



**MSYSA Strategic Plan**  
2026-2031



# MSYSA

501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization  
Member of the U.S. Soccer Federation & US Youth Soccer



Membership organization with more than:

- 240 member clubs and leagues
- 85,000 players
- 12,000 coaches, administrators, and volunteers
- 2,500 referees, assignors, mentors, and coaches

## Mission:

Grow the game of soccer by educating, promoting, supporting, and providing

## Vision:

Provide an opportunity for everyone to participate in the game of soccer

## Why:

We transform lives!



EDUCATE	PROMOTE	SUPPORT	PROVIDE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Coaching Education</li><li>*Communicate policies/procedures for programs, player registrations etc.</li><li>*Disseminate info from US Soccer, US Youth Soccer and East Region</li><li>*Parent Education</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Affiliate Club spotlights</li><li>*Affiliate Coach Spotlights</li><li>*Player Accomplishments</li><li>*Recognize players, teams, coaches, and referees with annual awards</li><li>*Highlight talented players that make National level pools and teams</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Issue Grants</li><li>*Award scholarships</li><li>*Club Leadership Webinar Series</li><li>*Offer technical and administrative expertise</li><li>*Provide resources to expand recreational opportunities</li><li>*Serve as a repository for ideas/ initiatives for benefit of all members</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Insurance coverage</li><li>*Issue Certificates of Insurance</li><li>*USYS Carding and rostering</li><li>PROGRAMMING<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*ODP</li><li>*Goalkeeper Training</li><li>*Presidents Cup</li><li>*State Cup</li><li>*Summer Soccer Academy</li></ul></li><li>*Strategic Partnership and Sponsorship benefit affiliates</li></ul>

# Summary

This strategic plan offers guidance, support, direction, and vision to the soccer community within Maryland and the District of Columbia. The Maryland State Youth Soccer Association leans on our pillars of educating, supporting, promoting, and providing, and our mission of growing the game to guide our numerous progressive initiatives designed to best serve our soccer community.

Our vision is to use the beautiful game of soccer to positively impact the lives of participants, to create opportunities, and to strengthen communities. We have created this roadmap to help us navigate to our common destination while providing confidence that we can move soccer forward and help to shape the future of the game we love for generations. We look forward to continuing to work together to achieve these important goals.

Sincerely,

Mark Cantor  
MSYSA President

Greg Smith, Ph.D.  
MSYSA Executive Director



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Photo: MSYSA Presidents Cup

# Definitions

- Health & Safety
  - Protecting physical and mental well-being via resources and initiatives
- Development
  - The process of growing, changing, or becoming more advanced
- Equitable Access
  - Striving to reduce known disparities



# | Constituents

- Club Leaders
- Coaches
- Government Officials
- League Leaders
- Parents/Players
- Partners/Sponsors
- Referees
- K-12 Schools
- Volunteers



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# Aspirations

- **Improve the lives of participants**
- **Create opportunities**
- **Strengthen communities**

*Photo: MSYSA Summer Soccer Academy*



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# Strategic Priorities

- **Engagement**
  - Deliver value and enhance experiences
- **Inspirational brand**
  - Improved value perception & stature
- **Participation growth**
  - Increased through partnerships & outreach





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*Photo: USSF Referees, Maryland*

