

# ATHLEADERSHIP 2.018

## IMPACT STATEMENTS AND PHOTOS



North Minneapolis high school athletes are trained to teach North Minneapolis youth (ages 5-18) elements of Discovery of Self, a program the athleaders have been using. As teachers, athleaders more deeply integrate DoS practices/principles, and feel good about being positive role models. Youth learn a mindset and tools to help them in all aspects of life. In addition, athleaders speak at community-bridging events that bring people to North Minneapolis.

# WHAT IS ATHLEADERSHIP?

Athleadership began as a 2016 collaboration between Heritage Youth Sports Foundation and Continuum Center, training 5 Minneapolis North High Polars to teach elements of the Continuum Center's Discovery of Self (DoS) curriculum to 70 North Mpls youth ages 4-14 in summer programs at LaCreche, Jerry Gamble Boys and Girls Club, and Beacon at Mpls North High.

Shallow chest breathing causes your brain to release chemicals correlating with stress, anxiety and the fight, flight, or freeze response. When your adrenalin rushes – just because you're breathing wrong – it's hard to sit still and concentrate, and it's hard to control one's body or emotional reactions. Even at a young age, some of the youth have great difficulty breathing correctly (and, as a result, sitting still) - just like many athleaders did when they got started!



CJ (above left) helps by applying some pressure to help direct the breath where to go. It has a big impact. Some children (and adults) need extra help.

In its 3rd year, 13 athleaders spent 50 hours at 4 sites (plus 18 hours training/prep) in new roles as vision, focus, and mindset development coaches to 174 youth (including peers) and staff. Additionally, we hosted public events to gain experience and confidence as public speakers telling their positive stories, spreading optimism, and creating engaging social events that bridge “demogapics”.

“Athleadership is a fantastic program! This past summer my son and a bunch of his friends were leaders in the program. I saw these young men teach these younger students about breathing, focusing, imagery and emotional development. The adults who supervise the program were with these young men every step of the way. They did not interfere with what the athleaders were doing, they were more the guides. After being taught these techniques and new ways of thinking, I personally witnessed youth to use them to refocus themselves, to avoid their own conflicts, and help resolve others’. It really works! Not only for the athleaders but especially for the youth. It truly does make a difference! ”

- Mark Campbell Sr. - Creekview Site Director

“First off, I would like to thank Ms. Jane and Coach Mike for the opportunity to work. This was good for me because it kept me off the streets and from doing bad things. I really liked doing this because I liked how the kids got better and better every time and this helped a lot with learning responsibility and getting ready for school. Overall this was a good experience because people counted on you so you really had to be responsible. This also helped me out because it helped control my anger and to be able to work with kids. ”

- Meiko, 9th grade

# HERE'S WHAT OUR ATHLEADERS HAVE TO

"Athleadership means a lot to me and the kids we work with. It has helped me become a better leader throughout the job. Before this job I didn't really like to speak to new people but speaking to these kids has helped me with that. And I'm looking forward to this job next year."

- Marcus, 9th grade

"Teaching the youth affected me by teaching me to talk to people. At first I did not want to talk to the kids because they weren't listening but as time went on I started to get more comfortable with the kids, and they started to listen. The teaching affected the kids by helping them calm down using the breathing, and the imagery helped them to not get into conflicts they told us would have happened if they did not calm down and use imagery to be the bigger person. They stopped being so antsy. We also taught them how we could learn from animals' emotions like gratitude, compassion."

- Jamar, 11th grade

"Athleadership is a very important program that I think a lot more people should be involved in. To me being a teenager in the same community as the kids I'm teaching is a big part in this program. The kids are having role models that they can see almost every day. Also me being an athlete in the

## SAY:

"1. This helped impact 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 imagine myself making the shot."

2. It helped me like the job a little more, like at la crèche I really liked going there because every time we went there I enjoyed teaching them and the kids enjoyed me being their teacher, basically it's just helping me be a better leader and taking the leadership role."

3. The impact I had on the kids was that half of the time they were always listening to me and like if they were off task I could help them get back on track and continue to teach. Overall like I said in question 2 just to build my leadership and accept my role as a leader."

- Willie, 9th grade

"Athleadership meant a lot to me, it has helped me progress and think of new ways to better myself. Every method that we learned to use from Miss Jane has helped me with anger or concentration. Being in this program was truly a great honor because I was able to help the younger generation and have them a few steps ahead of me when I was their age. I also enjoyed the kids' company - they made a not morning person enjoy mornings. I was glad to be a part of this program this summer."

- Mark, 11th grade

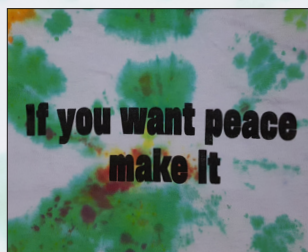
community means a lot because the kids can see me play in my games and they can relate to me because they know me. They will know I am doing the breathing and imagery. Just having an impact on the kids is the most important part about Athleadership to me."

- Yusuf, 11th grade



# T-SHIRT Tie-Dye Party!

SUN 8/12 - Oak Park Center



Our North Mpls athleaders are hosts and important spokespeople.

