

ATHLETES UNLIMITED

# PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION REPORT



2025





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“ATHLETES UNLIMITED, AN AMERICAN STARTUP, HAS LAUNCHED COMPETITIONS IN SOFTBALL, BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL THAT GIVE PLAYERS CONTROL OVER TEAM SELECTION, SCORING SYSTEMS AND GOVERNANCE.

MANY WITHIN WOMEN'S SPORTS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH RADICAL CHANGE, HAVING SPENT DECADES FIGHTING TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD. BUT TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, WOMEN'S SPORTS NEED ANOTHER ACT OF REBELLION: TO LEAVE MEN'S SPORT AND ALL OF ITS BAGGAGE BEHIND.

**THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S  
SPORT LIES IN INNOVATION,  
NOT IMITATION.”**

# INTRODUCTION



It's with great pleasure that we share the Athletes Unlimited 2025 Public Benefit Corporation Report with you all. This report serves to update our key stakeholders on our progress toward our objectives.

This year's report introduces a fresh, visual format designed to bring our progress to life. Using 2025 headlines, quotes, and media highlights, we move beyond basic progress reporting to showcase the real-world impact of our objectives during a dynamic year.

Being a Public Benefit Corporation isn't just what sets us apart from other sports entities—it's instrumental to our success. Seeing that impact unfold in real time alongside our stakeholders drives us forward, because we know our work is never truly finished.

As we continue pushing forward for positive change through our work, we are incredibly indebted to you for your continued support in our vision for the future and partnership in seeing these changes come to fruition.

We look forward to working with you on further innovations and are energized for these next steps together. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey.

**Jon Patricof**

Co-Founder & CEO

**Hilary Meyer**

Chief Impact & Athlete Engagement Officer

# ABOUT US

Athletes Unlimited is an innovative and ambitious model of professional sports. We own and operate professional women's softball, volleyball, and basketball leagues featuring world-class competition and fan experience. We are driven by the athletes who play in the leagues, with athlete representation on our board of directors, each league led by a Player Executive Committee, and players sharing in long-term profits of the company, all while being proactive in shaping policies supporting the athletes who play in the league.

As a mission-driven Public Benefit Corporation (PBC) and the first professional sports league to be organized as such, Athletes Unlimited is founded on the values of innovation, inclusion, and excellence and continues to promote these values through our work.

## OUR MISSIONS

1. Empower professional athletes as leaders.
2. Promote inclusive ownership in professional sports focusing on long-term financial and personal well-being of athletes.
3. Bring fans closer to the game by innovating on and off the field to maximize engagement and excitement for a global community.





# OBJECTIVES

Our Board of Directors has adopted a set of PBC objectives and this report is designed to document our progress. In this report, we recap 2025 activities contributing to these goals and metrics.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

- Contribute to the **long-term financial well-being** of athletes.
- Provide **compelling off-court/off-field enrichment** opportunities for athletes.
- Ensure **leagues and teams are meaningfully led by athletes**.
- Enact and follow **inclusive policies** that enable athletes to control for decisions related to bodily autonomy and their ability to be both professional athletes and parents.
- Uplift and provide mechanisms for **athletes to be civic leaders** in their community.
- Ensure that Athletes Unlimited **games and in-game highlights are accessible** on a variety of platforms, including digitally.
- Ensure that **stadiums are inclusive** and accommodating to all guests.
- Contribute to the **well-being of communities** in which AU hosts seasons.
- Build **empathy through sharing diverse experiences**.

# CONTRIBUTE TO THE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL WELL-BEING OF ATHLETES

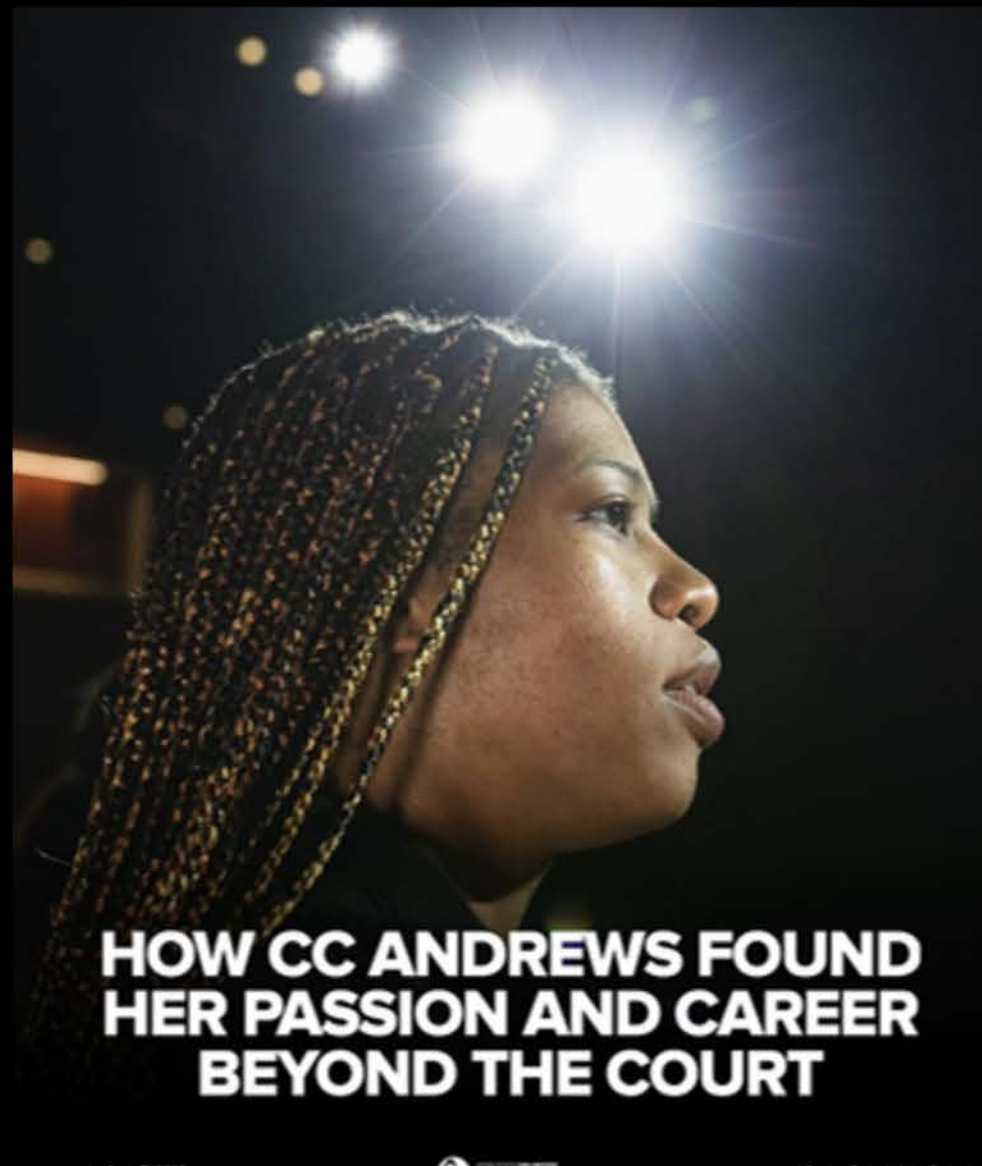
Life for an athlete shouldn't end when their playing career does. Athletes Unlimited believes all athletes are capable of more than being just one thing, and it is through our leagues that we support this belief by supporting our players with access to network building events, community engagement functions and life workshops. Through these programs, we are able to help support athletes in exploring a life in sports outside of the field or court.

For many athletes, Athletes Unlimited opened the door back into a new professional opportunity in their sport. For some, those career revivals didn't stop at the baseline or batter's box. Whether by stepping into front office roles, advisory boards, or athlete-driven initiatives, Sam Fischer-Cooke, Haylie McCleney, Amber McKenzie, and Ciara "CC" Andrews are just a few examples of athletes who are using Athletes Unlimited's various paths, to continue on into other careers—helping continue to build the very leagues they played in.

Some AU athletes like Alisha Glass Childress, need to be a little closer to the court even if they aren't playing and may find themselves transitioning to leadership positions like she did as a coach for the 2025 AU Pro Championship season.

And AU Pro Lacrosse athlete Mira Shane brought her skills as a leader in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging to each league by facilitating a workshop that delved into cultural competence, understanding personal values, and fostering connections among athletes to find common ground.

From launching new leagues, serving on boards, supporting teams, or shaping marketing strategy, they're not just extending their careers; these athletes are helping AU grow into its next chapter. By staying in the game through their new roles, these women are proving that the end of a playing career doesn't mean stepping away completely. It can mean stepping up to lead, to build, and to continue changing the game from the inside out.



AFTER RETIRING FROM PLAYING, SAM FISCHER ACCEPTS NEW ROLE AS MANAGER, SOFTBALL OPERATIONS AHEAD OF 2025 INAUGURAL AUSL SEASON

**“I THINK THIS WHOLE PROCESS HAS FELT LIKE THE RIGHT MOVE... I FELT LIKE I WAS HALF PLAYING, HALF COACHING. SHARING THINGS THAT I SEE, OFFERING TECHNICAL OR STRATEGIC ADJUSTMENTS...SO IT FEELS, IN SOME WAYS, VERY NATURAL TO NOW MOVE INTO THIS SPACE.”**

**ALISHA GLASS CHILDRESS**

# MISSION EQUITY

Unprecedented in professional sports, Athletes Unlimited employs an investment model called “mission equity.” Coined by Athletes Unlimited co-founder Jonathan Soros, investors in Athletes Unlimited agree to cap their profit at a certain percentage. If the rate of return on their investment exceeds a mutually-agreed upon amount, the surplus becomes available for mission-related initiatives by the company. For Athletes Unlimited, no less than half of that surplus will be contributed to the Athlete Profit Participation Plan. The other half goes to expanding mission-aligned programs, such as those highlighted in this report.

Athletes Unlimited has created a system that athletes who are playing now will share in the long-term value that they are helping create. Every time athletes compete in the a game during an Athletes Unlimited season, they receive units in the Profit Participation plan, which allows them to participate in distributions for the current year and the 19 that follow.



	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b># of athletes (&amp; Advisory Board) receiving Profit Participation per year</b>	71	177	219	216	218	169
<b>Total # of athletes (&amp; Advisory Board) in Profit Participation Plan</b>	71	196	313	394	493	570

**FISCHER, GLASS  
CHILDRESS  
SHARPEN SKILLS  
AT NYU'S FUTURE  
OF LEADERSHIP  
PROGRAM**



***"I WAS SO EXCITED AND SUPER GRATEFUL TO BE IN THAT COHORT OF PEOPLE THAT ARE ALL IN DIFFERENT SPACES, THAT ARE THINKING ABOUT LEADERSHIP IN THIS REALLY NEW AND TRANSFORMATIONAL WAY."***

**ALISHA GLASS CHILDRESS**



**PROVIDE COMPELLING OFF-COURT/OFF-FIELD ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ATHLETES.**

As part of Athletes Unlimited's commitment to developing the athlete as a holistic endeavor, we offer athletes several off-field/off-court opportunities. Driven by this commitment, athletes are offered a collection of activities, offerings and opportunities designed to maximize engagement.

