The Grassroot Project uses the power of sports and the platform of athlete role models to educate, inspire, and mobilize youth to live healthy lives.
Hello TGP Family!

I write this letter at the same time as having to say goodbye to another cohort of our graduating student-athletes. For those who have known TGP since the beginning, you know that our college athletes are the key to the impact we are having on DC teens. And for those who know me personally, you know how passionate I am about supporting the personal and professional development of our NCAA student-athletes. When athletes are well-trained and well-supported to be facilitators of our programs, they make an indelible mark on the health education environment of DC schools. And when athletes find their passion for social justice through their work with TGP, our long-term impact is amplified beyond imagination. Many of our athletes go on to work in the Peace Corps, Teach for America, AmeriCorps, and in countless other public service positions.

The athletes that are graduating this year have reinforced a youth-led and student-led culture in TGP. They’ve been instrumental in recruiting their peers to join TGP and training them in our curriculum, and they’ve made it possible for us to provide targeted youth development programs in DC schools that otherwise would not have been able to offer this type of programming.

As we look ahead, we are engaging our leadership team, our student-athlete volunteers, and our teenagers, their parents, and their teachers in the process of ramping up our work. We have already begun the development of a seven-week nutrition & physical health curriculum, and we aim to pilot this curriculum in the coming year. We have also begun the development of a parent-focused workshop that will supplement our school-based programs. Parents of our students have requested that we engage them in TGP, and I hope that our new parent workshops will improve parent-child communication about important health issues. I’m excited to keep you posted on all that the upcoming year has in store for us. Thank you for your interest in our work and for supporting us in countless ways over the years!

Tyler Spencer

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### The Year in Review

- **Fall 2015** | We implemented TGP programs in 18 classrooms, reaching more than 300 students.
- **April 2016** | Ryan Pettengill testified at the oversight committee for DCPS at their budget meeting about the importance of health education. The budget passed, allowing health education in DCPS to begin in grade 3, rather than grade 6.
- **Spring 2016** | We implemented TGP programs in 20 classrooms reaching 338 students.
- **July 2016** | We hired new GHC fellows and a new ED (over 100 applications were received!).
- **Summer and Fall 2016** | We started work on a pilot program with the football squad at Barry Farms Recreation Center. The football team participated in our program and gave us key feedback that will be used in the creation of future programs.
- **Summer 2016** | We launched Grassroots Girls, a new curriculum that focus on the needs of young woman and girls in DC. We also updated our mixed gender curriculum to include additional sexual health topics.
- **September 2016** | We trained 120 varsity students-athletes from four DC universities to be facilitators of our new program.
- **Fall 2016** | Piloted Grassroots Girls.
I liked how we learned a lot in one day, and I didn’t think I’d be comfortable talking about the things that we learned about, and I liked how I did feel comfortable talking about it.

Student at Meridian Public Charter School
Rates of HIV infection in DC have been declining since 2009. Grassroot has only been growing.

African-Americans account for majority of people living with HIV in DC.

3.2% of black residents are living with HIV.

The highest burden of disease is among BLACK MALES (4.6%).

BLACK HETEROSEXUAL WOMEN are the second highest demographic of new HIV infections in Washington, DC (1 in 5).

There has been a 73% in number of HIV cases diagnosed and reported in the district from 2007-2016.

Source: HAHSTA Annual Report 2016, DC Department of Health
Neighborhood Action

Schools In Which Grassroot Has Operated
by DC Ward

Paul Public Charter School
Ideal Academy Public Charter School
LaSalle Backus Education Campus
Raymond Education Campus
The William E. Doar, Jr. Public Charter School for the Performing Arts
Penny Street Public Charter School
Mary McLeod Bethune Academy
Noyes Education Campus
McKinley Middle School
KIPP Will Academy
Two Rivers Public Charter School
Wheatley Education Campus
Browne Education Campus
Kelley Miller Middle School
Clubhouse 14 Boys and Girls Club
Seed Public Charter School
Sousa Middle School
Eliot-Hine Middle School
Stuart Hobson Middle School
Orr Elementary School
Stanton Elementary School
Howard Road Academy
Washington School for Girls
FBR @ the ARC
KIPP AIM Academy
Johnson Middle School
M.C. Terrell/McGogney Elementary School
Achievement Preparatory Academy
King Elementary School
Leckie Elementary School

Kramer Middle School

Seed Public Charter School

Eliot-Hine Middle School
What I like about Grassroot is that they teach us stuff that we didn’t know until they came here.

Damirea Chase
SEED School

What I learned from Grassroots is that you can control your body and when you drop the ball in life, pick it up and bounce back.

Lyanna Smith
SEED School

I learned that it’s best to be safe and get tested frequently so that you stay safe.

Student From
Excel Public Charter School

I learned that abstinence is the best type of protection from sexual transmitted infections and diseases.