# SWOT

## • Strengths

- Advocacy
- Education
- People
- Programs

## • Weaknesses

- Fundraising
- Jurisdiction
- Scarcity
- Personalities

## • Opportunities

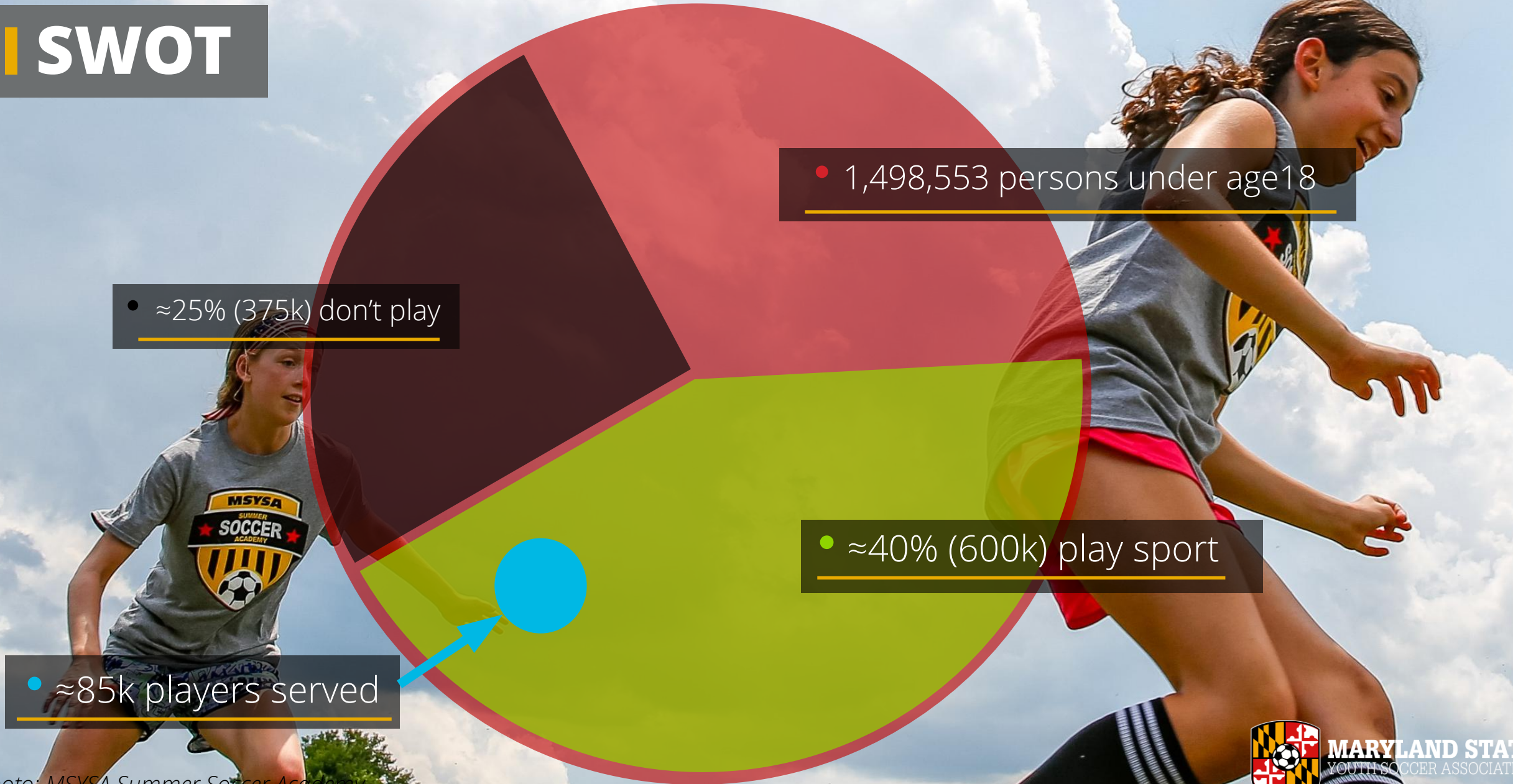
- Development/  
Partnerships
- Social Media
- School Engagement
- World Cup 2026+