## Help them change narratives!

The impetus for this summer's t-shirt tie-dye party was that the North High boys and Braemar Panache girls together tie-dyed for the April 2017 skating show, *Breaking the Ice*. On the shirts: **If you want Peace, Make it.**

The Northernettes came to support some very social social change, model bridge-building, discuss a 2019 ice skating show, and get a t-shirt! Youth and adults from all over the Twin Cities joined the fun and left with an experience and a message of positivity and all-important optimism!



These bridge-building events are a collaboration of Heritage Youth Sports Foundation, Continuum Center, New Vision Initiatives, City of Mpls Neighborhood Community Relations, Jerry Gamble Boys and Girls Club, Change Equals Opportunity (CEO), Keeping my Focus (KMF), and Non-Fiction, Inc.

# PICNIC *with* a PURPOSE

Good food and conversation as we celebrate  
and spread the optimism!



A dance performance, DJ, new connections, and a chance to hear from our Northside athletes about their summer work teaching North Minneapolis youth about vision, focus and mindset development!

**JOIN A GROWING COLLABORATION!!**



*Rio Sanders*



*Willie Wilson*



*Ar'mon Dalton*



*Omar Brown*



*Nasir El-Amin*

“ I was very impressed after hearing from the young men who went through the Athleadership program. The energy and positive attitudes of everyone at the picnic lead me to believe that this program has potential to have a greater impact with sufficient resources. As a person who spent my childhood in the community, the event was a wonderful step toward my goal of reconnecting. ”

- Jim Rovner



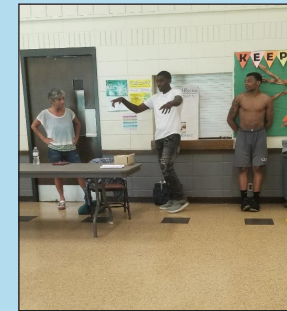
All athleaders learn diaphragmatic breathing, which is breathing deep to fill your stomach when you inhale, not your chest. Watch a baby or an animal, they breathe in their belly. It's how we are wired to breathe.



**Meiko, Marcus and Rio** shake loud (empty) water bottles with coins in them trying to distract the kids from their focused breathing. It took a few weeks of practicing with no noise before they could handle the distraction.

# ATHLEADERSHIP IN ACTION!

Older/veteran athleaders led this class about emotional intelligence, with stories of how to use imagery to help you be healthier, happier and do better in school, sports and life.



Left: Omar, Ar'mon, Mark, Jamar, Yusuf.  
Middle: Phaizon Scott gets animated telling one of his stories.  
Right: The youth became increasingly engaged and able to focus.



**Jane Barrash leads a Discovery of Self session** – with assistance from Phaizon Scott (now a college freshman) – for high school basketball players in the Run and Shoot summer league at Farview Park.

Glentrell Carter, 11th grade (center - gray shorts), and Phaizon Scott (now in college) are part of **Athleadership 2.0**, helping Jane teach their peers. Jane checks Phaizon's breathing as the **group practices diaphragmatic breathing and focusing**. Many people need to be shown where to send their breath.



“Athleadership was great for our youth at Jerry Gamble Boys and Girls Club. They taught the youth about imagery, concentration and deep diaphragmatic breathing. What was amazing was having the youth apply what they learned. Also, it taught young athletes how to improve their leadership skills that will help them on and off the court. The program helped our youth socially and emotionally.”

- Marcus Zackery Sr.  
*Executive Director of Jerry Gamble Boys and Girls Club*

“The DoS curriculum and Athleadership helped me in many different ways. I learned new things, and things I never knew about myself, like that I had been breathing wrong and frustrating myself without even knowing it. I learned it and more, and taught others. I was able to pay attention better in class and made the B honor roll two consecutive years after learning it, and became a smarter athlete – in football I made All District, and All Conference 2 consecutive years also. Now I’m in college striving for greatness. As an athlete I was looked up to and I had a big impact on kids in my neighborhood by sharing time with them and the wonderful knowledge I learned. When I taught it to others that I am around every day, at first they didn’t really believe it but that’s how everyone is at the beginning. But they listened and trusted and they started seeing changes in their life and others.”

- Phaizon, college freshman

### **Cover Photo**

2018 Athleaders from left: Yusuf Abdullah, Jamar Gardner, Karon Abdullah (Yusuf’s brother), Ar’mon Dalton, Marcus Zackery, Mike Shelton (Executive Director of Heritage Youth Sports Foundation), Omar Brown, Miles Shelton (Mike’s son), Meiko Anderson, Jane Barrash (Continuum Center Executive Director), Rio Sanders, Nasir El-Amin.

Not pictured: CJ Brown, Mark Campbell, Glentrell Carter, Phaizon Scott, Willie Wilson, and team supervisor, Kriss Burrell (also Academic Dean at Mpls North High)

**Jane and Mike have co-directed Athleadership since 2016.**

Questions? [jane@continuumcenter.net](mailto:jane@continuumcenter.net) or [mshelton.hysf@gmail.com](mailto:mshelton.hysf@gmail.com)