Student From
Excel Public Charter School
"I joined TGP because I was looking to make an impact in the greater DC community. As an athlete it was tough to find opportunities to serve others that allowed me to balance my training and competition schedules. I loved my time with TGP. TGP connected me to students, parents, and administrators from around DC. These connections made me feel like part of the fabric of the our nation's capital. My favorite aspect of the programming is how simple games are used to break down complex information in an easily understandable and engaging way. As a former teacher, I appreciate this even more now! My time with TGP has greatly informed the trajectory of my life since graduating in 2012. I taught 6th grade World Cultures in Houston, TX with Teach For America and then left the classroom to work in educational fundraising. While with TGP, I realized that education and the dissemination of knowledge from one person to another is the key to our collective future and success. I feel an immense sense of responsibility to help as many individuals as possible receive an excellent education. Currently, I am the Director of Individual Giving for Teach For America-Houston. I am so grateful for my time with TGP, it has influenced my worldview and taught me lessons I will never forget."

"TGP has been the most inspiring and influential experience of my college career at GW. The organization, staff and student-athlete coaches taught me that everyone has the ability to create change, even at a young age. Seeing how DC youth react to and learn from TGP’s curriculum inspires me to continue working in health education and promotion. I am excited for a career in public health, and to watch TGP grow and involve more student-athletes and DC youth."

"I joined TGP because I was looking for a way to get more out of my experience in DC beyond being a student and an athlete. It goes without saying, but my time with TGP was by far one of the most enjoyable and transformative parts of my college experience. My favorite part of programming was seeing both the students and our coaches develop together throughout the course of our curriculum. TGP has given me a lasting desire to look beyond my own needs to the issues of my surrounding community, and how I can best help solve them. Now that I’ve graduated, I’ll be working in software sales in DC. I’m excited that I’ll be staying in the city and able to continue my involvement with TGP."
Leadership Team is a core group of student-athletes dedicated and committed to supporting TGP programming in schools and communities across DC. These amazing student-athletes represent an extension of TGP leadership, taking the reins on athlete recruitment from our partner universities, as well as serving as the main facilitators of the Athlete-to-Coach (A2C) Trainings held each semester. This diverse group of student-athletes represent the TGP culture in every way!

The Grassroot Project’s Leadership Team have been a busy bunch this year! Two new members joined the ranks as Leadership Team Members this year, and they jumped right into their duties and acclimated flawlessly to create a cohesive team!

In Fall 2016, two Leadership Team members presented at a 501c TECH competition for a $7,500 grant. The impeccable delivery led to TGP successfully being awarded the grant to get started on developing a mobile app for TGP. Members of the Leadership Team could also be found at the International Conference on Stigma at Howard University during the fall. Later in the semester there was a Careers Fair also hosted at Howard, and Leadership Team members shared TGP’s mission with athletes looking for opportunities to be involved in the community! Finally, the semester ended with introducing TGP and facilitating games for participants at a World AIDS day event hosted by Peace Corps.

Fast forward over winter break and the Leadership Team team jumped head first into pre-training for the new comprehensive sexual health curriculum before our bi-annual Athletes-to-Coaches Training. We are particularly proud to announce that the Leadership Team led the first ever training at American University this Spring. It was a great success that has set the foundation for a prosperous partnership.

Athletes also had an opportunity to wet their feet in the political arena right before exams. TGP testified at the DC’s City Council on health, and athletes shared their experiences and impact with TGP. In a bittersweet send off, we said goodbye to four of our Seniors who graduated this year! Their shoes are being filled with excited new members who have with much zest accepted the torch for another fun-filled year at TGP!
Activities in 2016

- 501c Tech
- Howard Stigma Conference
- Howard Careers Fair
- World AIDS Day Presentation
- Launching of Pilot Sexual Health Curriculum
- AFS-USA Partnership
- First-ever training at AU
- Welcomed 6 new leadership team members
The TGP Logic Model

TGP’s Effect on DC Youth
- Funding
- Curriculum
- Transportation
- TGP Staff
- TGP Board
- Partnerships
- Equipment
- Teachers

TGP’s Effect on College Athletes
- Programs in Health/PE classes
- Summer programs in Rec Centers
- Staff liaise with local and federal allies

Inputs
- Funding
- Athletes
- 7th Graders
- TGP Staff
- TGP Board
- Facilitator Training
- Leadership Academy
- Partnerships

Activities
- Facilitator trainings
- Leader team training
- Professional development classes
- Leadership Academy
- Programs
- Staff program observations
- Staff working with athletic departments

Short Term
- Increased knowledge of sexual health
- Improved cultural sensitivity

Intermediate
- Increased self efficacy to teach
- Improved employability

Long Term
- Increased interest in volunteer work

Programs in Health/PE classes
- Staff liaise with local and federal allies

~150 facilitators
~12 members of leader team
6 members of Leadership Academy
50 athletes’ professional development
Partnerships developed