## • Threats

- Competition
- Federal Laws
- Landscape  
Interconnectivity
- Pay-to-Play



# | SWOT



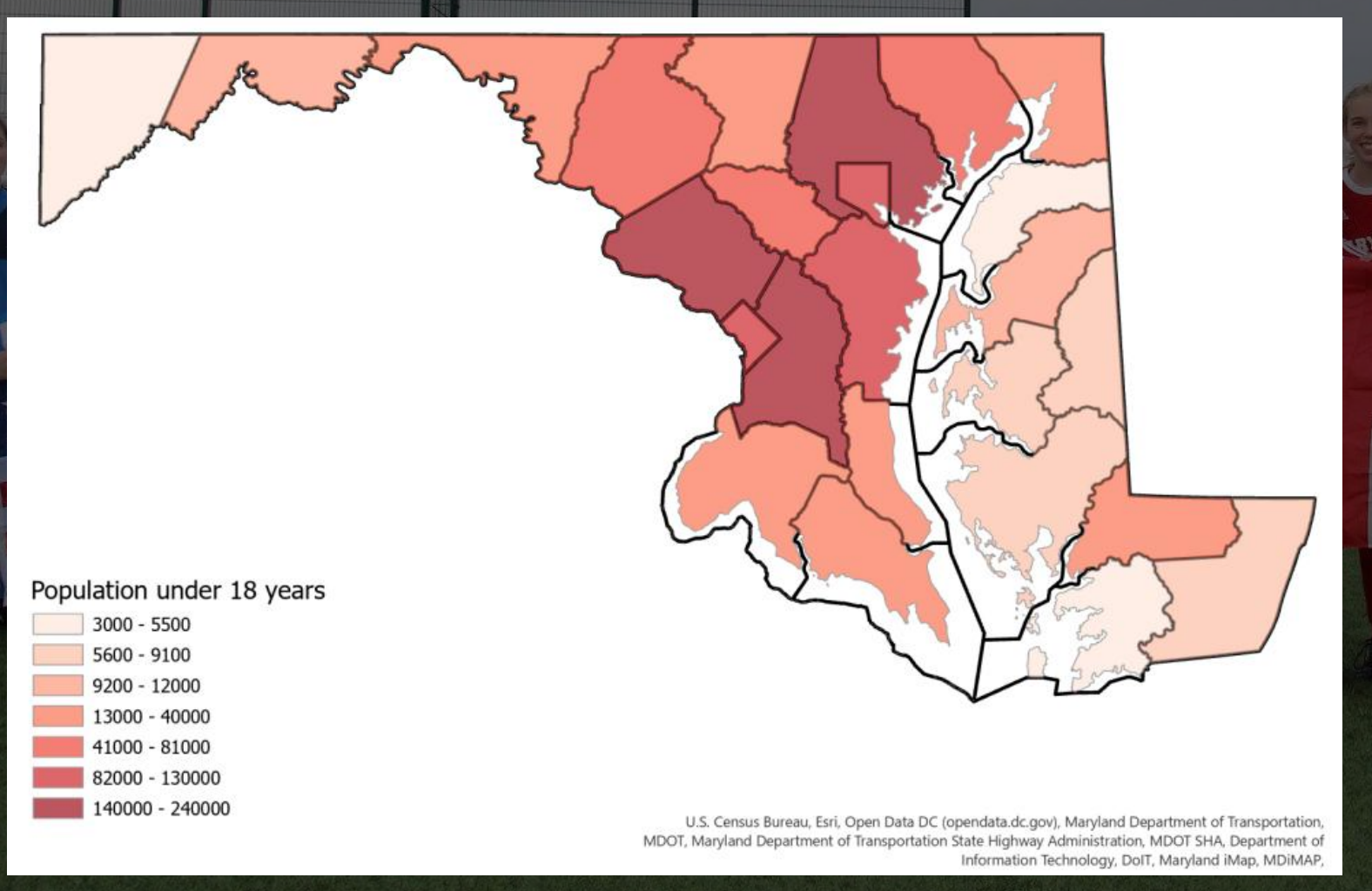
• 1,498,553 persons under age 18

• ≈25% (375k) don't play