National Girls & Women in Sports Day (NGWSD) is a celebration that inspires girls and women to play, be active, and realize their full power. NGWSD began in 1987 as a special day to recognize women's sports uniting premiere organizations and elite women athletes to bring national attention to the promise of girls and women in sports. In 2025, there was dynamic programming in Nashville to celebrate the day.



Crossover into Business  
Fall, 2025  
Harvard Business School

In 2025, Athletes Unlimited athletes participated in NYU's Future of Leadership Program, EY's Athlete Career Readiness program, New Majority Capital's bETA program, and Harvard Business School's Crossover into Business.

# ENSURE LEAGUES & TEAMS ARE MEANINGFULLY LED BY ATHLETES.

The engine of every Athletes Unlimited League is the Player Executive Committee (PEC), which anchors the partnership between athletes and the company. Each Athletes Unlimited League has a PEC composed of up to five active players. The PEC meets weekly with Athletes Unlimited senior leadership to help recruit players, set league rules and scoring systems, plan off-field programming, and drive both league-specific and company-wide decisions that affect the athlete experience. Members of the PEC serve as a sounding board for other athletes and help serve as a liaison between players and the company, ensuring that perspectives of the broader player community are integrated into the work of the organization.

**In 2025, there were 15 voting members of AU PEC's:**

*\*\* Denotes PEC Chairperson*



**Molly McCage\***  
Volleyball



**Tori Dixon**  
Volleyball



**Alisha Glass Childress**  
Volleyball



**Morgan Hentz**  
Volleyball



**Dani Drews**  
Volleyball



**Aubrey Leach\***  
Softball



**Morgan Zerkle**  
Softball



**Sharlize Palacios**  
Softball



**Georgina Corrick**  
Softball



**Alana Vawter**  
Softball



**Lexie Brown\***  
Basketball



**Rebecca Harris**  
Basketball



**Theresa Plaisance**  
Basketball



**Sydney Colson**  
Basketball



**Isabelle Harrison**  
Basketball

**“ATHLETES HAVE MORE POWER THAN THEY SOMETIMES REALIZE... WITHOUT ATHLETES, THERE’S NO PRODUCT. THAT CHANGED HOW I THINK ABOUT ATHLETE EMPOWERMENT AND WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A VOICE IN THE BUSINESS SIDE OF SPORT.”**

**CIARA ANDREWS**



**FULL ARTICLE ON  
AUPROSPORTS.COM**

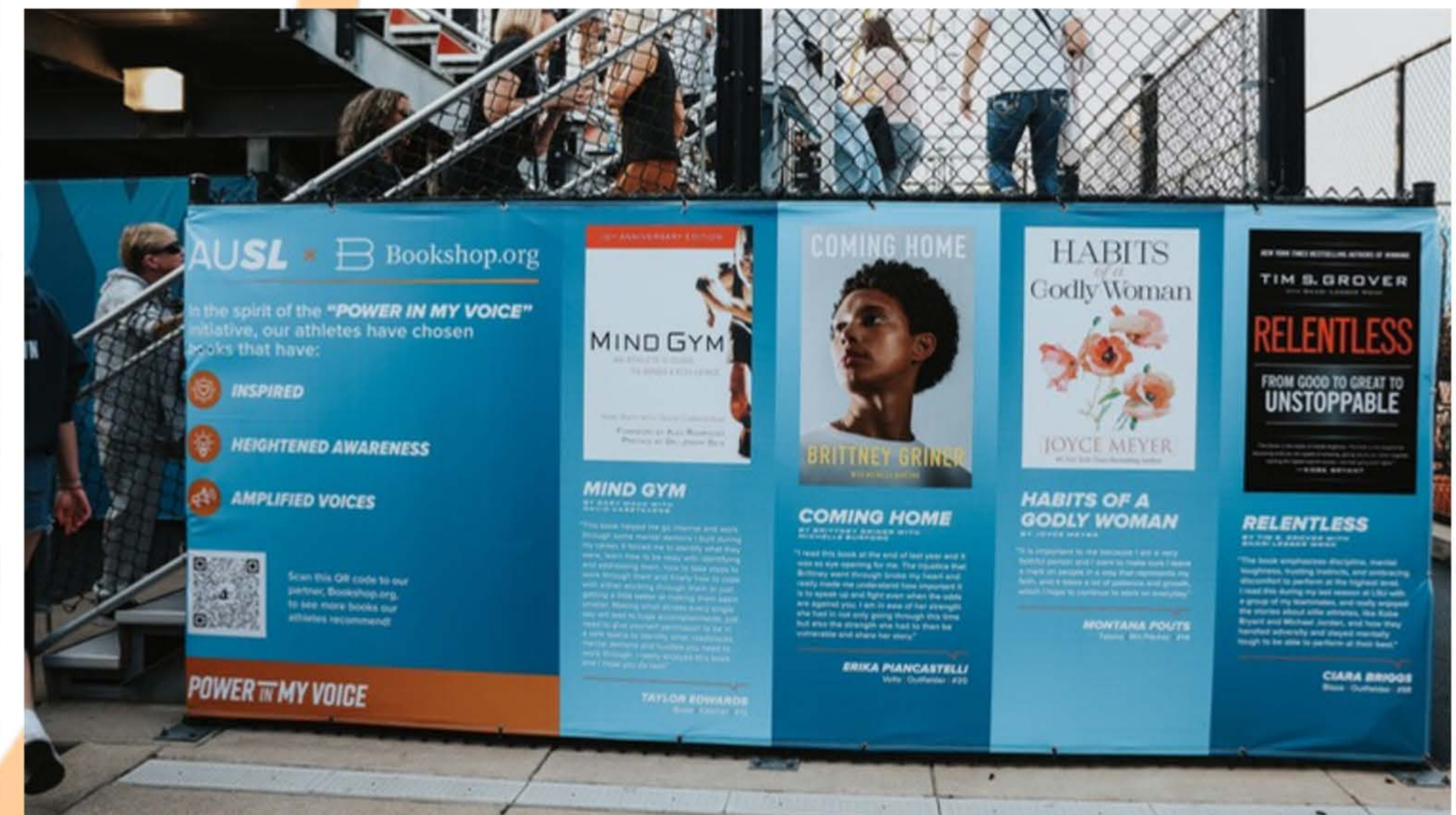
For 2025 in particular the AUSL PEC was met with the mighty task of considering whether there was space for the addition of a traditional, city-based softball league to supplement the dynamic AU softball format showcasing an individual leaderboard and a performance-based point system. When presented with these sorts of opportunities, the PEC guides decisions what should be done, how and when.

***“I THINK ONCE WE SAW AN OPPORTUNITY (FOR TRADITIONAL PLAY), WHICH THEY GAVE US, WE WERE LIKE, ‘YES, LET’S JUMP RIGHT IN AND DO IT. REALLY THE PEC HAS SAY ON THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF THE LEAGUE AND THOSE SORTS OF THINGS. BUT WE IMPACTED THE ROSTER SIZE TO GET AN EXTRA PITCHER IN THE LEAGUE AND ALL OF THAT. [THE LEAGUE] JUST COME[S] TO US WITH ANY QUESTIONS THEY HAVE ABOUT WHAT COULD MAKE IT GREAT AND WORK.”***

**MORGAN ZERKLE, AUSL PEC MEMBER**

# INTERSECTIONAL EQUITY WORKING GROUP

The Intersectional Equity Working Group, composed of athletes and staff, proactively work to reduce systemic bias through annual work plans that include policy reviews, DEIB workshops, and community-driven initiatives. Additionally, the group manages the #BecomingUnlimited program, which empowers BIPOC girls in sports; and all of the Power In My Voice programming, including the Women Who Inspire and Books That Inspire, our partnership with bookshop.org, and our partnership with bookshop.org.



# ENACT & FOLLOW INCLUSIVE POLICIES THAT ENABLE ATHLETES TO CONTROL FOR DECISIONS RELATED TO BODILY AUTONOMY & THEIR ABILITY TO BE BOTH PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES & PARENTS.

Athletes Unlimited's goal with the pregnancy and caregiving policies is to treat parenthood as a normal part of a professional athlete's journey. The policies put the player first and let the athletes decide if and when to disclose their pregnancy to a team doctor or to league employees. Pregnancy also does not impact a player's future contracts. Reasonable accommodations such as rest during practice or medical leave for pregnant players who need it are provided while other accommodations, like a fully paid leave of absence, are also available.

Athletes who become parents through adoption, surrogacy, or legal guardianship — or are a spouse of someone who has given birth — also receive two weeks of leave with full pay. And players who take parental leave are not penalized in terms of eligibility for bonuses nor does it impact eligibility for playing in future seasons.

For athletes who are parents, our goal is to approach each on a case-by-case basis and work with the athlete to determine how best to support their needs. If a player brings their children on-site during our seasons, Athletes Unlimited provides full support for a babysitter, nanny, spouse and other accommodations. If a player does not bring their children on-site during competition, Athletes Unlimited works with the athlete to cover out-of-market childcare support, if needed.

We recognize that athletes bring their whole selves to the season, and our goal is to support them so that they can do their best work on the field or court without having to worry that their children are safe and well cared for.



"Being able to play a match and immediately go off and I get to hug my baby—this is literally a dream come true."

- Sarah Wilhite Parsons

"Everything they (Athletes Unlimited) offered when it came to just being a mother... like, knowing that if he (her son, Jaiden) comes to practice, it's not a problem... and somebody always makes sure, like, 'Oh, he can come with me,' always just looking out, and I think that's a big thing because there aren't that many moms in this league, but it's still good to know that AU is parent first."

