

Annual Report 2026 ↗



Columbus, OH

THE S.O.U.L. FOUNDATION

Too many of our communities face a heartbreaking truth: young people are growing up without access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive. When educational gaps widen, safe spaces disappear, and guidance is absent, the consequences reach far beyond the individual child—they affect the future of the entire community. The safety, stability, and success of our youth must become a shared responsibility.

The S.O.U.L. Foundation (Shaping Our Urban Leaders) was born out of this urgent need. In 1998, a group of concerned citizens came together with a common conviction: that every child deserves the chance to succeed, regardless of their circumstances. They saw the gaps—in education, in wellness, in opportunity—and committed to closing them.

Through targeted programs in education, wellness, and athletics, the S.O.U.L. Foundation empowers young people to build character, self-discipline, and integrity. These are not just after-school activities—they are lifelines. Our work provides more than skills; it offers belonging, belief, and a path forward.

In a world where too many children are left behind, S.O.U.L. steps in to say: NOT in our community.





Our Impact[↗]

In 2026, The S.O.U.L. Foundation reached more than **12,653 YOUTH**—on golf courses, in schools, and through trusted community partners.

The S.O.U.L. Foundation continued to meet young people where they are—through education, wellness, athletics, leadership development, and community-centered initiative. Our work reflects a growing commitment to removing barriers, expanding access, and creating experiences that help young people see themselves in new spaces and possibilities.

Our innovative “Center on the Move” model brings programming, mentorship, and resources directly into the communities where young people live, learn, and play. By embedding our work in schools, recreation centers, golf courses, and neighborhoods across Central Ohio, we eliminate barriers to access and create more opportunities for young people to engage, grow, and thrive.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Numbers only tell part of the story.

Behind every program, activity, lesson, and event are the people who make the work possible—mentors, volunteers, community partners, families, and advocates showing up to support, guide, and uplift the next generation.

Because transformation happens through relationships.

When we invest in young people, we don’t just create programs.

WE CREATE ACCESS.

WE CREATE OPPORTUNITY.

WE CREATE POSSIBILITY.

WE DON’T JUST MEET YOUTH WHERE THEY ARE.

WE HELP THEM SEE WHERE THEY CAN GO.

WHO WE SERVE

12,653

Total young adults
and children
impacted in 2026.

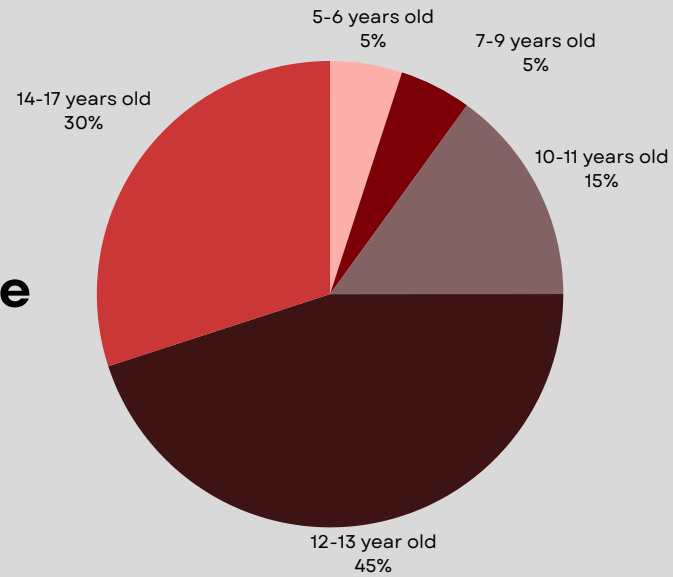
32

Schools across
Central Ohio.

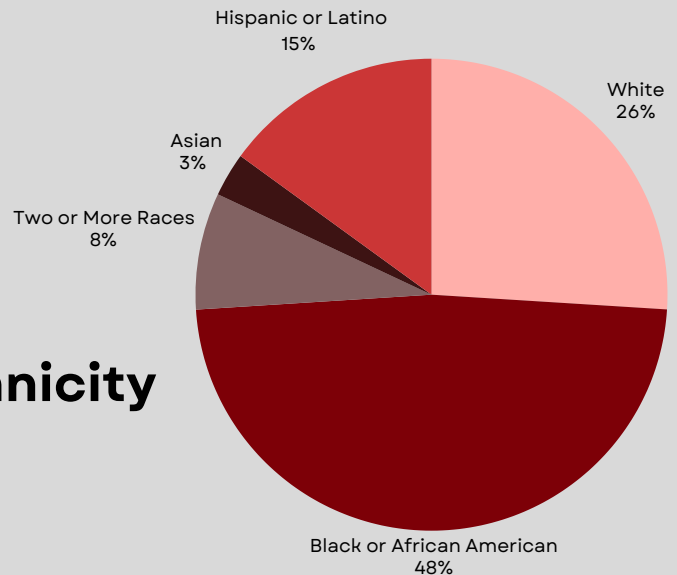
10+

Community
partners.