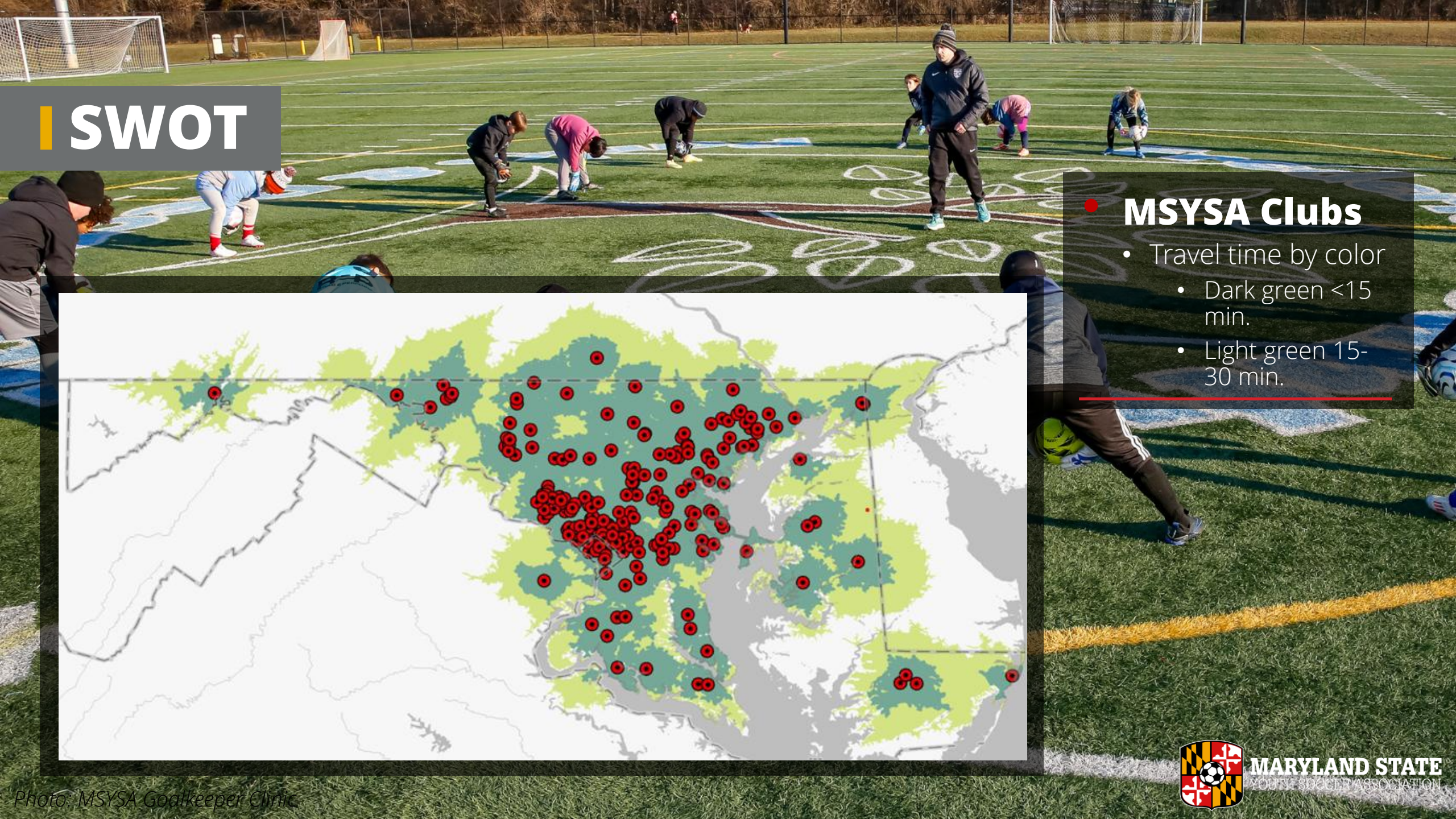
• ≈40% (600k) play sport

• ≈85k players served

# SWOT



# SWOT



- **MSYSA Clubs**
  - Travel time by color
    - Dark green <15 min.
    - Light green 15-30 min.