- Odyssey Sims



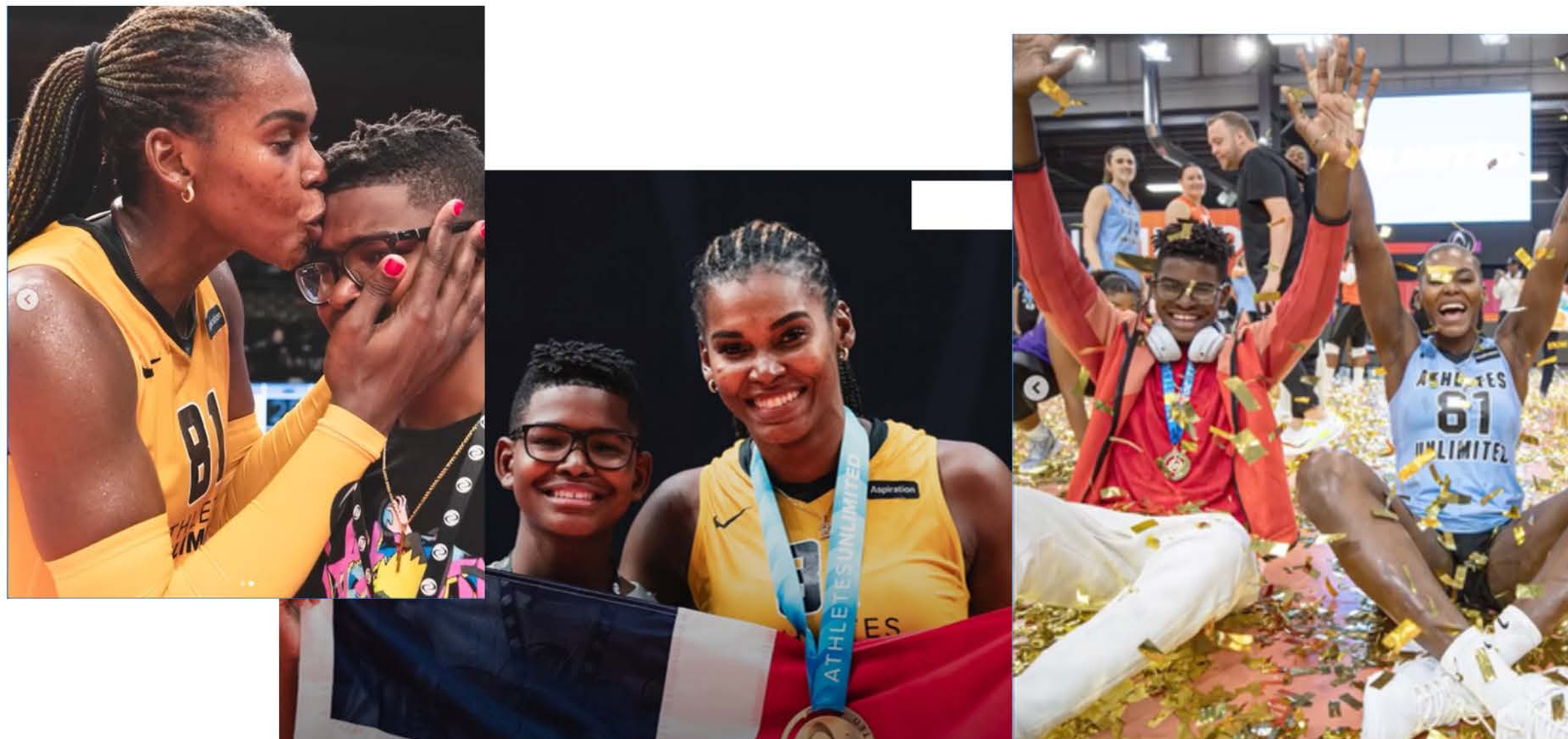
**AU has been wonderful, and I think it was a great decision for me and for my family. I think Ezra will be able to look back on this and have a lot of really, really fun memories, and my husband, too. I think we'll look back and be like, 'this was a really cool thing to do.'**

**NEWS**  
**JUSTINE WONG-ORANTES ANNOUNCES PREGNANCY DURING AU PRO VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**



# FAMILY & CAREGIVING POLICY USAGE

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
PLAYERS USING ATHLETE CAREGIVING STIPEND	0	6	14	8	14	11
PLAYERS USING PREGNANCY POLICY	0	0	1	0	1	0
PLAYERS USING FAMILY TRAVEL STIPEND	0	1	10	7	4	5



**"FER MEANS THE WORLD TO ME. HE IS MY MOTIVATION."**  
 BETTY DE LA CRUZ-MEJÍA ON BEING A MOTHER

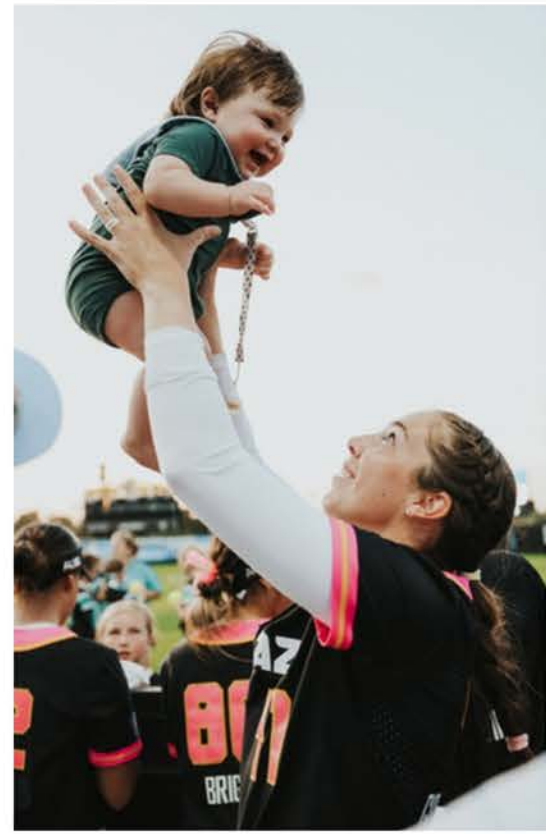
## BETHANIA DE LA CRUZ-MEJÍA

Betty De La Cruz-Mejía's thirteen-year pro career has taken her all over the world. The Dominican Republic Olympian has played in leagues in over ten different countries and has one of the most impressive resumes in the sport.

Her motivation? Her son, Fer.

**"WHEN I HEAR MY SON SAY I'M SO PROUD OF YOU, YOU ARE THE BEST, FOR ME IT'S LIKE EVERYTHING."**

BETHANIA DE LA CRUZ-MEJÍA



## DANIELLE GIBSON WHORTON

In the AUSL Blaze’s season opener on June 7, Danielle Gibson Whorton stepped up to the plate in a professional softball game for the first time in 651 days. She has taken the last year off after becoming pregnant with her son Whitley, who was born on Nov. 4, 2024.

She had put off playing with Team USA to start her family and was also balancing an assistant coaching position at her alma mater, the University of Arkansas but found her self back at the plate where she made history by driving in the first run in Blaze franchise history with a double from her bat.

## KELSEY STEWART-HUNTER

*“I honestly think like it’s always been my life plan to have kids and then to still play,”* said Kelsey Stewart-Hunter.

In August of 2022, Kelsey Stewart-Hunter gave birth to her son, Trace, and when she was ready the league was waiting for her thanks to AU’s comprehensive pregnancy policy.

In her first season back, she played with a custom Wilson glove displaying her son’s name.

**“I’M JUST TEARING UP WHENEVER I OPEN MY GLOVE ‘CAUSE I’M LIKE WOW, THIS IS MY LIFE NOW.”**

**KELSEY STEWART-HUNTER**



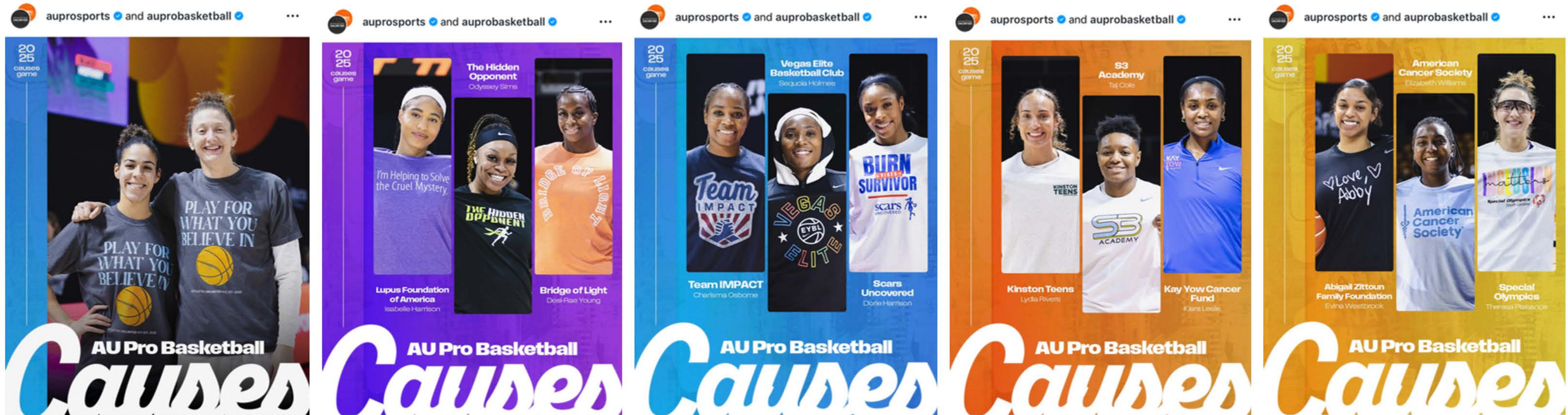
**UPLIFT & PROVIDE MECHANISMS FOR ATHLETES TO BE CIVIC LEADERS IN THEIR COMMUNITY.**



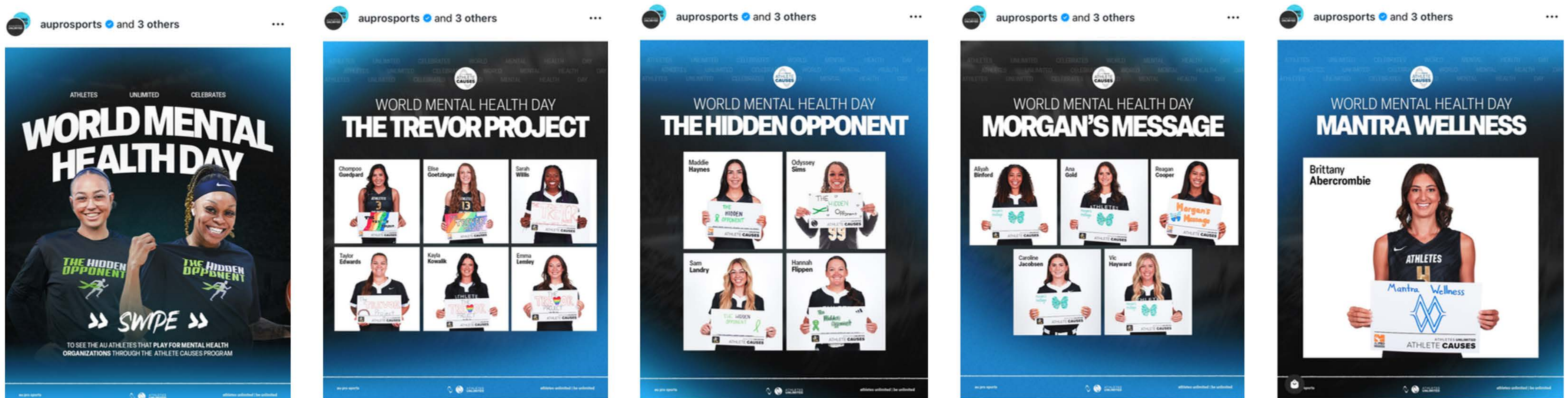
Athletes Unlimited recognizes that the qualities that lead to excellence on the field — discipline, collaboration, hard work, an unwavering focus on a goal — are the same qualities that create strong civic leaders and participants in civic life. That’s why commitment to civic leadership is woven into the fabric of the organization. Here are some highlights of the many ways Athletes Unlimited supports and encourages Athletes to lead their own impact in communities close to them.

YEAR	AMOUNT
2020	\$151,325
2021	\$454,248
2022	\$632,683
2023	\$730,190
2024	\$686,600
2025	\$387,430
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,041,476*</b>

\*Total donation figures have been reconciled to reflect the most accurate data available.



Social post from the 2025 basketball season highlighting some of the foundations athletes played for.