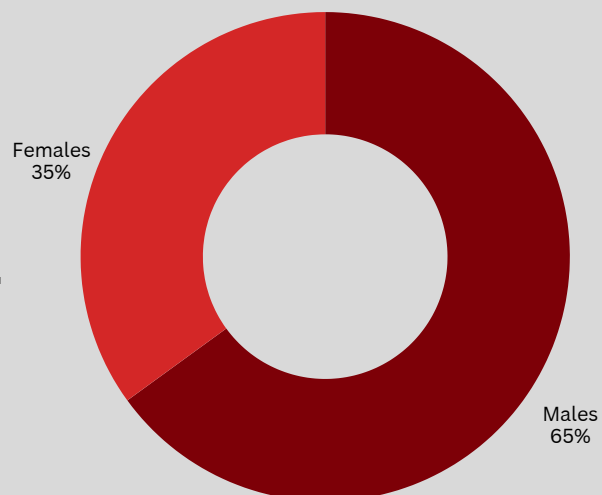
Age



Ethnicity



Gender



Chica Golf Club

**Creating Access. Building Confidence
Expanding Possibility.**

Chica Golf Club is helping create a more welcoming and accessible entry point into the game of golf for girls and women. Through free golf clinics led by LPGA instructors, participants are given the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of the game while receiving professional instruction in an encouraging environment.

For many, access is the first step. By eliminating the cost of participation, Chica Golf Club creates an opportunity for girls and women to experience golf, develop new skills, and build confidence on the course. The clinics are designed to make the game approachable while introducing participants to an environment where they can learn, ask questions, challenge themselves, and grow.

The impact extends beyond learning how to swing a club. Golf can create opportunities for connection, mentorship, discipline, and personal development.

Chica Golf Club represents S.O.U.L. Foundation's continued commitment to breaking down barriers to

participation and expanding access to spaces where young people and women can see themselves belonging and succeeding.



Women & Girls



Summer Experience at Watkins

In 2026, S.O.U.L. Foundation celebrated the fourth year of providing the Health Pathway at Watkins Elementary through Columbus City Schools' Summer Experience.

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The program creates an opportunity for students to continue learning during the summer through experiences connected to health and wellness. Rather than approaching summer learning as simply an extension of the traditional classroom, S.O.U.L. creates an environment where students can participate, explore, move, interact, and learn through engaging activities.



Four Years ↗

The Health Pathway reflects S.O.U.L.'s belief that education and wellness are deeply connected. Young people benefit when they have opportunities to understand their health, engage in positive activities, and explore areas of knowledge that may influence their interests and future goals.



Four years of continued partnership also represents something bigger: consistency matters. By returning to Watkins Elementary year after year, S.O.U.L. has been able to build continuity and strengthen its relationship with the students and school community.

The fourth year of the Health Pathway is another example of S.O.U.L.'s commitment to meeting young people where they are and creating meaningful learning experiences that support the development of the whole child.





S.O.U.L. Foundation

The Y-Cup

**Three YMCA Locations. One Cup.
One Community.**

The Y-Cup brought the energy and excitement of Olympic-style competition to Central Ohio, connecting young people from three YMCA locations for a shared experience centered on athletics, teamwork, competition, and community.

Designed as a series of Olympic-style games, the Y-Cup gave participants the chance to step outside of their everyday routines and compete alongside and against other young people in a fun and energetic environment. The event encouraged participants to move, work together, support their teammates, and experience the excitement that comes with friendly competition.



BELIEF & VALUE

The event also reflects S.O.U.L. Foundation's belief that athletics can be a powerful tool for youth development. Competition can teach young people how to communicate, collaborate, handle challenges, celebrate others, and keep showing up.

The Y-Cup transformed a day of games into a shared community experience—and created a foundation for bringing young people together through movement, connection, and healthy competition.



College Dorm Kit Initiative

Helping Students Begin College Prepared

For a student preparing to leave home and begin college, the transition can be exciting—but it can also come with financial challenges. The cost of getting ready for a dorm room can quickly add up, creating another barrier for families already navigating the expense of higher education.