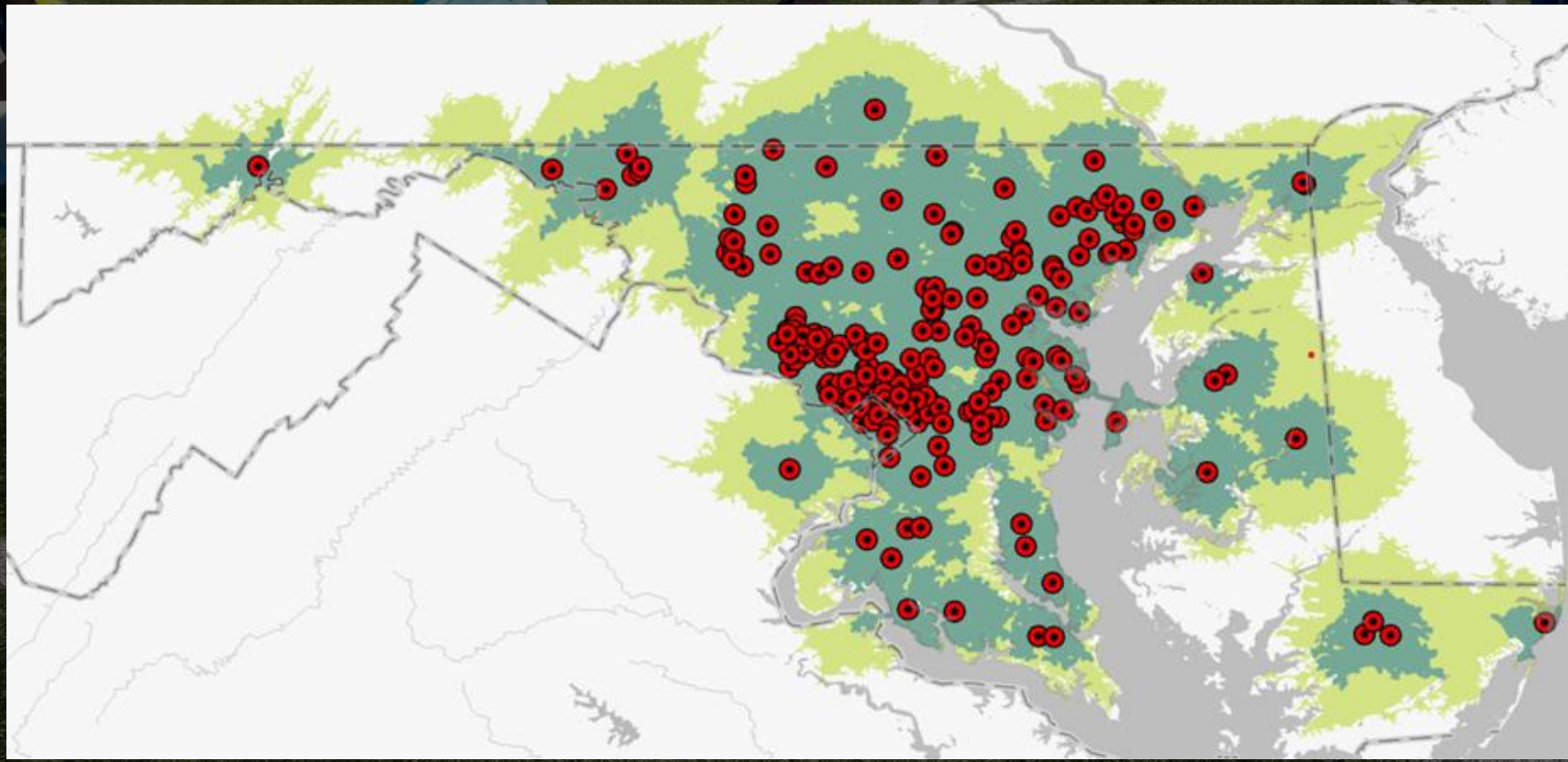


Photo: MSYSA Goalkeeper Clinic



COACHING  
EDUCATION



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Photo: MSYSA Coach for Community

# Principles & Tactics

- **Service leadership**
  - Best-in-class resources; achieve goals
- **Performance excellence**
  - Innovative solutions; inspire others
- **Collaborative partnerships**
  - Maximize resources; promote goodwill



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# Core Business Lanes

- Health & Safety
- Equitable Access
- Development



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# Goals & Strategies

- **Health & safety:**

- Goals

- Provide access to health and safety information
- Increase access to life saving equipment
- Enforce related policies and competition rules

- Strategies

- Increase the number of facilities with accessible AEDs and provide training
- Provide prehab and mental health educational resources
- Encourage safeguarding officers within partner programs

