



# NATIONAL PAL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ATHLETIC/ACTIVITIES LEAGUES, INC.

## Spring 2024 Newsletter

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Kids, Cops & Communities



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## Table of Contents

*A Note from National PAL  
Chair of the Board* .....2

*Dallas PAL: Meet Our PAL  
Boxer, the 2023 USA Boxing  
National Champion*.....3

*Moorhead PAL: Building  
Relationships Through  
Hockey*.....4

*Willard PAL: Camp Character  
in Missouri*.....5

*Torrington PAL: Stuff-a-Bus*.....6

*Detroit PAL: Celebrating 55  
Years of Service*.....7

*City of Flint PAL: Impactful  
Initiatives*.....8

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## A Note from National PAL Chair of the Board

To our partners, donors, Chapters, and friends,

On a recent trip to the Region 6 conference in Williamsburg, Virginia, I had the opportunity to observe youth from several different states and Chapters (Henrico, Hampton Roads, VA, Howell, Monmouth Ocean, NJ, DMV Annapolis, and Baltimore, MD) interact with one another as if they were lifelong friends. It was awesome and refreshing to see them accept one another for who they are.

While at the conference, I learned that Hampton Roads PAL would be traveling with ten male youth members to Paris, France, on an educational and cultural trip.

I spoke with the PAL Director Wayne Gomes (Former MLB Player), who was extremely excited about the opportunity he was about to embark on with these young men. As a former MLB player, Wayne stated that he was afforded the opportunity to see the world, and now he had the opportunity to provide these young men with a chance, just as someone had given him a chance when he was younger. "Now, these young men would get a similar chance to experience Paris. Hopefully, they will see what this world has to offer and strive to achieve more!"

Fortunately, I have had the opportunity to visit many PAL chapters, and I am extremely proud of the work our Chapters are doing to expose the youth we serve to all the world has to offer! I will be sure to highlight Chapters in our coming newsletters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Hill'.

**Sgt. Chris Hill**  
*Chair of the Board*  
National PAL

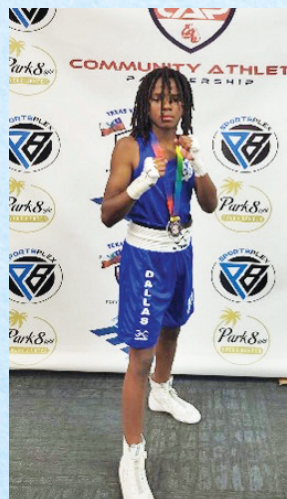


# Dallas PAL: Meet Our PAL Boxer, the 2023 USA Boxing National Champion

National PAL is thrilled to shine a spotlight on one of our outstanding athletes, **Christopher Brown Jr.**, who, at the age of 12, has already achieved remarkable success in the world of boxing. Chris holds the prestigious title of the **2023 USA Boxing National Champion** in the 90 lb. Bantamweight category, a testament to his exceptional talent and dedication. Since stepping into the ring at the age of 9, Chris has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to his craft, tirelessly honing his skills and pushing himself to new heights. His journey to becoming a national champion has been marked by countless hours of training, grueling workouts, and unwavering determination.



Despite his young age, Chris exemplifies the true spirit of a champion. He understands that success in boxing – and in life – is not achieved overnight, but through persistence, discipline, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. Whether it's early morning runs, countless rounds of sparring, or meticulous attention to technique, he approaches every aspect of his training with unparalleled focus and intensity. But Chris' journey is far from over. Instead of resting on his laurels, he continues to push himself to new limits, constantly seeking ways to improve and evolve as a boxer. With each training session and every bout, he strives to refine his skills, strengthen his resolve, and cement his legacy as one of the sport's brightest stars.



As he continues to prepare for the challenges that lie ahead, **Dallas Police Athletic/Activities League (PAL)** stands behind him with unwavering support and admiration for his incredible accomplishments. He is not just a champion in the ring but a role model for aspiring athletes everywhere, proving that with hard work, dedication, and a never-say-die attitude, anything is possible. Please join us in congratulating Christopher Brown Jr. on his remarkable achievements and wishing him continued success in his boxing journey.



# Moorhead PAL: Building Relationships Through Hockey

In Northern Minnesota, one of the most effective ways to build relationships with kids is on the ice!

Eighteen years ago, officers from the **Moorhead Police Department** started playing a charity game against local youth players to create positive relationships and promote positive community outreach. This event spurred the creation of their PAL program and started a journey for the past five years to continue building on those core values.



