

# Oakland Strokes Community Outreach Annual Update

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Presented by Oakland Strokes  
Dana Hooper - Executive Director and  
Carla Jourdan - Head of Community Programs and Outreach



# Acknowledgements

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- The working environment between the Oakland Strokes and the Park District Tidewater staff has been very collegial, collaborative, and overwhelmingly positive.
- We look forward to continuing to work together to increase community access to the Oakland Estuary and water sports
- Special thanks:
  - Kelsey Gielen
  - Megan Seccombe
  - Morgan Evans
  - Stewart Reid
  - Aaron Kint





# Who Are the Oakland Strokes?

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- Youth Rowing Club with programs for High School and Middle School students
- Currently serving 220 athletes from the East Bay
- No cut team that provides every active participant the opportunity to learn, develop and race at local, regional and national level
- Robust financial aid program that ensures that financial hardship is not a barrier to entry or continued participation
- We draw students from all over the East Bay Regional Park District & Beyond
  - El Cerrito in North-West
  - Fremont in South-West
  - Pleasant Hill in North-East
  - Pleasanton in South-East
- We have a history of success, with a total of 23 National Championships (Including in 2024!) and countless Regional and National medal winning boats.
- Strong history of supporting athlete admission to colleges nationwide.

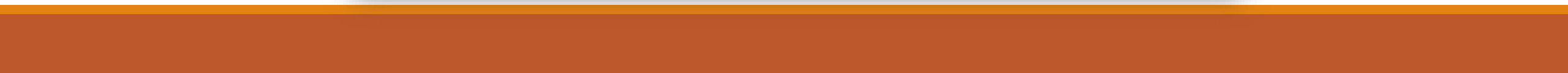


# Our Mission

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*"Our mission is to provide student athletes of all backgrounds and abilities the opportunity to row, develop and commit to a team that competes at a national level. Our program fosters strength of character, a strong work ethic, self confidence, and a respect for others."*

Over the past four years we have taken steps to strengthen our Community Programs and Outreach to improve services and create pathways to rowing for Oakland youth.





# Community Programs

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## Community Engagement

1. **Events**  
Acting as vendors and attendance at community events within Oakland to spread the word about rowing opportunities.
2. **Learn to Row Programs - Rowing/Fitness Games**  
Visits to schools with new and current partners for onsite rowing instruction for Oakland youth.

## Participatory Programs

1. **A.R.I.S.E. High School Enrichment Program**  
Semester long class for students at partner high school. On the water training for 12-14 weeks.
2. **STEM to Stern Middle School Rowing Program**  
10-week program integrated with our middle school rowing program that addresses the most identified barriers to youth rowers.
3. **Rowing & Water Competency Summer Camp**  
One week intensive program that combines water competency/safety training with rowing instruction.



# Community Engagement

## 1. Events

- We engage with the local community away from the boathouse to show that our commitment extends beyond the athletes at the boathouse.
- Programs we attended in 2023-24
  - Go Bears, Go Girls, Go Play!
  - Oakland MS Sports Expo
  - CCPA College Fair
  - Brookfield Rec. Center Annual Backpack Drive
  - East Oakland Future Fest
  - Oakland Roots Games





# Rowing/Fitness Games with OUSD

## 2. Learn to Row

- Oakland Strokes worked with Oakland Athletic League (OAL) to provide OUSD middle school students with erg instruction and fitness games.
- Participating schools:
  - Melrose Leadership Academy
  - United for Success
  - Westlake Middle School
- After school program sessions were held onsite at each location.





# Rowing/Fitness Games with OUSD

## 2. Learn to Row

- 110 OUSD students participated in single day programs
  - Erg instruction and games
  - Fitness games





# Participatory Programs:

## 1. A.R.I.S.E. High School

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- Since 2021 the Oakland Strokes have been a program provider for A.R.I.S.E. High School's Community Based Learning Program
- Students from A.R.I.S.E. attend a weekly Enrichment program at Tidewater, focusing on on-water rowing
- 2023-24 Program Statistics
  - 25 weeks of programming
  - 50 hours of instruction
  - 15 students
  - Free Program
- Athletes encouraged to join the Strokes Summer Camps and High School team at the conclusion of the program





# Middle School Rowing

## 2. STEM to Stern

- The Oakland Strokes have been running a STEM to Stern program since the Fall of 2021
- Three pillars of STS include Rowing Instruction, Swimming Lessons, and STEM Education
- Also includes:
  - Transportation to and from practice
  - Pre and post practice nutritional snacks
  - Scholarships to cover program fees
- No Program costs to participants beyond nominal registration fee





# Middle School Rowing

## 2. STEM to Stern

- At the boathouse, STEM to Stern athletes are part of the Strokes middle school program.
- 2023-2024 program:
  - 20 weeks of programming
  - 80 hours of rowing instruction
  - 10 hours of swimming instruction
  - 10 hours of STEM instruction
  - 13 athletes
  - 1 “alumni” athlete in our UI5 Advanced program
  - 1 “alumni” athlete in our UI6 High School program