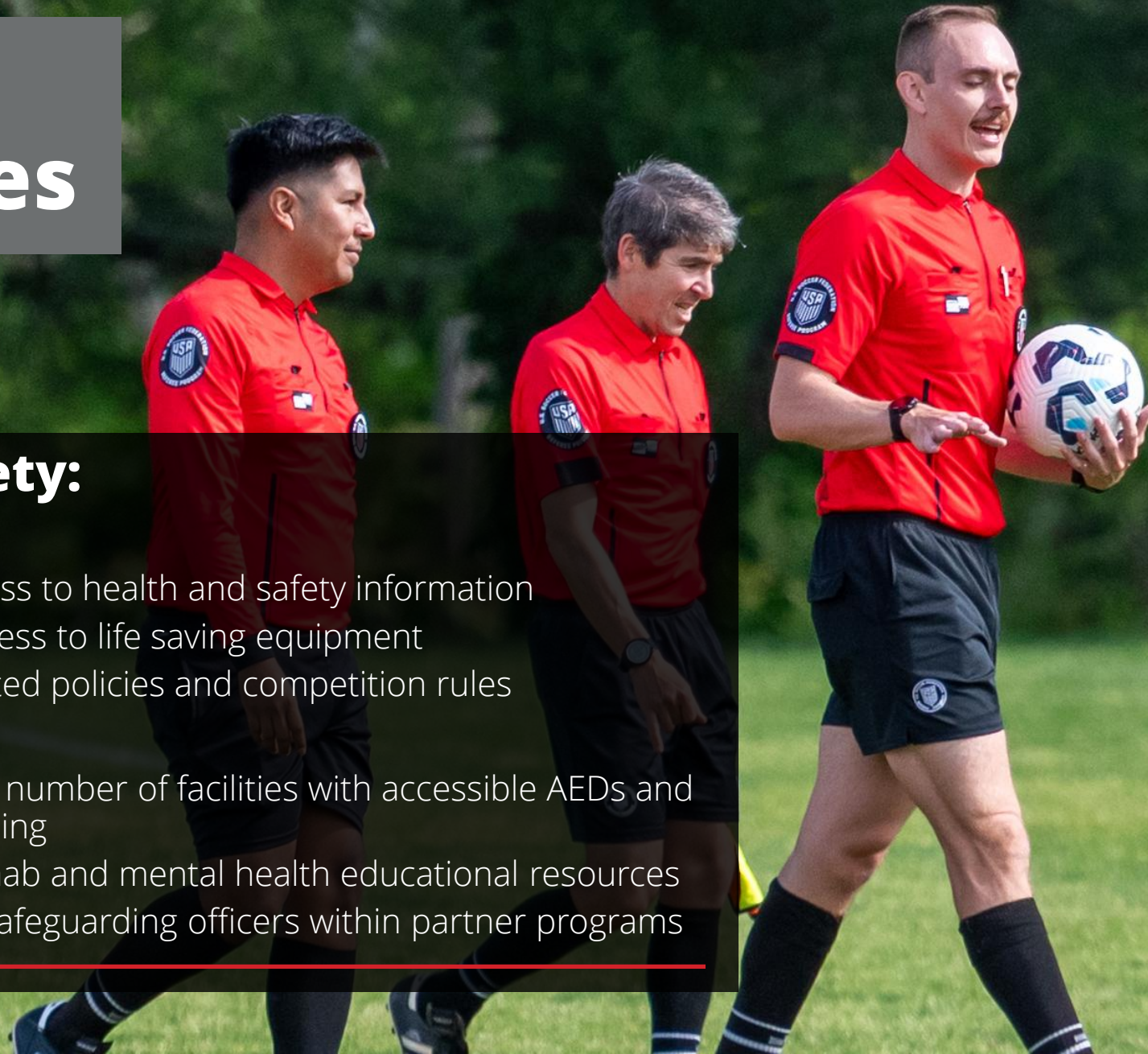


Photo: USSF Referees, Maryland



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# Goals & Strategies

- **Equitable access:**

- Goals

- Increase access to the game
- Partner with people and organizations to further this goal
- Expand the number of places to play

- Strategies

- Provide school-based programs in conjunction with the school day at low or no cost to participants
- Lead initiatives to establish more places to play in partnership with local government and other stakeholders



# Goals & Strategies

- **Development:**

- Goals

- Establish opportunities to learn and grow within more communities
- Provide a continuum of support that fosters an inclusive environment
- Maintain the ODP development pathway

- Strategies

- Promote more development opportunities closer to home
- Maintain grant funding for grassroots programming
- Facilitate TOPSoccer coaching education
- Offer a child development program
- Provide opportunities for high potential players





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*Photo: MSYSA Summer Soccer Academy*

# SMART Goals

- MSYSA uses SMART Goals to provide a sense of direction while helping to organize and reach our goals:
  - **S**pecific
  - **M**easurable
  - **A**ttainable
  - **R**esults-oriented
  - **T**ime-determined