October 10<sup>th</sup> is World Mental Health Day. Social post spotlighting athletes who play for mental health related causes.



## MORGAN HENTZ

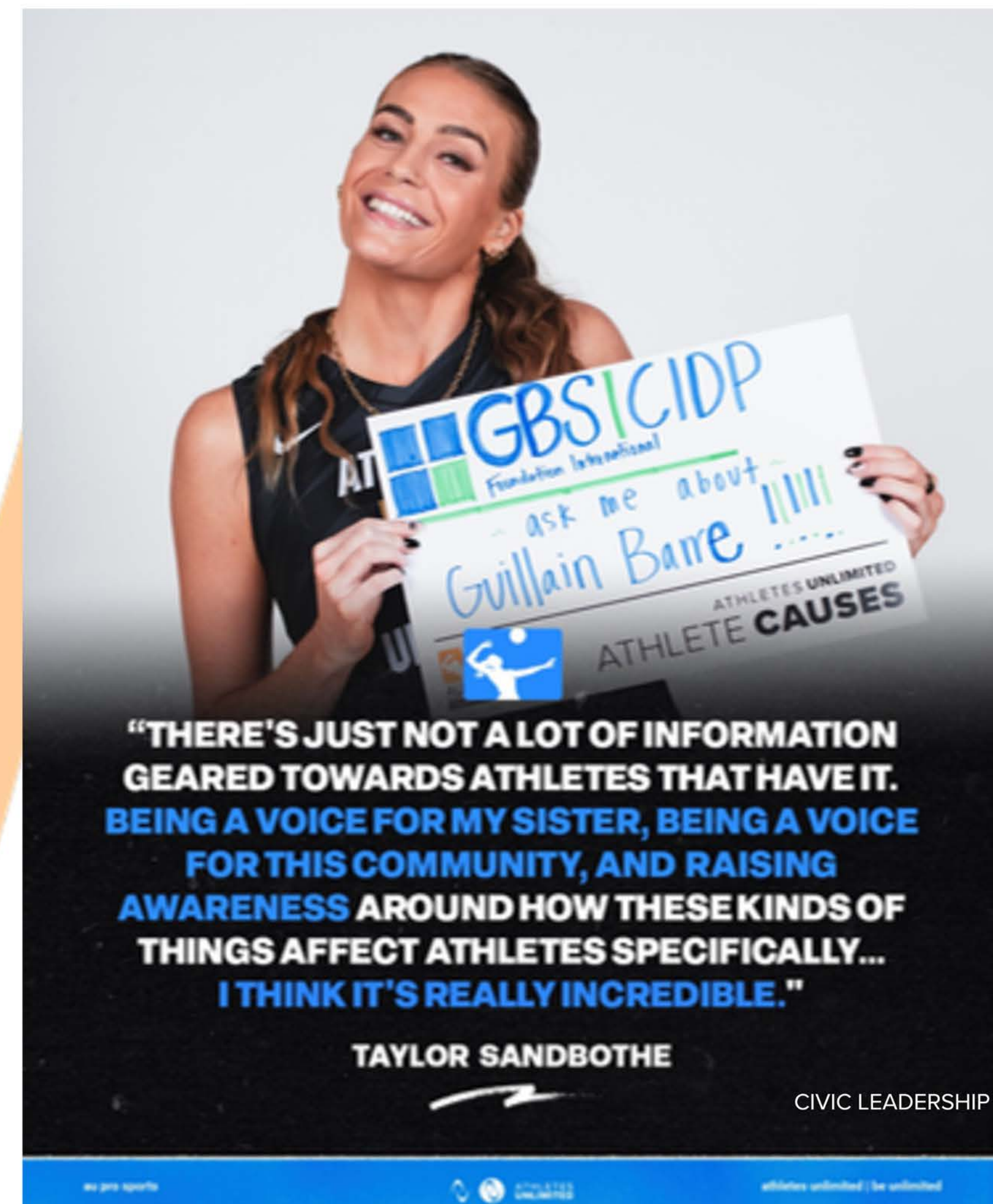
*Being an older sibling, I think I do fit the stereotype to a T," said Athletes Unlimited Volleyball star, Morgan Hentz. "But I love being an older sibling. I feel like my siblings teach me as much as I hope to teach them."*

Today, volleyball is more than just an outlet for the girl who grew up in Kentucky—it's become a passion. It has also given her a platform to advocate for neurodivergent individuals like her brother.

## TAYLOR SANDBOTHE

Every time Taylor Sandbothe steps on the volleyball court, she knows it's a privilege, and this fall with AU Pro Volleyball, she stepped on with a deeply personal purpose - playing in support of the GBS/CIDP Foundation International in honor of her younger sister, Elle, who was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré Syndrome in 2021.

Now, Sandbothe carries her sister's story with her every time she steps on the court.



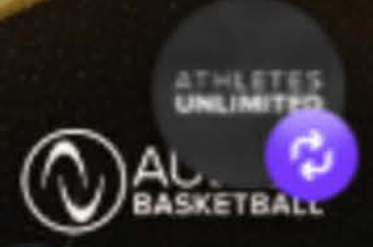
ATHLETES UNLIMITED  
CIVIC LEADERSHIP AWARD

*S. Holmes #8*

SEQUOIA HOLMES IS THE 2025 ATHLETES UNLIMITED CIVIC LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER. THE AU CIVIC LEADERSHIP AWARD IS A YEARLY HONOR THAT RECOGNIZES ONE AU ATHLETE ACROSS LEAGUES FOR THEIR CIVIC LEADERSHIP EFFORTS.

ATHLETES UNLIMITED  
SEQUOIA HOLMES

2025 WINNER



# CIVIC LEADERSHIP AWARD

Each year, the Civic Leadership Award recognizes an athlete for their civic leadership efforts both during the season and in the off-season.

Any Athletes Unlimited athlete playing in the calendar year who has demonstrated civic leadership both in season and in their off-season is eligible for this award and can be nominated by themselves or their peers. These nominations speak to the depth of civic leadership activities they are involved in both outside and within Athletes Unlimited programs.

These civic leadership activities could include the athlete's involvement in Athlete Causes, volunteerism, community service, fundraising, voter engagement, raising awareness, advocacy, and more.



**Sequoia Holmes**  
2025



**Kaz Brown**  
2024



**Mira Shane**  
2023



**Cassidy Lichtman**  
2022



**Jasmyn Jackson**  
2021

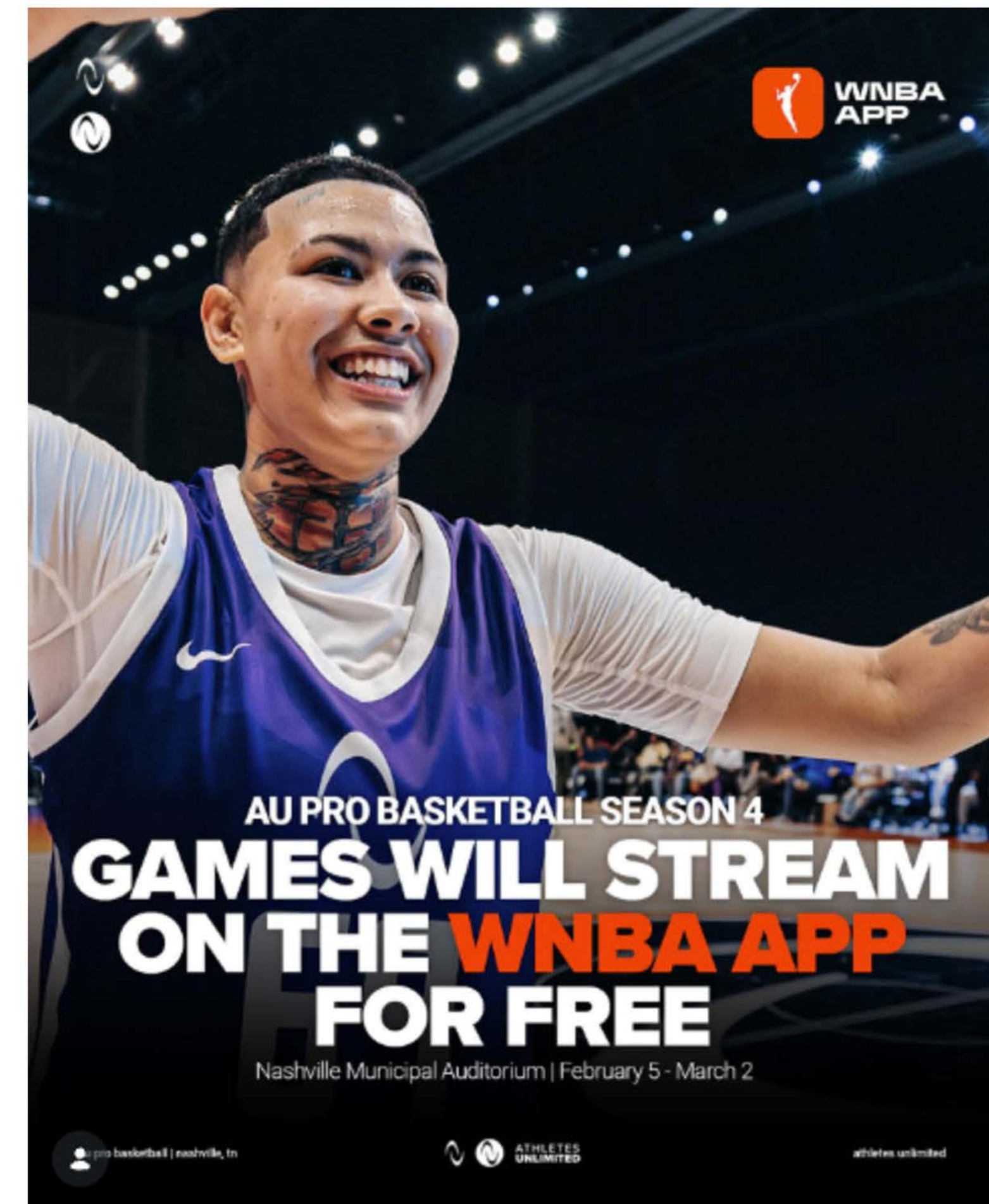
***“IT’S A GRACIOUS AND HUMBLING HONOR TO BE RECOGNIZED FOR MY CIVIC LEADERSHIP,” SAID HOLMES. “GROWING UP, PEOPLE IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD ALWAYS REMINDED ME THAT MY COMMUNITY MATTERED—THAT IT WOULD HELP SHAPE WHO I BECAME—AND THAT BLESSINGS ARE MEANT TO BE SHARED. THEY TAUGHT ME TO NEVER FORGET WHERE I CAME FROM AND TO GIVE BACK TO THE PEOPLE AND PLACE THAT POURED INTO ME BY SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION.”***

**SEQUOIA HOLMES**



**ENSURE THAT ATHLETES UNLIMITED GAMES & IN-GAME HIGHLIGHTS ARE ACCESSIBLE ON A VARIETY OF PLATFORMS, INCLUDING DIGITALLY.**

2025 was the most widely distributed in across all three sports -- basketball, volleyball, and softball -- reaching fans in 200+ countries across 7 continents. By maximizing distribution across every available network and platform, AU prioritized growth, accessibility, and global reach at an unprecedented scale.



