Squash Court

2019-20 Squash Shots



90 hours of virtual programming



Team Building



Racquets Rally



9 Out of Town Trips



Summer Camp



360 hours of in-person squash and academic sessions



End of Season Celebration



SEA Team Nationals



Welcome to the Team Ceremony



Team Retreat

CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

The Urban Squash Cleveland family, composed of students, parents, staff, board, donors, volunteers, partners and supporters, has come together during a challenging year.

As a result, USC met and exceeded its 2019-20 fundraising goals, allowing the organization to continue to provide meaningful opportunities for the 47 team members and 11 alumni, supporting the student-athletes academic work, their athletic development and their social-emotional wellbeing both at the start of the school year and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, more than ever, it is critical that we continue to empower and support our student-athletes under a safe and supportive environment.

\$15,000 +

Jack Herrick (B)
Joseph K. Juster (B)
Ray and Katie Murphy
Roy Radigan (B)
Michael Shaughnessy (B)
Tim Sheeler (B)
Jack Turben (B)
Theodora Wolf (B)
NEOSRA DBA Greater
Cleveland Squash

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Brent (B) and Ann Ballard
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Virginia Lennon (B)
Goldman Sachs
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**A heartfelt
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 to all of you!**

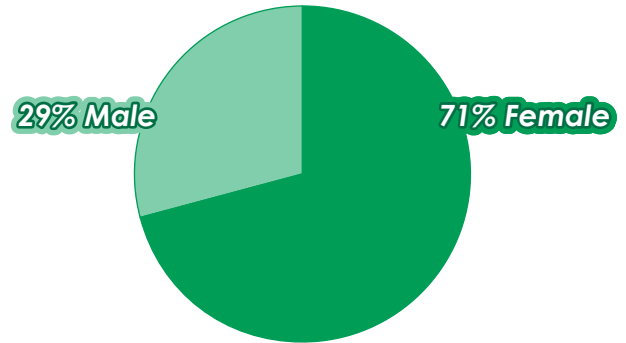


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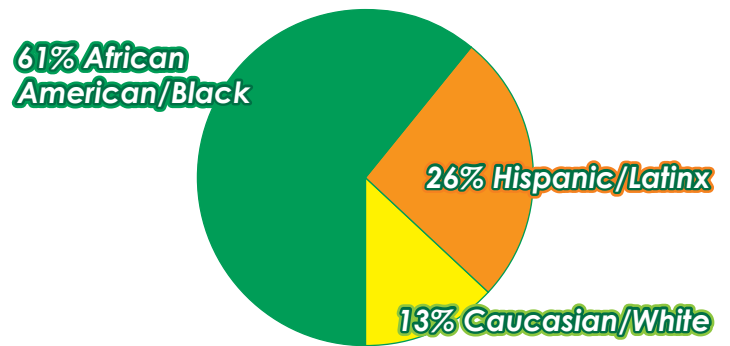
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Ghostlight Productions
College Now
The Gathering Place
Teach For America - Greater Cleveland
The Whole Kid
Young Entrepreneur Institute
Camp For All Kids
Yoga Roots
Squash & Education Alliance

Demographic Information

Student Genders



Student Race/Ethnicity



Out of Town Trips & Squash Opportunities

The USC team had 9 **out of town travel opportunities** from September 2019-March 2020. Highlights include a full team retreat at Cuyahoga Valley National Park, a visit to Washington D.C. during the World Team Championships and The SEA Team Nationals at Yale University.

Team members participated in several **exciting squash events in Northeast Ohio**. Student-athletes watched matches of the Cleveland Skating Club Open and the Cleveland Classic and participated in special squash clinics with PSA players Anna Serme, Nadia Pfister, Curtis Malik and Alfredo Avila.



The Evolution of Squash Health



The USC team participated in one-of-a-kind culinary and agricultural experiences with world class chefs from Spice Field Kitchen.

USC students experienced:

- Cooking in groups during the first annual Team Retreat at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
- Making nutrient dense meals during Saturday sessions.

Squash Health cooking sessions, now online, have become even more impactful and realistic, as students cook in their own homes with their families. Using freshly prepared ingredient boxes, students participate in live, virtual sessions preparing wholesome, exciting meals.

Getting Involved

You may support the kids of USC by donating online at www.urbansquashcleveland.org, by mailing a check through the enclosed envelope, by volunteering or by donating goods or services in any way you think would be helpful to the children of Urban Squash Cleveland.

- To volunteer, please contact Katie Kohn at katie@urbansquashcleveland.org or by phone at 216-269-4106.
- If you're interested in visiting Urban Squash Cleveland and learning more about empowering Cleveland youth, please contact Iago Comes at iago@urbansquashcleveland.org or by phone at 216-315-2258.

**Visit us at 4701 Lorain Avenue,
Cleveland, Ohio 44102 and at
www.urbansquashcleveland.org**





**Urban Squash
Cleveland**

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