

## Athleadership 2017

CONTINUUM CENTER



Heritage Youth Sports Foundation  
Lives and Communities through



ATHLEADERSHIP

Ms Jane, Yusef, Phaizon, Nasir, Ar'mon, DJ, Willie, Glen, Zion, Mr Burrell (Not pictured: Eli and Glentrel).

**Over the course of 5 weeks (following 10 hours of training), 10 athleaders from North Minneapolis were vision, focus, and mindset development coaches for 149 youth (double the size of last year's pilot), two days a week each for 45 minutes in 4 summer programs: Jerry Gamble Boys and Girls Club, 21<sup>st</sup> Century (at MCTC), Beacons (at North High), and La Creche. The age range was 4 years old to 15. At La Creche we had 3 classrooms of the same youth consistently in each, the other sites to varying degrees had less consistency.**

Below are photos and sample statements from the site staff, and from a parent. You'll notice how the youth are paying attention and engaged in the diaphragmatic breathing/focusing exercises (one photo Zion shakes a bottle with coins in it to try to distract them), and the connections game.



**Eli Campbell** – “The impact this had on me was actually helping me be a new person on and off the court. I am now using this outside pf sports and it’s helping me focus more and helping me calm down from snapping. It helps me in school with homework and tests and stuff like that with teachers. It had an impact on me teaching the kids and actually helping these kids life. Teaching the kids help me become a better speaker and a better leader. Teaching the kids impacted me by creating a relationship with them and being a role model. The impact I had on the kids was big!! I feel like they looked up to me.”

**Phaizon Scott** – “I feel like the training and teaching we do is helping others and helping us. Because as we teach it we learn more about it! I really feel that the breathing has helped me with basketball just by helping me calm down and it has helped me and my AAU team just by me breathing and being able to talk without anger. It really helps.

For me I wish I could have learned this when I was in the first grade. This would have save me from a lot of trouble in elementary school and in basketball as a kid. With me learning imagery it help open up my mind in a lot of ways like I always try to do imagery before everything now. At first when I learn this I used to never really seriously do it because I thought it was dumb, but then really started focusing on it and a couple amazing things happened and now I like to do it every day with any situation just to see now what can happen with me using my inner abilities.”



**Lakisha Clark-Burgess, 21sr Century program director** – “Athleadership provided the scholars an opportunity to see young people their age involved in something positive and uplifting. The athleaders all worked well together and were prepared every time they came. I have seen less extreme behavior but still some behaviors as to be expected with young people. I have also seen that they are learning how to hold one another accountable. I would like to find how to embed athleadership more into our program.”



**Nasir El Amin**– “With all the training we did with Discovery of Self it has made me more apparent and woke as far as my dreams and being able to change and effect my own reality. Working with the kids showed me that even at an early age our emotional and imaginative side is disregarded, all we are taught in school is that the outside world is real and you get in trouble for daydreaming.

I loved working with the kids it was a great experience especially when they started to understand it. The impact was very noticeable. One week a kid was very anxious, the next they were a little more focused, or some kids fall in live with the idea that their dreams really can come true. They have stories of teaching their family the breathing. This program has a big impact on the youth we worked with.”



**Zion Sanford** – “The Athleadership program has helped me so much. It has helped me in basketball, school, and life period. Even before I started doing the Athleadership program I had learned the breathing techniques. I had a hard time focusing but now when I’m panicking I used the techniques and now I am doing very well. In school it has helped me become a better scholar helping me make the B-Honor Roll every quarter and sometimes pushing me to A-Honor Roll.

It has also helped with the kids – at La Creche they even wrote us a thank you poster and made a song so I know it had an impact. At Gamble Boys and Girls Club they didn’t know anything

that we were talking about and didn't even know what their imagination was. By the end of our sessions they had answers we haven't even thought of, it was amazing. It was also a big impact from me teaching them – I knew many of them because I was in BGC programs so they really listened. Athleadership can connect you in so many ways with so many people it's really important to focus on it."

**Glentrel Carter** – "It impacted me in so many ways just for me knowing I was a hot head and that I needed the help. Breathing and calming down was a big help. I'm a progress in action as I was teaching the youth. The yin yang helped in multiple ways as well.

Me teaching it to the youth made me use it more. It felt like they really used the techniques and the more we came back the more they got it, so it made me use it. Never thought I could say that I made an impact on the younger youth within weeks. I feel they will always know that North High basketball [and Patrick Henry] taught them that breathing always helps, there's a positive to any negative, using imagery can life can go multiple ways. I love working with the kids and am happy to have got the opportunity."



**Yusef Abdullah**– "The training and the work impacted me because I learned how to breathe the right way I can stay focused on school by breathing because in school I was not always focused. I think working with the kids has taught me more about the inner world since I am teaching I have learned it more. I think we impacted the kids because when I saw that they were actually learning and they were working with us I think we helped them a lot."

**Willie Wilson** – "This helped me in basketball because when I miss a layup or a shot I usually get mad at myself but now that I use the breathing I just calm down and play for the next play. Also if it's a close game I can just do my breathing and imagine I'm the only one on the court and it

helps me play better. Another way I can use breathing is when it's a close game and I'm at the free throw line I can imagine myself making the shot. I enjoy teaching the kids, basically it's just helping me become a better leader and taking a leadership role."



**Ar'mon Dalton** – "The impact of us teaching the kids was them learning how to breathe correctly through the stomach and it's another way to get calm and can stop them getting in trouble anymore! Working with the kids impacted me a lot just because it helped me be patient it also taught me I am responsible for a lot of kids decisions."



**Sheu Oduniyi, physical education for 21<sup>st</sup> Century at MCTC** – “The program was very helpful teaching the scholars how to handle stressful situations. The athleaders were very informed on topics. It helped the scholars comprehend when the staff used personal experiences. I haven’t seen a decrease in problem behavior but it was a small amount of time and we had inconsistent attendance. I think having the program in a classroom rather than the gym would be helpful.”

**Glenn Carter** – “Now I try to think and imagine about the best outcome in different situations.”



**Athleadership is a partnership of Continuum Center, Heritage Youth Sports Foundation, the Minneapolis Foundation, and the Minneapolis North High School Alumni Association.**

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