Short Term
- Increased positive attitudes about HIV prevention
- Increased knowledge about HIV
- Increased awareness of sexual health in community

Intermediate
- Delayed sexual debut
- Increased testing
- Increased discussion around HIV
- Increased safer sex practices
- Decreased stigma

~15–20 teachers co-facilitate programs
Partnerships developed
400 students graduate TGP programs in 2016
~75 health teachers get TGP teacher training
~15–20 teachers co-facilitate programs
Partnerships developed

~15 schools and 2 rec centers receive programs
~150 facilitators
~12 members of leader team
50 athletes’ professional development
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OUTCOMES

SHORT TERM
- Increased knowledge of sexual health
- Improved cultural sensitivity

INTERMEDIATE
- Increased self efficacy to teach
- Improved employability

LONG TERM
- Increased interest in volunteer work

OUTPUTS

- ~150 facilitators
- ~12 members of leader team
- 6 members of leadership academy
- 50 athletes’ professional development
- Partnerships developed

- Sessions once a week for 8 weeks
- ~15 schools and 2 rec centers receive programs
- 400 students graduate TGP programs in 2016
- ~75 health teachers get TGP teacher training
- ~15-20 teachers co-facilitate programs
- Partnerships developed

IMPROVED SEXUAL HEALTH OF TEENS IN DC

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT OF COLLEGE GRADS IN COMMUNITY

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- ~75 health teachers get TGP teacher training
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- Partnerships developed

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- Leadership Academy programs
- Staff working with athletic departments
- Program directions
- Staff working with local and federal allies
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- 50 athletes’ professional development
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Evaluation Updates

TGP has undertaken a number of monitoring and evaluation projects this year to better understand our impact on all our target populations. Here are some highlights.

Student-athletes
We studied new Grassroot coaches during the Fall 2016 semester, and found that, compared to non-participant student-athletes, Grassroot participants tended to show increased incidence of flourishing (psychological and social wellbeing).

Grassroots Girls
We were able to wrap up our first year of Grassroots Girls with huge success! The Washington Area Women’s Foundation provided TGP with the opportunity to deliver curriculum catered intentionally with young girls in mind. Over the course of the year, 26 female student athletes were trained in the new curriculum, and 100 young girls at Excel Academy and Washington School for Girls received the intervention.

Upcoming
Building on the successes of our sexual health curriculum, TGP plans to research, design, fundraise for, launch, and evaluate new curricula for physical health and mental well being by 2020. These curricula would be implemented in addition to the existing sexual health education program, creating a three-year pipeline of health services for at-risk middle school students. TGP is poised and proud to continue our efforts in tackling teen health disparities and improving health outcomes for young people in the DC area.
New in 2017

TGP is planning a number of new events for 2017.

**Pilot Comprehensive Sexual Health Programs**

Beginning in the Spring 2017 semester, we began piloting an expanded sexual health curriculum in schools. This curriculum contains many hallmark Grassroot games, but now incorporates new games and key messages that address sexual consent, relationship violence, LGBTQ issues, and other important areas of sexual health.

**Celebrating Community Connections**

Though DC is home to many health service providers, the city struggles to link community members to service providers. We’re working to remedy this issue by hosting an event during which service providers for HIV testing and treatment, family planning services, and counseling and social support can come together to provide their services to TGP’s students and their parents/guardians.

**Parent Engagement Workshops**

In 2017, we plan to pilot and evaluate a two-session parent intervention that will help train parents to better communicate with their children about sex, and specifically to reinforce the messages of Grassroot programs. These workshops will occur just before and just after our school-based programs. We hope that parents will come out of these workshops feeling more knowledgeable about HIV and STIs, and more confident about effectively discussing sex with their children.
Donors

$25,000 - $49,999
- Gilead Sciences
- DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education

$10,000 - $24,999
- The Reva and David Logan Foundation
- ViiV Healthcare
- The George Preston Marshall Foundation

$1,000 - $9,999
- Lisa Folb
- Michael Manganiello

$100 - $999
- Lindsay Nathanson
- Karen Schneider
- Melanie Hilbush
- Annika Bannon
- Edward Costigan
- GE Foundation
- Cameron Hoerner
- Siri Oswald
- Christine Curley
- Pascual Eley
- Nancy Polikoff and Cheryl Swannack
- Stephen Whisnant
- John Mullman

>$100
- Odina Salihbaeva
- Danielle Pomfrey
- Hess
- Jeffery Bowers
- Sidnee Cox
- Annika Bannon
- Catherine Liebman
- Kelly Bradley
- Lauren Neves
- Ashley Mahoney
- Gregory Accarino
- William Rinehart

$50,000 - $150,000
- The Rush Foundation
- Bender Foundation

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## Financials

**October 2015 – September 2016**

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