# BY THE NUMBERS

AUSL REGULAR SEASON

**20** SOLD OUT GAMES

**347K** PEAK VIEWERSHIP DURING CHAMPIONSHIP GAME ON ESPN

**\$1M+** IN MERCHANDISE SALES




**240M** IMPRESSIONS ON AUSL SOCIAL CHANNELS

**5.3M** PAGE VIEWS ON THEAUSL.COM

+452,280 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



## LIVE & RE-AIR BROADCAST #S




-  Basketball: 100+ games across 33 channels (20 linear, 13 streaming)
-  AUSL Softball: 200+ telecasts across 10 platform partners
-  Volleyball: 700+ matches across 71 channels (66 linear, 5 streaming)
-  All AU games uploaded to YouTube ensuring free access for all

GAMES AND HIGHLIGHTS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL 22

# ENSURE THAT STADIUMS ARE INCLUSIVE & ACCOMMODATING TO ALL GUESTS.

Sports are for everyone. We are transforming the Athletes Unlimited experience to ensure every fan enjoys a meaningful, accessible, and inclusive environment.

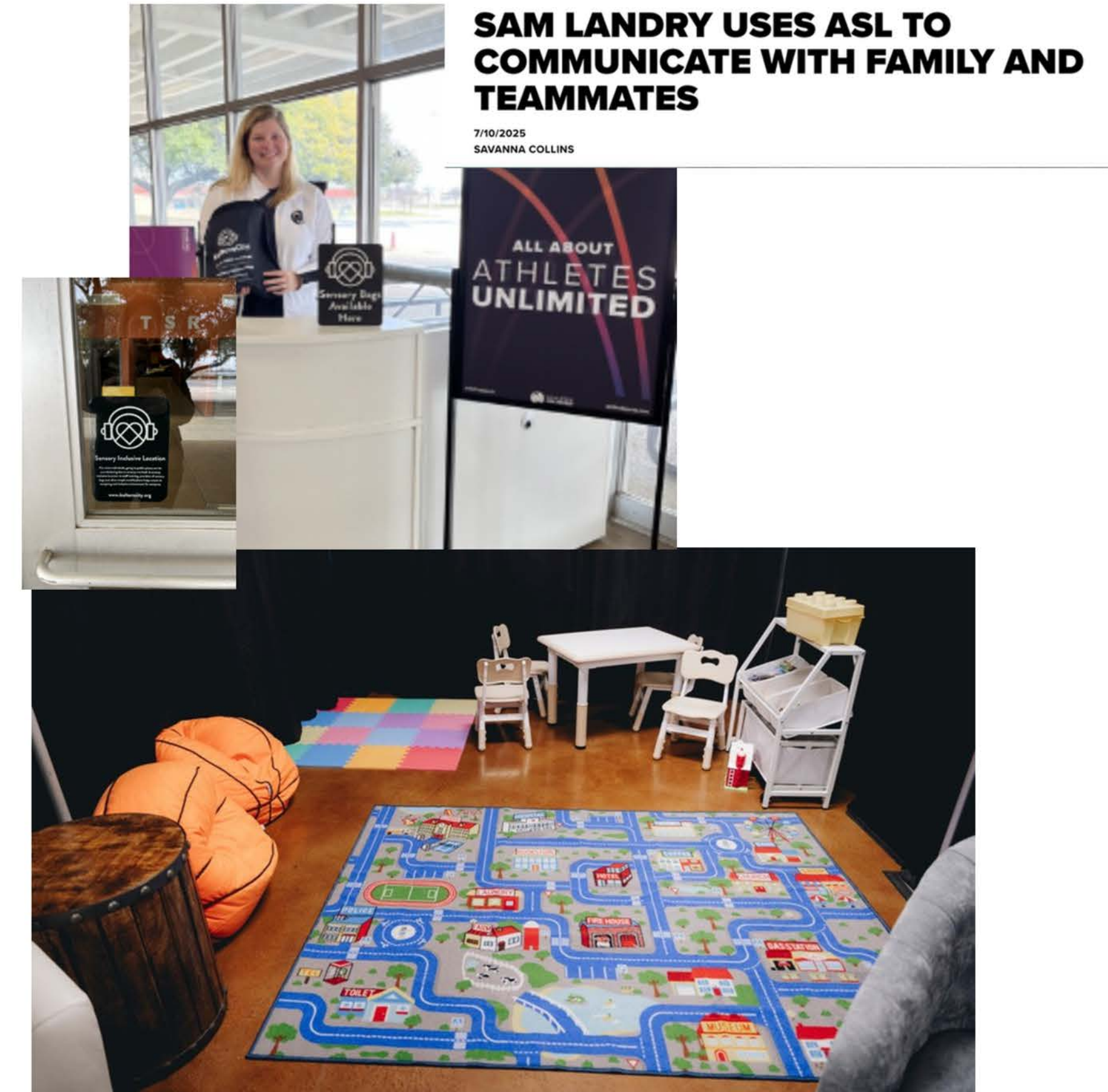
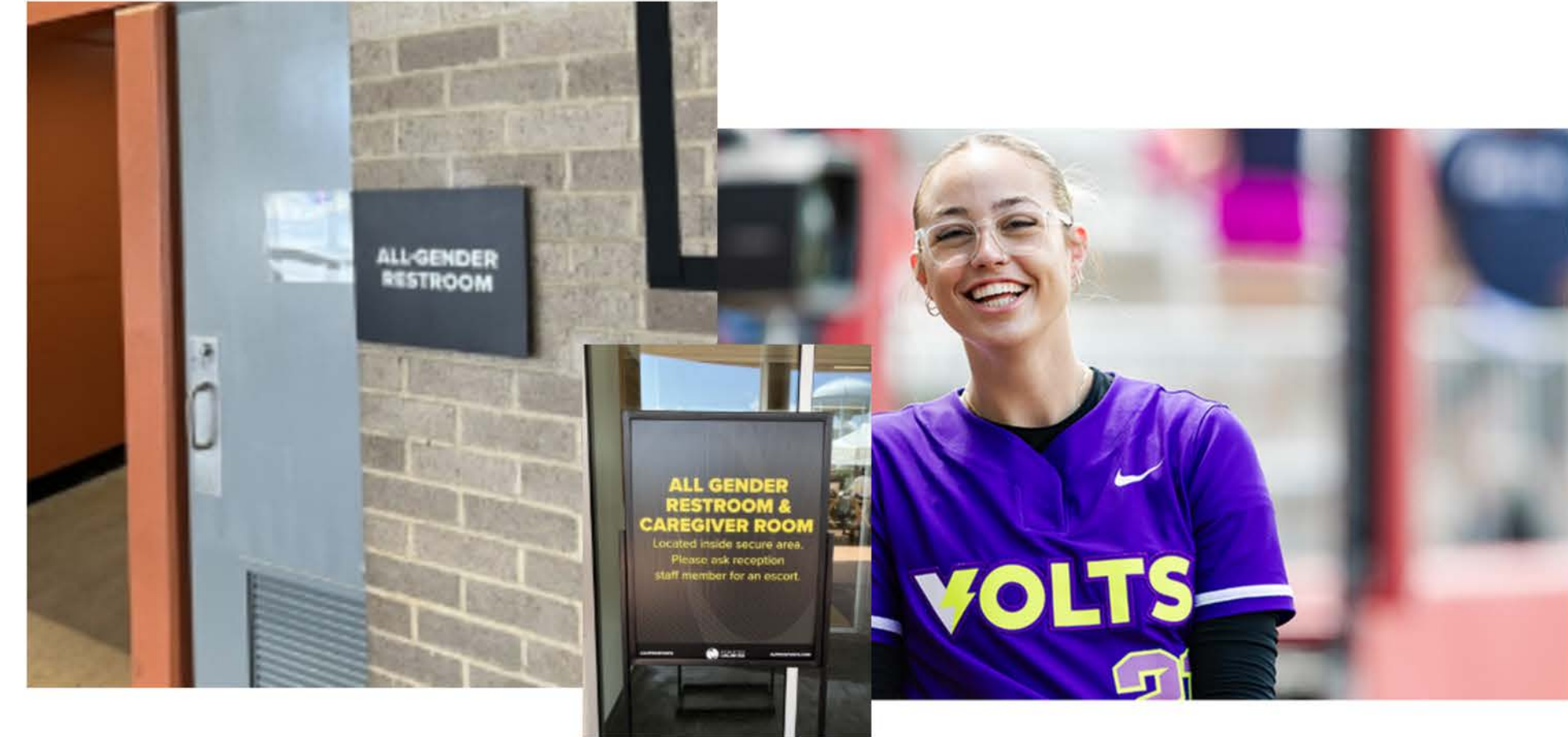
In each of our stadiums, fans could access:

-  Private Caregiving Spaces: dedicated spaces for fans with young children to recharge.
-  Gender-Neutral Restrooms: Ensuring comfort and dignity for all guests.
-  Sensory Inclusion: Partnering with the nonprofit KultureCity to support fans with invisible disabilities.

## OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH KultureCity®

Through KultureCity, we provide Sensory Bags equipped with noise-canceling headphones, fidget tools, and feeling cards to help fans manage the intensity of the game.

To ensure a supportive environment, fan-facing AU employees are Sensory Inclusive Certified. This training empowers our team to recognize and assist fans with different sensory needs effectively.