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# Deliverables

- **By 2031:**

1. Secure 100's of AEDs
2. Provide 100% of participants with access to mental health and other resources
3. Provide 100k+ development opportunities
4. Establish 100+ new spaces to play
5. Invest \$100k in grants & scholarships annually



# Deliverables

## 1. Secure 100's of AEDs:

### • Overview:

- Many facilities do not have AEDs
- Collaborate with others to secure
- Provide CRP/AED training each year
- Maintain each AED each year



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# Deliverables

## 1. Secure 100's of AEDs:

- **Statistics:**

- ≈500 facilities in MD & DC do not currently have an accessible AED
- AEDs increase the chance of survival from 9% to as high as 60%

- **Key considerations:**

- Laws are requiring AEDs
- AEDs are expensive
- Partnerships are key
- Initial investment and ongoing maintenance costs

# Deliverables

## 2. Provide Access to Mental Health and other resources:

### • Overview:

- Many resources exist but are not currently accessible
- Partner with one or more companies to make available
- Promote that these resources are available and encourage utilization



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# Deliverables

## 2. Provide Access to Mental Health and other resources:

- **Statistics:**

- ≈20% of people in the United States suffer from mental illness
- Millions of athletes get injured each year, with children and teens being most affected

- **Key considerations:**

- Mental health affects participation
- Prehab has been shown to help keep people in the game longer
- Many great resources exist but are not readily available
- Connecting participants with these resources is paramount

# Deliverables

## 3. Provide 100k+ development opportunities:

### • Overview:

- All participants can benefit from additional development opportunities
- Bring opportunities into each community
- Market the opportunities and encourage participation





# Deliverables

## 3. Provide 100k+ development opportunities:

### • **Statistics:**

- Development enhances human potential, improves living standards, and fosters innovation
- All stakeholders (e.g., coaches, referees, players) can be positively affected by increased development opportunities

### • **Key considerations:**

- Development can look different based on the stakeholder
- Development must be accessible and relatively convenient
- Development is an ongoing process, and incremental progress improves long-term outcomes

# Deliverables

## 4. Establish 100+ new spaces to play:

### • Overview:

- To grow the game, there must be spaces to play
- Work collaboratively to repurpose or newly create additional spaces
- Market that the spaces are available and encourage utilization



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# Deliverables

## 4. Establish 100+ new spaces to play:

- **Statistics:**

- Over 40,000 nonprofit organizations are registered in Maryland
- More than 600,000 small businesses exist in Maryland

- **Key considerations:**

- Grassroot participation must be convenient (i.e., local)
- Spaces to play must be safe
- Community groups not currently known for providing sport programs may be key (e.g., Lions Clubs)

# Deliverables

## 5. Invest \$100k in scholarships and grants annually:

### • Overview:

- Cost remains a barrier to participation
  - Helping to reduce this barrier will help to further grow the game
- Collaborate to make more funds available
- Educate participants and encourage them to apply for Scholarships and Grants



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# Deliverables

## 5. Invest \$100k in scholarships and grants annually:

### • **Statistics:**

- 6.7M residents in MD (2.4M households) & DC (324k households)
- 39% of households in MD live below the ALICE threshold
- 33% of households in DC live below the ALICE threshold

### • **Thoughts:**

- Underserved and under resourced communities exist
- Soccer improves lives
- Participation may improve local communities and society as a whole
- This is intertwined with our mission



Photo: MSYSA State Cup



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# Roadmap

## 2030

- Secure 75 AEDs
- Provide 30k development Opportunities
- Establish 30 new places to play
- Offer \$100k in Scholarships & Grants

## 2029

- Secure 65 AEDs
- Provide 25k development Opportunities
- Establish 25 new places to play
- Offer \$90k in Scholarships & Grants

## 2028

- Secure 50 AEDs
- Provide 20k development Opportunities
- Establish 20 new places to play
- Offer \$80k in Scholarships & Grants

## 2027

- Secure 35 AEDs
- Provide 15k development Opportunities
- Establish 15 new places to play
- Offer \$70k in Scholarships & Grants

## 2026

- Secure 25 AEDs
- Provide 10k development Opportunities
- Establish 10 new places to play
- Offer \$60k in Scholarships & Grants



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