In February 2024, the local officers lost yet again to the kids' team, making it eighteen straight losses for the Cops. Following each game, the Cops and Kids get together at the rink for food and fun, spending time together in a positive setting.



Beginning in 2021, officers began playing sled hockey against area kids from Hope, Incorporated, another non-profit that helps children with disabilities play sports. They play them annually and accept the lesson in humility as kids skate circles around them.

Between the two annual events since 2007, they have played against over 400 kids, including several college hockey and one current NHL player. Three former players in these games have also gone on to get hired by the police department, demonstrating that these relationships do matter and can have a lasting impact!



# Willard PAL: Camp Character in Missouri

**Willard PAL** was incorporated in April of 2009 in Missouri as a “Boxing Only” PAL program. Hundreds of kids graduated our 8-week FUNDamentals course over the years but eventually started complaining about the Chapter “only offering boxing.” Youth wished to continue interacting with officers and wanted additional opportunities to do so.

Officers started toying with the creation of an outdoor activities area on some city-owned properties around 2017 and discovered that there was a lot of community support. Donations started coming in from families, businesses, and even some corporations. The Chapter decided to compete for a \$100,000 grant from Kubota, and received a consolation prize that jump-started their Camp Character program and enabled them to put in some (two) state-sanctioned ziplines.

One officer explained, “I’ve taught DARE for 32 years and have 10 hours of contact with all the fifth-grade students that pass through our Willard Intermediate North School. Having that annual contact put us in an excellent position to have a popular PAL program.”





# Torrington PAL: Stuff-a-Bus

**Torrington PAL** offers many opportunities for youth, such as building connections and trust with law enforcement, field trips, cooking lessons, and community service events. The favorite experience among the group so far has been the annual Torrington PAL Stuff-a-Bus event. Students were excited to volunteer their time by collecting toys for those in need during the holiday season.

Once a month, the Chapter has a program called Cafe Yum, in which a nutritionist assists participants with cooking a healthy recipe. So far, youth have made oatmeal cookies, pizzas, and bagels, which were a big hit!

Torrington PAL is especially excited about National PAL's Youth Mentoring Summit over the summer and look forward to meeting other PAL youth from other Chapters across the country.





# Detroit PAL: Celebrating 55 Years of Service

This year, **Detroit PAL** is celebrating its 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Over the years, an estimated 350,000 participants have been served through the Chapter's programming. The organization offers quality sports and youth enrichment programs to over 9,000 youth annually. PAL programming primarily serves vulnerable, under-served Detroit youth with constructive after-school activities.

Detroit PAL uses a sport sampling model, providing the youth they serve with opportunities to participate in a wide variety of 12 different sports. One such program is hockey. Historically, hockey lacks diversity and inclusion. A 2022 study found that only 7% of the league is made up of racial minorities. Detroit PAL strives to make the game accessible for all. They have found that interest in hockey is high in the city of Detroit, but high costs and lack of accessibility make it difficult for youth to participate. Through support from sponsors, Detroit PAL has been able to keep the cost low for participants.

Since 2021, when Detroit PAL revived the hockey program for the first time since the 1990s, they have served 152 youth ages 4-10 in their Learn to Skate and Learn to Play hockey programs. With great success thus far, in the spring of 2024, they are introducing a spring hockey league. This will allow youth more opportunities to learn to skate and play and to begin competing in scrimmages as their skills continue to develop. Detroit PAL is excited to continue to grow their hockey program and break barriers to make hockey more accessible to all.