### SAM LANDRY USES ASL TO COMMUNICATE WITH FAMILY AND TEAMMATES

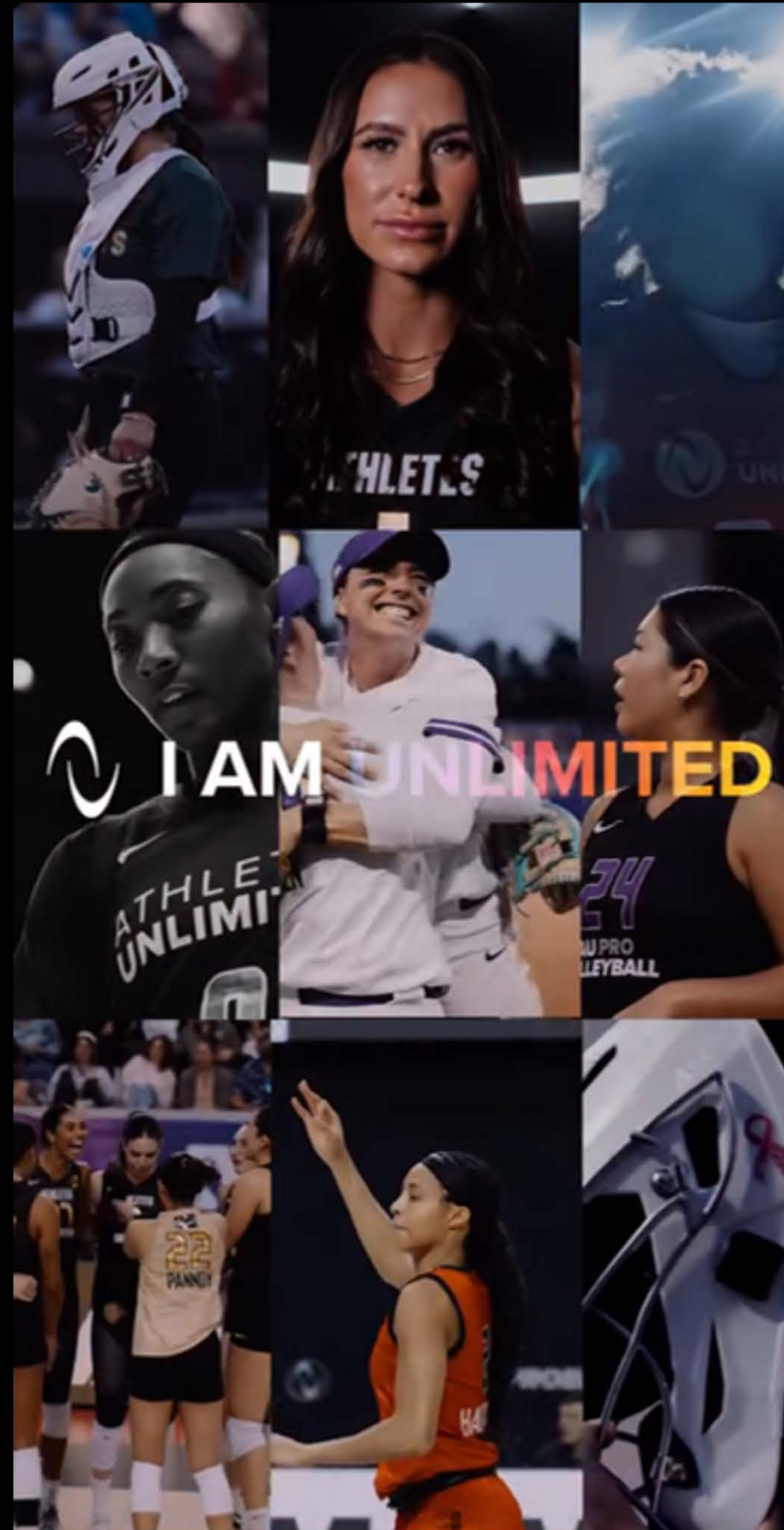
7/10/2025  
SAVANNA COLLINS

## **BUILD EMPATHY THROUGH SHARING DIVERSE EXPERIENCES.**

Athletes Unlimited is committed to quality and engaging storytelling and fan-facing elements that feature a diversity of voices and helps bring new perspectives and new ideas to our fans through first-class sports entertainment.

Launched with the goal of putting athletes front and center, Athletes Unlimited has allocated time and resources to its content and storytelling from day one. With the goal of featuring diverse voices and stories, AU shows who the athletes are on and off the court through to our fans through first-class sports entertainment.

The company's Social, Digital Content and Broadcast teams produced and published content year-round that supplemented our live games, from photography and graphic design to short and long-form video series helping our player's impacts transcend the playing field or court in many different areas.



*Athletes Unlimited further solidified its commitment to creating community through sharing and elevating athlete stories with the launch of the I AM UNLIMITED social and digital campaign.*

*The campaign reflects AU's values by publicly cementing the organization as a place where athletes lead, communities belong, and every story matters.*

*A homepage for the initiative highlights the stories of AU athletes*

- **Jordan Thompson (volleyball)**
- **Montana Fouts (softball)**
- **Sam Landry (softball)**
- **Michaela Edenfield (softball)**
- **Molly McCage (volleyball)**
- **Deja Kelly (basketball)**

*through the shared belief that embracing who you are, speaking in your own voice, and moving through the world without limits is the way to be.*

In partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Athletes Unlimited amplified the personal health equity stories of Bandits pitcher, Odicci Alexander-Bennett and Blaze catcher, Taylor Edwards.

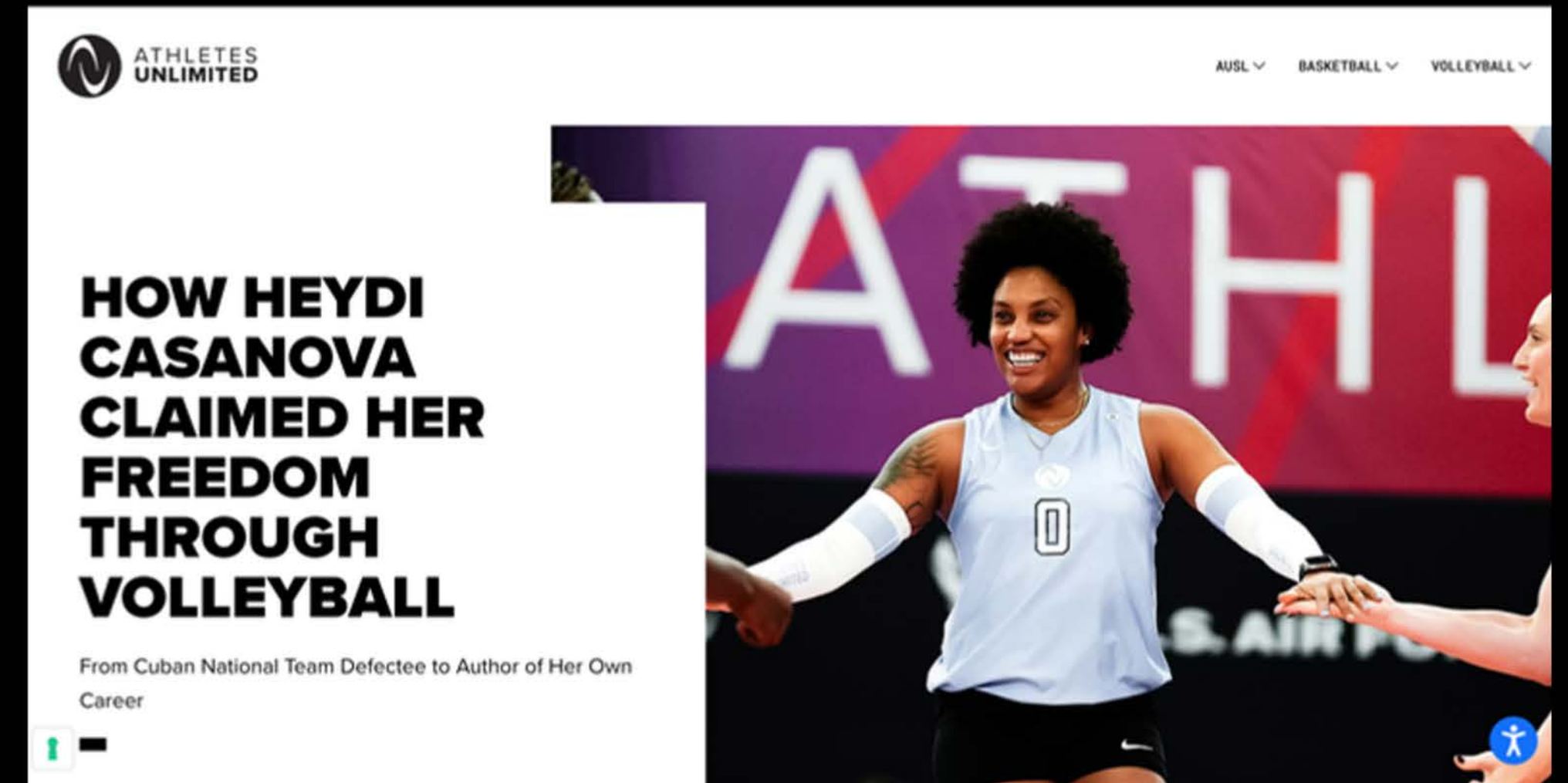
Taylor Edwards shared her deeply personal journey about a decision she made to support her family - by being an egg donor.

**“WE HAD A CONVERSATION THAT WE WOULD KIND OF DO A SIBLING TRADE-OFF. TYLER, MY BROTHER, HE WOULD DONATE HIS SPERM TO GWEN (TAYLOR’S PARTNER) AND I WOULD DONATE MY EGGS TO MY BROTHER AND HIS HUSBAND, CHASE,” SAID EDWARDS, “I’M JUST SO HAPPY THAT I’M ABLE TO DO SOMETHING SO IMPORTANT AND DELICATE FOR MY BROTHER.”**

**TAYLOR EDWARDS**



Taylor Edwards x Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Heydi Casanova fled her home country of Cuba protesting the mistreatment and exploitation she and her teammates suffered while playing for the Cuban National Volleyball Team. Through the sport, she was able to flee Cuba and initiate a career in new places liberating her in a new way.

**“I FEEL LIKE NOW THAT I CAN JUST HAVE FUN AND JUST ENJOY MY TEAMMATES AND JUST MAKE REALLY GOOD MEMORIES, BECAUSE UNTIL NOW, I’VE BEEN PLAYING ALL FOR MONEY, OR JUST GOING TO THE COUNTRY THAT I WANT TO PLAY IN, JUST TO HAVE THE FEELING OF WHAT IT IS TO BE THERE.”**

**HEYDI CASANOVA**



## **MCKENZIE CLARK**

Carrie Clark boarded a plane in her home state of Florida, bound for Minnesota. She was heading north to adopt her second child, a baby girl named McKenzie. After a long process with a few twists and turns along the way, she was finally able to bring the baby back to the Sunshine State and unite her with Carrie's son and husband.

Twenty-two years later, that baby girl is all grown up and went on to be drafted in the 11<sup>th</sup> round of the inaugural AUSL draft only to follow that up with a franchise first, three-run home run for the AUSL Volts. The homer was integral in helping secure the franchises first ever win.

Through it all, McKenzie has had her parents to thank. They have given her so much. This game has given her so much. And she hopes to give back to both of them in as many ways as she can.

# **DEFINED BY BELIEF: MCKENZIE CLARK'S STORY**

6/12/2025  
MARIA TRIVELPIECE





**HER GRANDMA WAS A  
ROCKFORD PEACH, NOW  
SHE'S A STAR IN THE AUSL**

SWIPE →



Aubrey Leach is one of the best softball players in the world.

She played at the University of Tennessee from 2016-2019 -- finishing on Top 10 lists for career batting average, steals, on-base percentage and walks.

She competed in the AUX for the last four years, tallying the second-most points during the 2023 season.

And this summer, she's breaking ground, holding down second base for the Blaze in the inaugural, superstar-laden Athletes Unlimited Softball League.



But for Leach, breaking ground isn't a totally new idea. It's in her genes.

**Her grandmother, Wilma Ann Williams-Leach, was a Rockford Peach -- a player on the best team in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League.**

One of the first, and most famous, women's sports leagues ever created.



**"I DON'T THINK IT HIT ME UNTIL HIGH SCHOOL WHEN I WAS LIKE, 'WOW, SHE WAS ACTUALLY A BIG DEAL' ... BEING OLD ENOUGH TO WATCH "A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN," AND UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY DID AND HOW THEY TRAVELED AND THE STRUGGLES THEY HAD IN THEIR OWN RIGHT WAS PRETTY COOL."**

AUBREY LEACH



**READ THE FULL ARTICLE ON  
MLB.COM**



## AUBREY LEACH

Aubrey Leach, the long time AU athlete and renowned softball star, earned a spot in the women's sports history book by being a part of the AUSL Blaze's inaugural team but her namesake's legacy doesn't start there.