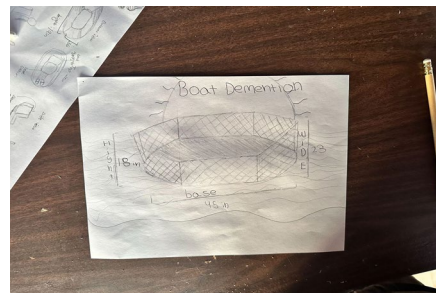




# Middle School Rowing

## 2. STEM to Stern

- STEM to Stern is a model program that we are looking to replicate with other partners





# 3. Summer Camp Rowing & Water Competency Pilot Program

- The Rowing and Water Competency Program prepares new rowers to be safe in and around the water by teaching them what to do in emergency situations.
- Full Day Camp which included:
  - Strokes recruit athletes
  - Water Competency Training (EBRPD Aquatics)
  - Rowing instruction
  - Transportation to all activities
  - Lunch and snacks
  - 15 hours rowing instruction
  - 7.5 hours water safety instruction
- No program cost to participants beyond nominal registration fee.





# 3. Summer Camp Rowing & Water Competency Pilot Program

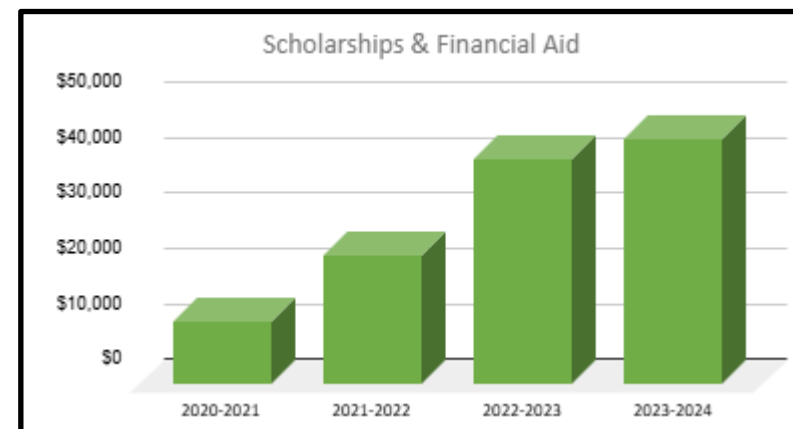
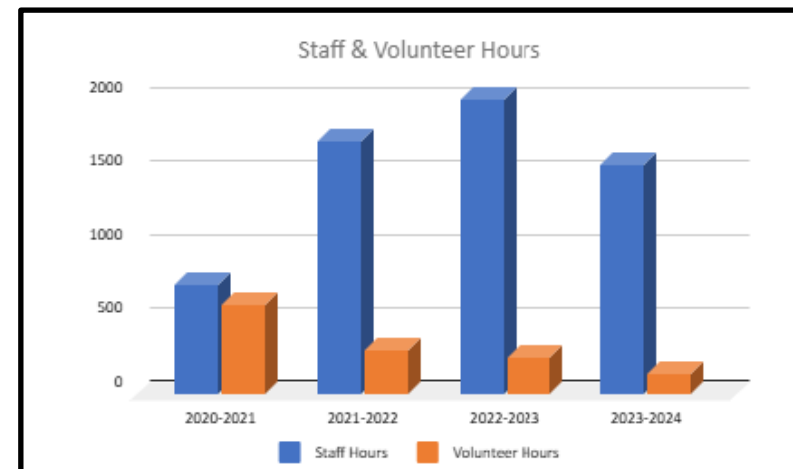
- Athletes spent 1.5 each day learning self rescue techniques at Roberts Pool that they were able to put into practice at the Tidewater Boathouse on the final day of camp.





# Oakland Strokes' Commitment

- The Community Programs are funded through a combination of Operating Expenses, Individual Donors, and Grants
- 2023-2024 program statistics:
  - 1560 Staffing Hours
  - 140 Volunteer Coaching Hours
  - \$62,440 in Staffing Costs
  - \$44,103 in Scholarships & Financial Aid





# Community Programs Student Highlight

**Giovanni “Gio” Grajeda Sierra**, a graduate of our first STEM to Stern program joined our High School Men’s Novice team in the Fall of 2023.

His boat qualified to participate in the Men’s U16 eight competition at USRowing Youth Nationals in the spring of 2024 in Sarasota, Florida. The story was featured locally on KTVU Fox news.

There, his boat finished 9th in the country!





# Community Partner Highlight

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## Ile Omode School – East Oakland

*“I am thankful for Oakland Strokes continued support in helping students to pursue a sport that wouldn’t normally be a part of their lived experience. Their dedication to making well-rounded athletes and scholars is commendable. From the stellar swimming program, to the in-depth STEM program and always awe inspiring rowing events, Oakland Strokes continues to be a valued partner to Ile Omode School.”*

*Ashlei Burley  
Teacher*





# Thank You!

## We Welcome Questions