Through the College Dorm Kit Initiative, S.O.U.L. Foundation provided free dorm-room essentials to first-year Columbus City Schools students who are Pell Grant eligible.

The initiative focuses on a simple but meaningful idea: students should be able to begin their college journey with the essentials they need to feel prepared. By providing dorm-room necessities, S.O.U.L. helped ease one portion of the financial burden associated with the transition from high school to college.

More importantly, the initiative extends S.O.U.L.'s investment in young people beyond graduation. The organization's commitment does not stop when a student leaves the classroom—it continues into the next chapter of their educational journey.

The College Dorm Kit Initiative is an investment in readiness, confidence, and opportunity. It sends students a clear message as they begin college: your future matters, your education matters, and your community is invested in seeing you succeed.

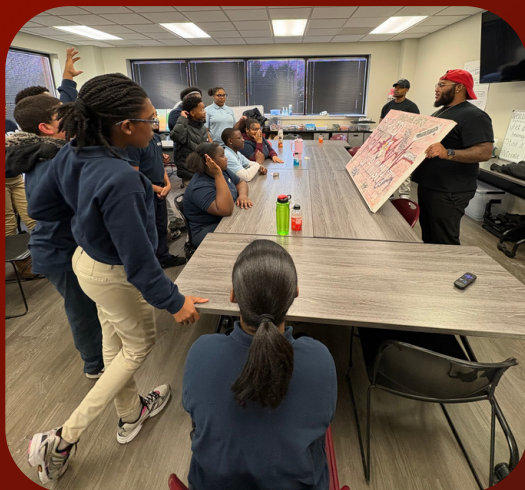
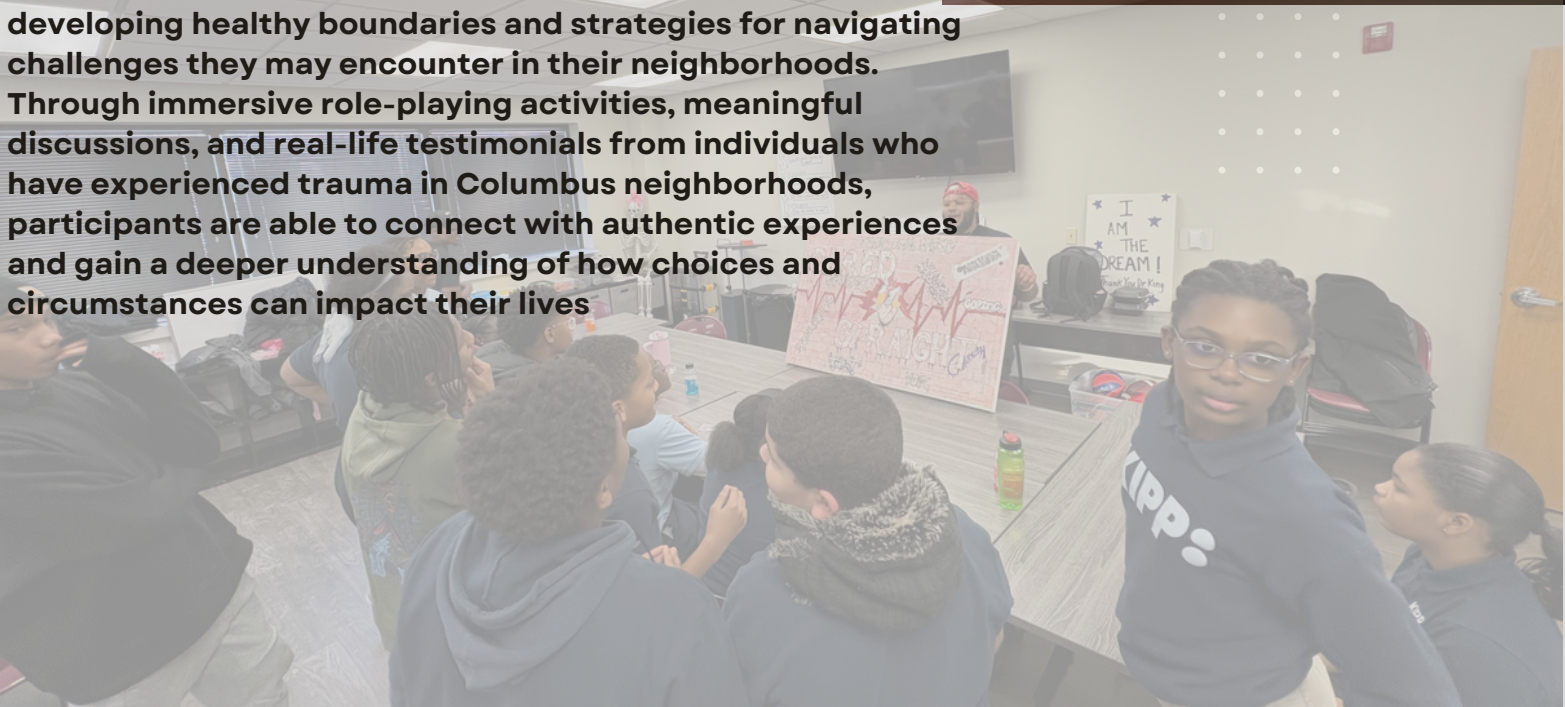