In a story picked up by MLB and shared across social platforms, Leach talks about what when she realized her grandma had started the Leach trailblazing with the All-American First Professional Baseball League.





## **CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY: CORI MCMILLAN'S CHEROKEE HERITAGE**

### **CORI MCMILLAN**

**Cori McMillan, the first indigenous athlete to compete in the AUSL, is a member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Cori's grandmother on her father's side, Erma McMillan, lives in Cherokee on the Qualla Boundary in western North Carolina and has been the connector in Cori's life to the culture and history.**

**The Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation, and Cherokee people generally, are traditionally organized into seven distinct clans: the Wolf, Deer, Bird, Long Hair, Wild Potato, Blue, and Paint clans. Cori and the McMillan families are members of the Wolf clan. These clans are central to culture and social structure, with kinship and responsibilities often passed down through the matriarch.**

**In celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day, AU highlighted Cori and her family's story.**





## IN-STADIUM FEATURES

Throughout all of Athletes Unlimited seasons, the athletes decided on themes that they wished to highlight to fans through “Impact Weeks.”

Impact Weeks topics are chosen by the PEC and generally tied to AU’s mission or values. They are opportunities for Athletes Unlimited players to highlight a specific cause, national observance, partner organization, or AU initiative. Impact Weeks are brought to life for fans and athletes through:

- In-venue and broadcast content and activations that happen on the Impact game day - the last games of the weekly series - signage, videoboard produced content, fan giveaways, gameball/first pitches by community leader and more.
- Player wearables that athletes wear on the Impact game day.
- Social media content, including pictures of the athletes in the wearables, resource guides for fans about the topic and more.
- Athlete programming during the week leading up to the Impact game day.
- Community-based volunteering, often related to the theme.



## **2025 IMPACT WEEK THEMES**

### **BASKETBALL**

**NATIONAL GIRLS &  
WOMEN IN SPORTS DAY**

**ATHLETE CAUSES**

**I AM UNLIMITED**

### **SOFTBALL**

**COACH ACROSS  
AMERICA PARTNERSHIP**

**PRIDE**

**JUNETEENTH**

**LEGENDS**

**ATHLETE CAUSES**

### **VOLLEYBALL**

**GREEN SPORTS DAY**

**EVERY STORY COUNTS**

**ATHLETE CAUSES**

# CONTRIBUTE TO THE WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES IN WHICH ATHLETES UNLIMITED HOSTS SEASONS

Athletes Unlimited league models can be brief but are always intense, and are built in communities with drive and passion. Our goal is to highlight and uplift all the communities that welcome us and get bricks to help these communities keep on building.

Continuing this effort to better communities, AU focuses on accessibility and awareness. One way we do that is by offering a number of free tickets in each market we play in, to assure that the games in the community are available to all. In 2025, we distributed 18,679 free tickets in 15 different markets proving our commitment to those who show up for us on the ground.



## AU PRO BASKETBALL WELCOMES OVER 1200 STUDENTS FOR FIELD TRIP DAY

Presented by the U.S. Air Force



When host communities have dark times, it is our job to support them as they do us every season. In response to the devastating floods that hit in Central Texas this past July, the AUSL created a Round Rock-themed T-shirt that was available both in Texas and our online shop, with 100% of the profits going to Team Rubicon - a veteran-led humanitarian organization that deploys skilled teams to support vulnerable communities before, during, and after disasters.



Athletes Unlimited's connection to growing the sport of softball was front and center in sponsoring the HBCU Collegiate Softball Invitational in Georgia.

## AUSL TO SPONSOR 2ND ANNUAL HBCU COLLEGIATE SOFTBALL INVITATIONAL

**“PLACES THAT PRIORITIZE PLAYING WOMEN’S SPORTS ON SCREEN AND SOUND ARE VITAL TO BUILDING FAN BASES; WE SERVE AS AMP MACHINES AND COMMUNITY BUILDERS AND CAN’T WAIT TO CHEER ON OUR FAVORITE PLAYERS—WHETHER BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, OR SOFTBALL—AS THEY TAKE TO THE SCREEN, FIELD, AND FLOOR AND FILL UP THE BIG SCREEN OVER THE BAR!”**

**JEN BARNES, CEO & FOUNDER, ROUGH & TUMBLE**

Athletes Unlimited launched the Women’s Sports Bar Alliance, to bring together the growing network of bars that focus on women’s sports.



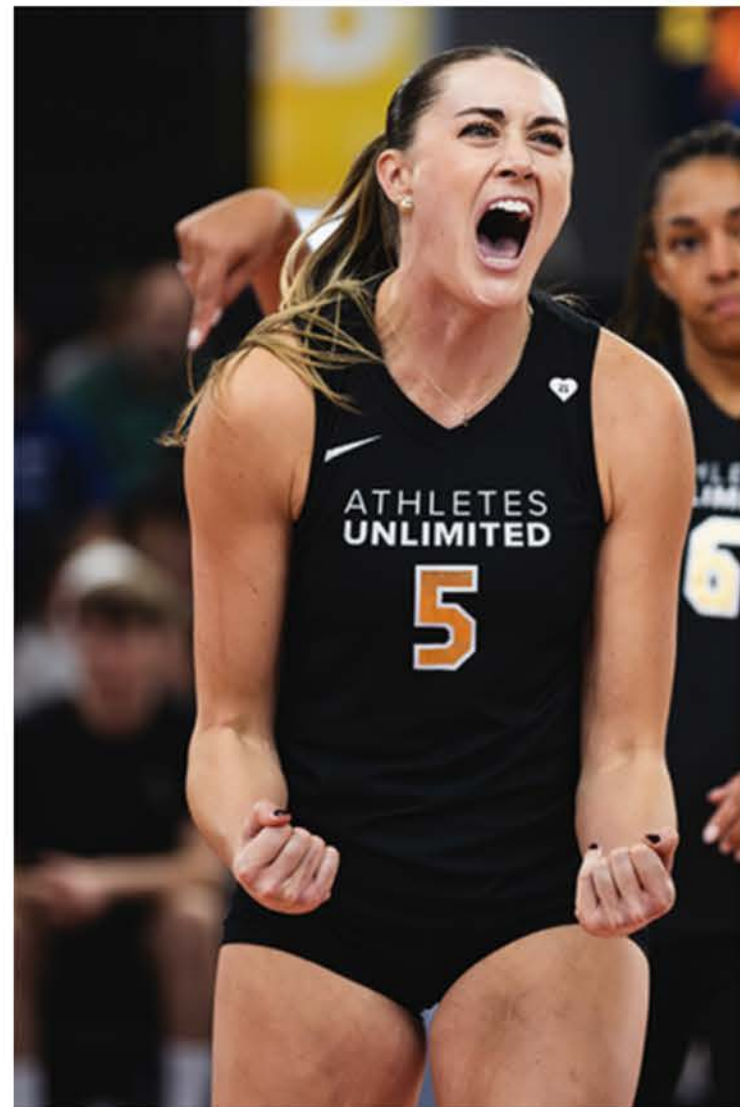
SPORTS BIZ NEWS

Athletes Unlimited launches the AU Women's Sports Bar Alliance, a first-of-its-kind partnership between its leagues and over sixteen sports bars

ATHLETES UNLIMITED  
**WOMEN'S  
SPORTS BAR  
ALLIANCE**

THE Gist

# SUSTAINABILITY



**“AS MUCH AS I LOVE BEING PART OF THE FASHION WORLD, WE DO NEED TO CALL OUT FAST FASHION IN EVERY ASPECT,” MCCAGE SAID. “JUST UNDERSTANDING WE ARE LIVING IN A CONSUMERIST SOCIETY, LIKE OVERCONSUMPTION IS LITERALLY EVERYWHERE. AND I THINK WE NEED TO, ONE, CALL IT OUT, AND TWO, JUST BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THIS PLANET IS PRECIOUS, AND BEING A GOOD GLOBAL CITIZEN IS JUST A PRIORITY OF MINE.”**

**MOLLY MCCAGE**

## REDUCING OUR FOOTPRINT

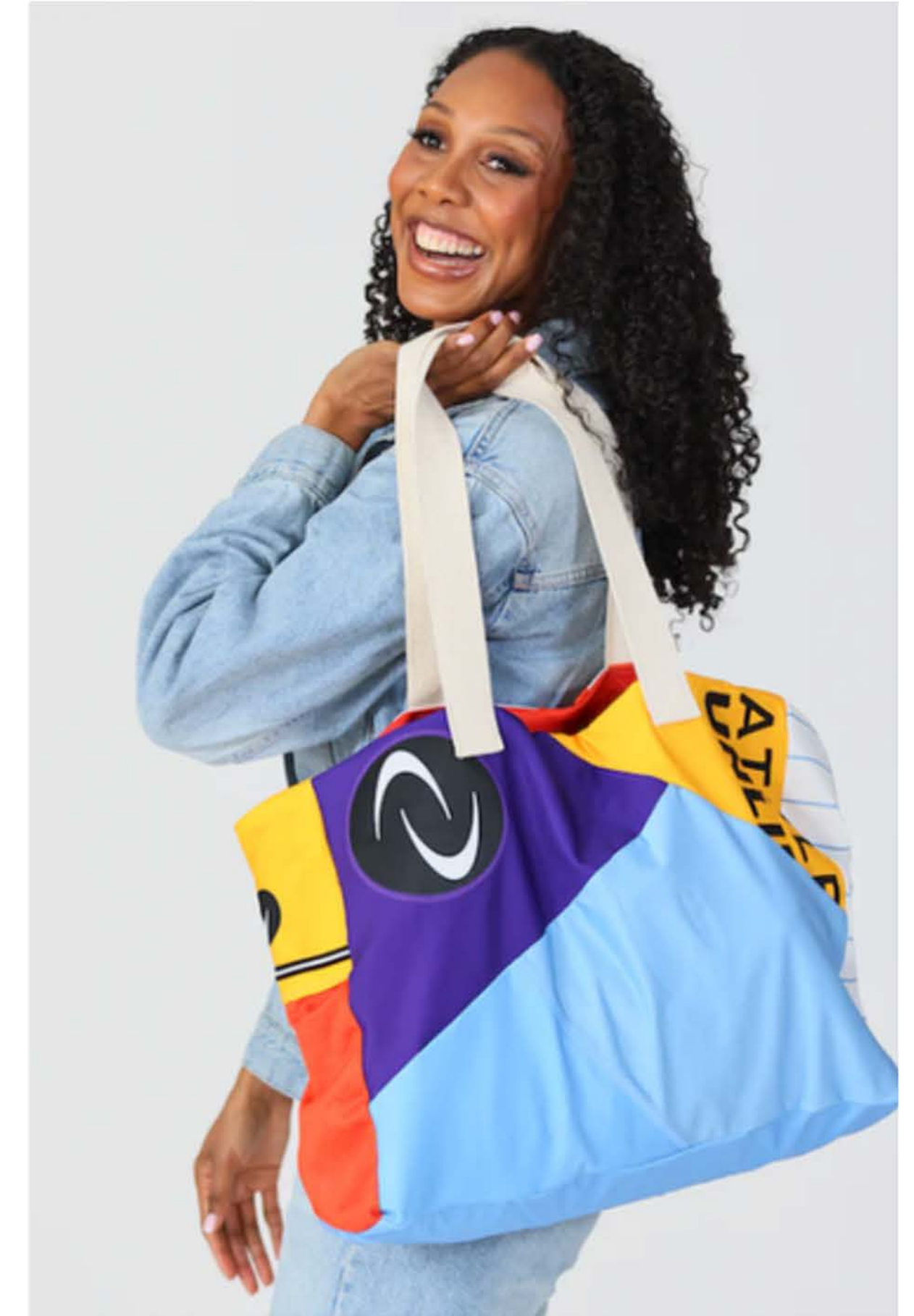
Athletes Unlimited maintains our carbon neutrality by offsetting our greenhouse gases, we also committed to lowering our per year fan intensity. In 2025, we accomplished our lowest rate yet.