**DETROIT PAL ALUMS ON 2023 NFL ROSTERS**

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>DEL'SHAWN PHILLIPS</b><br>BALTIMORE RAVENS   OL<br>High School: Cass Technical<br>PAL Team: North Detroit Jets             | <b>CAMERON LEWIS</b><br>BUFFALO BILLS   CB<br>High School: Voyageur College Prep<br>PAL Team: NW Cougars                      | <b>KHALID KAREEM</b><br>CHICAGO BEARS   DE<br>High School: Harrison<br>PAL Team: Westside Cubs                           |
| <b>CHAUUNCEY GOLSTON</b><br>DALLAS COWBOYS   DT<br>High School: East English Village<br>PAL Team: West 7 Bears                | <b>JOURDAN LEWIS</b><br>DALLAS COWBOYS   CB<br>High School: Cass Technical<br>PAL Team: Westside Cubs                         | <b>TAVIERRE THOMAS</b><br>HOUSTON TEXANS   CB<br>High School: Allen Academy<br>PAL Team: Westside Cubs                   |
| <b>ALARIC JACKSON</b><br>LOS ANGELES RAMS   T<br>High School: Renaissance<br>PAL Team: West 7 Bears                           | <b>DESJUAN JOHNSON</b><br>LOS ANGELES RAMS   DT<br>High School: East English Village<br>PAL Team: Detroit Titans              | <b>MICHAEL ONWENU</b><br>NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS   G<br>High School: Cass Technical<br>PAL Team: Dragons                    |
| <b>AHMAD GARDNER</b><br>NEW YORK JETS   CB<br>High School: Martin Luther King<br>PAL Team: Memphis Spartans/Tigers            | <b>AVONTE MADDOX</b><br>PHILADELPHIA EAGLES   CB<br>High School: Martin Luther King<br>PAL Sports: Pils Baseball @ Basketball | <b>DESMOND KING</b><br>PITTSBURGH STEELERS   CB<br>High School: East English Village<br>PAL Team: Westside Cubs/Steelers |
| <b>JAYLON MOORE</b><br>SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS   T<br>High School: Voyageur College Prep<br>PAL Sports: PAL Basketball            | <b>AMBRY THOMAS</b><br>SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS   CB<br>High School: Martin Luther King<br>PAL Team: Westside Broncos              | <b>SAMUEL WOMACK</b><br>SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS   CB<br>High School: East English Village<br>PAL Sports: PAL Basketball      |
| <b>SEAN MURPHY-BUNTING</b><br>TENNESSEE TITANS   CB<br>High School: Chipewawa Valley<br>PAL Sports: PAL Baseball @ Basketball | <b>TROY HAIRSTON III</b><br>HOUSTON TEXANS   FB<br>High School: East English Village<br>PAL Team: NW Cougars                  | <b>BRANDON GRAHAM</b><br>PHILADELPHIA EAGLES   DE<br>High School: Crockett Tech<br>PAL Team: Detroit Giants              |

In addition to recreational sports, Detroit PAL partners directly with schools as a sports league convener of 62+ schools across the Metro-Detroit area. The school model recently saw growth in Boys Basketball, Girls Volleyball, and School Cheer. Lastly, the 2024 NFL Draft is coming to Detroit, and Detroit PAL was welcomed as part of the official Draft footprint! The Corner Ballpark is the site for both official Draft events and events hosted by PAL. Among all the momentum, they learned that there are 17 current NFL Athletes who are PAL Alumni. Their current team, the PAL Team, and the high school they attended as youth are highlighted.

Detroit PAL is dedicated to enriching the lives of Detroit children. By creating safe spaces for children to play and grow, they help them develop the self-confidence they need to go far in life. National PAL is excited about the organization's growth and opportunities in the year to come!



# City of Flint PAL: Impactful Initiatives

Initiatives made possible by the **City of Flint PAL** have not only helped foster positive interactions between law enforcement and local communities but have also made a significant difference in the lives of many individuals.

One such event is the “Creating Champions Football Clinic,” where the renowned 2009 Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram II collaborated with the City of Flint PAL to provide a camp experience for youth. This initiative focused on football skills and emphasized the importance of relationship building. Participants were given the opportunity to receive mentorship from high school and collegiate student-athletes, along with former NFL players.



Additionally, the PAL’s “Cooking with a Chef” program was instrumental in educating children about nutrition and the impact of food choices on overall well-being. By engaging with professional chefs and creating simple yet delicious meals, kids learned valuable culinary skills that could be utilized in their daily lives. This initiative promoted healthy eating habits and encouraged creativity in the kitchen.

The City of Flint PAL Holiday Toy Giveaway was is another remarkable event that deserves recognition. By serving over 300 families annually, this initiative exemplifies generosity and kindness, contributing to the well-being of the community. Such acts of goodwill brighten the holidays and foster a sense of togetherness and support among community members.

Lastly, the “Flint Water Warriors Swimming Lessons for Kids” program is a six-week program that began this March 2024 and is a commendable effort aimed at providing free swim skills and water survival instruction to underserved populations. With a focus on water safety and skill development, this initiative addresses a critical need while ensuring that children have the necessary tools to stay safe in aquatic environments.

These initiatives serve as shining examples of the positive impact of community engagement. By promoting inclusivity, education, and well-being, the City of Flint PAL has made a tangible difference in the lives of many by creating meaningful opportunities for youth to connect with law enforcement. City of Flint PAL continues to serve in a community that is long overdue for opportunities for youth, who are still coping with the effects of being exposed to lead from the Flint Water Crisis, to have opportunities to succeed despite what they have been through.



## NATIONAL PAL

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