Cared Straight

Real Care. Real Direction. Real Impact.

Cared Straight focuses on equipping young people with practical coping skills, self-awareness, and the knowledge needed to make safe and informed decisions in their communities. The program provides youth with opportunities to learn from real-life situations while developing healthy boundaries and strategies for navigating challenges they may encounter in their neighborhoods. Through immersive role-playing activities, meaningful discussions, and real-life testimonials from individuals who have experienced trauma in Columbus neighborhoods, participants are able to connect with authentic experiences and gain a deeper understanding of how choices and circumstances can impact their lives.


shaping our urban leaders



The S.O.U.L. Foundation believes that meaningful change begins with providing young people with honest conversations, positive guidance, and opportunities to learn from real experiences. Cared Straight reflects this belief by creating a space where youth can feel heard, challenged, and empowered to make healthier decisions. Through this approach, the program seeks to strengthen confidence, encourage personal responsibility, and help young people recognize their ability to positively influence themselves, their families, and their communities.



S.O.U.L. Foundation

Leadership Through Golf

Opening Doors Through Golf

For seven years, S.O.U.L. Foundation's Leadership Through Golf program has used the game of golf as a vehicle for much more than athletic development. The program was created to expand access to a sport that has historically been less accessible to underserved and marginalized students and families, while using golf as a pathway to develop leadership, confidence, community engagement, career exploration, and self-efficacy.

Now entering its seventh year, the program represents an enduring commitment to giving young people opportunities to learn, grow, and discover possibilities beyond their immediate environment. Participants are introduced to a sport that can connect them with new experiences, relationships, mentors, and networks while helping them develop skills that extend far beyond the golf course.



What makes Leadership Through Golf especially meaningful is the intentional connection between access and opportunity. S.O.U.L. is not simply introducing young people to golf—it is creating pathways for them to develop confidence, discover interests, strengthen leadership skills, and begin imagining themselves in new spaces.

Seven years later, Leadership Through Golf continues to demonstrate what can happen when young people are given access to experiences that challenge expectations and expand their vision for what is possible.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - Aurelius Scott

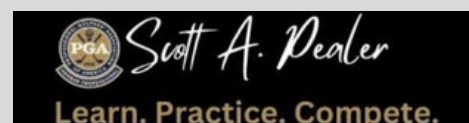
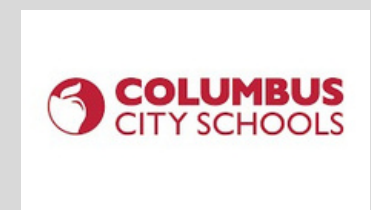
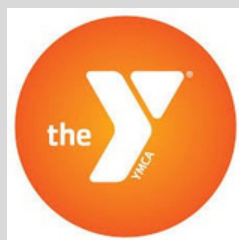


My name is Aurelius Scott, and I am currently finishing my associate degree at Columbus State Community College, where I am studying Sports Exercise Science, Recreation and Administration. Throughout my time with the SOUL FOUNDATION, I have gained valuable knowledge and experiences that have prepared me for my future in the sports and recreation field. After completing my associate degree, I plan to transfer to The Ohio State University to continue my education and work toward my long-term career goals of becoming an athletic director. I am proud of how far I have come and excited to keep growing academically, professionally, and personally as I take the next step in my journey.

OUR PARTNERS

The S.O.U.L. Foundation would not be where it is today without the unwavering support of our partners and donors. Their generosity has been instrumental in helping us bring life-changing programs to kids and teens across Central Ohio—from golf courses and classrooms to community centers and beyond.

We are deeply grateful for every partner who believes in the power of showing up and investing in our next generation.



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Thank You!