2023: 0.128 mtCO2e/fan  
2024: 0.136 mtCO2e/fan  
2025: 0.075 mtCO2e/fan



Athletes Unlimited collaborated with REFRIED to turn textile surplus in to one of a kind merchandise for fans to call their own which can be found for purchase on the AUProShop.

Athletes Unlimited and fans upcycled equipment valued at \$17,660 was donated to Leveling the Playing Field and Good360. This new and gently used sports gear was redistributed to youth sports and recreation programs in under-resourced communities.



*Upcycled*  
**AU x Refried**

**SHOP NOW**



# VOLUNTEERING

## AUSL PRO GAMES AT THE LLSWS

Since 2023, Athletes Unlimited and Little League have teamed up to round out their annual Summer of Softball with a marquis event at the home of the Little League Softball World Series in Greenville, North Carolina, with the AUSL Pro Games at the LLSWS, presented by DICK'S Sporting Goods. As part of the spotlight event, all of the AUSL professional softball players come out to Greenville to play a doubleheader at East Carolina University's softball stadium, just blocks away from where the 12 teams from around the world compete for a chance at the LLSWS Championship Banner.



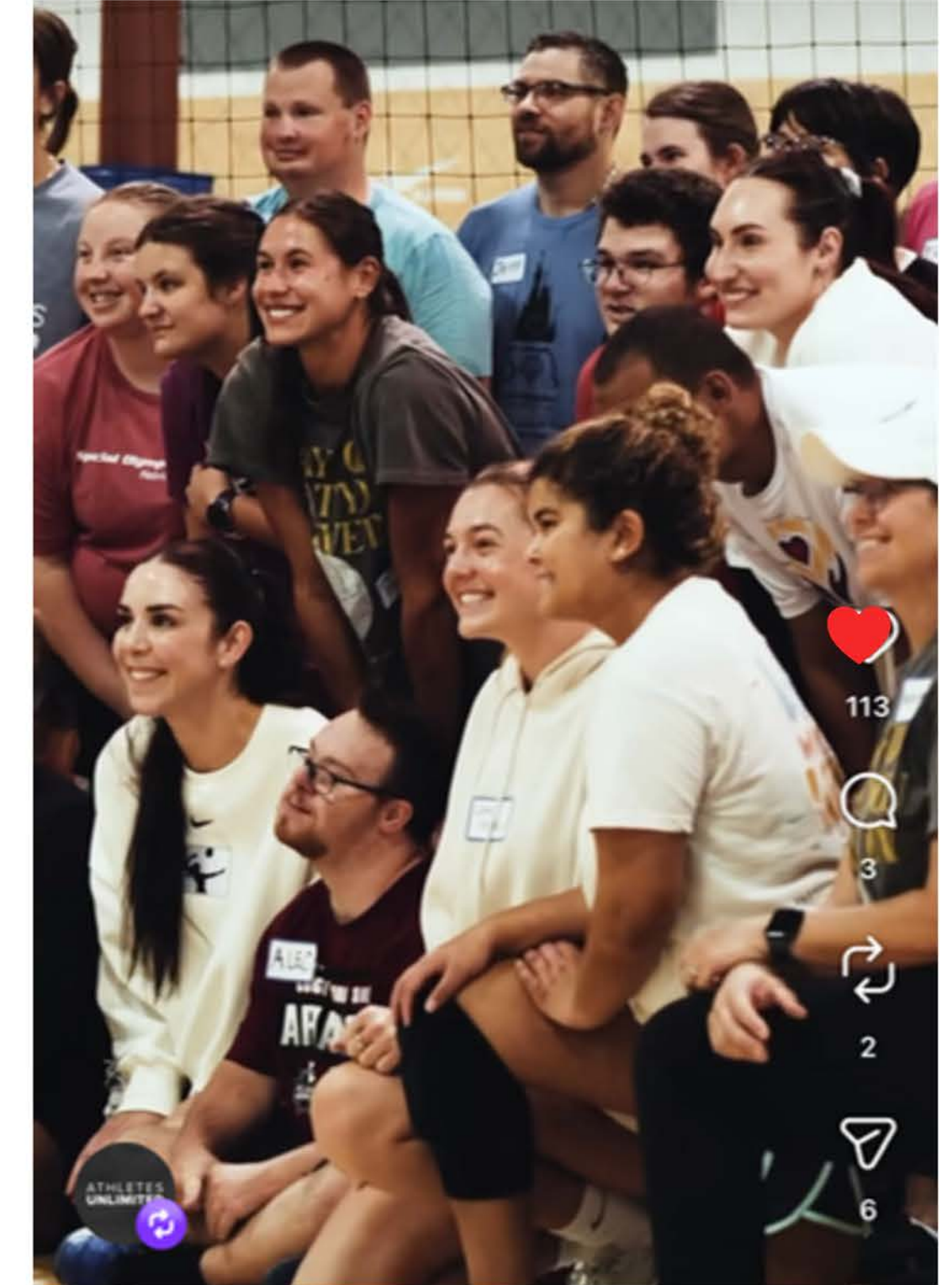
**“IT’S ALL ABOUT  
GROWING THE GAME.”**

**IT’S SEEING YOURSELF IN THE LITTLE  
KIDS THAT ARE IN THE STANDS  
WATCHING YOU. WE’VE ALL BEEN THAT  
LITTLE GIRL, SO IT’S ABOUT PLAYING  
FOR THEM AND CARRYING THAT  
MOMENTUM ON.”**

**KAYLA KOWALIK**

# AU PRO VOLLEYBALL HOSTS YOUTH SKILLS CLINIC WITH OMAHA STARLINGS

Athletes Unlimited Pro Volleyball players and coaches teamed up with former U.S. sitting volleyball Paralympian and Omaha native Brent Rasmussen to host the “Everybody Can Play” Clinic. The event welcomed 60 children and adults with disabilities.



AU Pro Volleyball athletes paid a special visit to students of the Madison Metropolitan School District, as part of the “Mad for Reading” program.

**HONESTLY, THE REASON WHY I PLAY IS TO GIVE BACK TO A LOT OF THESE YOUNG ATHLETES, SHOW THEM THAT WE CAN BE THEIR ROLE MODELS AS PROFESSIONALS, NOW ABLE TO PLAY IN THE STATES.**

**BROOKE NUNEVILLER**

## AU BASKETBALL PROS CONNECT WITH NASHVILLE YOUTH FOR COMMUNITY DAY OF GIVING



**I THINK IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO GIVE BACK," SAID BRIA HARTLEY OF HER EXPERIENCE AT PURPOSE PREP. "A LOT OF US COME FROM THE SAME COMMUNITIES THAT SOME OF THESE GIRLS ARE IN NOW. SO IT'S REALLY COOL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE PEOPLE KIND OF LIVING OUT THEIR DREAM, AND REPRESENTATION MATTERS. SO I THINK IT'S JUST REALLY COOL THAT WE'RE ABLE TO COME HERE, BE AN EXAMPLE FOR THESE GIRLS, AND JUST ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THAT THEY MAY HAVE.**

**BRIA HARTLEY**



**THANK YOU @AUPROSPORTS FOR HOSTING ST. JUDE PATIENT ADALIENE AS PART OF THE FIRST AU COMMUNITY DAY OF GIVING.**

**WE ENJOYED OUR HANDS ON HOPE ART SESSION WITH AU ATHLETES, WHERE WE SHARED OUR LIFESAVING MISSION.**

**ST. JUDE**



***I LIKED HOW INVOLVED EVERYONE WAS WHEN IT CAME TO ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS,” SAID GUARD KENISHA BELL. “EVERYONE PICKED A TASK TO DO AND WORKED TOGETHER AS A TEAM TO KEEP SMILES ON THEIR FACES.***

***KENISHA BELL***

# COACH ACROSS AMERICA X AUSL

The AUSL had its first in-season impact partnership this season with Coach Across America and their “She Changes the Game” initiative, a national effort to grow and sustain girls’ participation in sport by increasing the number of women coaches in youth athletics. Throughout the season, the AUSL worked a social media and broadcast campaign encouraging fans to support the initiative through local engagement and in-stadium activations.

On broadcast this partnership came to life through branded vignettes of select AUSL athletes sharing the impact of their collegiate head coaches on their personal and professional development as both women and athletes in addition to two branded pieces focused on Morgan Zerkle (Bandits) and Victoria Hayward (Talons) on their experiences as coaches of collegiate softball programs touching on the duality of their roles as pros and collegiate coaches, as well as what it means to coach the next generation of softball athletes.

For social, the AU Content team created 4 branded vignettes featuring athletes from each AUSL team talking about a youth coach that has had an impact on their lives as athletes and women that were posted and amplified across all AUSL platforms (IG, X, Facebook, and TikTok).

In person, the partnership continued with the AU Game Presentation team running a PSA as well as the Broadcast vignettes in-venue across all 12 markets. As a further display of commitment to this partnership and the shared mission, AU hosted reps from CAA in Rosemont, Sulphur, and Tuscaloosa for concourse tabling, first pitches, live interviews, and a post-game meet & greet with AUSL pros and youth from the Lost Boyz program. To top it all off, a custom tee was sold in three key markets focusing on the “She Changes the Game” initiative.



# THE CHAMPIONS COLLECTION

Athletes Unlimited believes in the fabric that creates culture and values threads between artistic expression and the world of pro sports. The Champions Collection was developed to create a collection of portraits of Athletes Unlimited champions by commissioning emerging artists whose work and approach speaks to our mission and values. Our goal is to draw arts and sports closer together while providing a platform for these artists and deepening our ties to local communities. In 2025, three new pieces were commissioned.

(ARTISTS L TO R: VICKY VUONG, FANTASIA ARIEL, POORNIMA MORTHY)



# BOARD OVERSIGHT & STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS

Athletes Unlimited's key stakeholders, who directly benefit from our public benefit mission, include our investors, staff, athletes, and fans. Our decision-making process is driven by clearly defined strategic goals centered on enhancing the engagement and well-being of both our athletes and fans. Regularly, across all our business units, we emphasize that business decisions should align with our identified public benefits for these stakeholders, ensuring each decision actively contributes to those benefits. As a 2025 "Best Places to Work" leader amongst sports leagues, staff engagement remains consistently high.

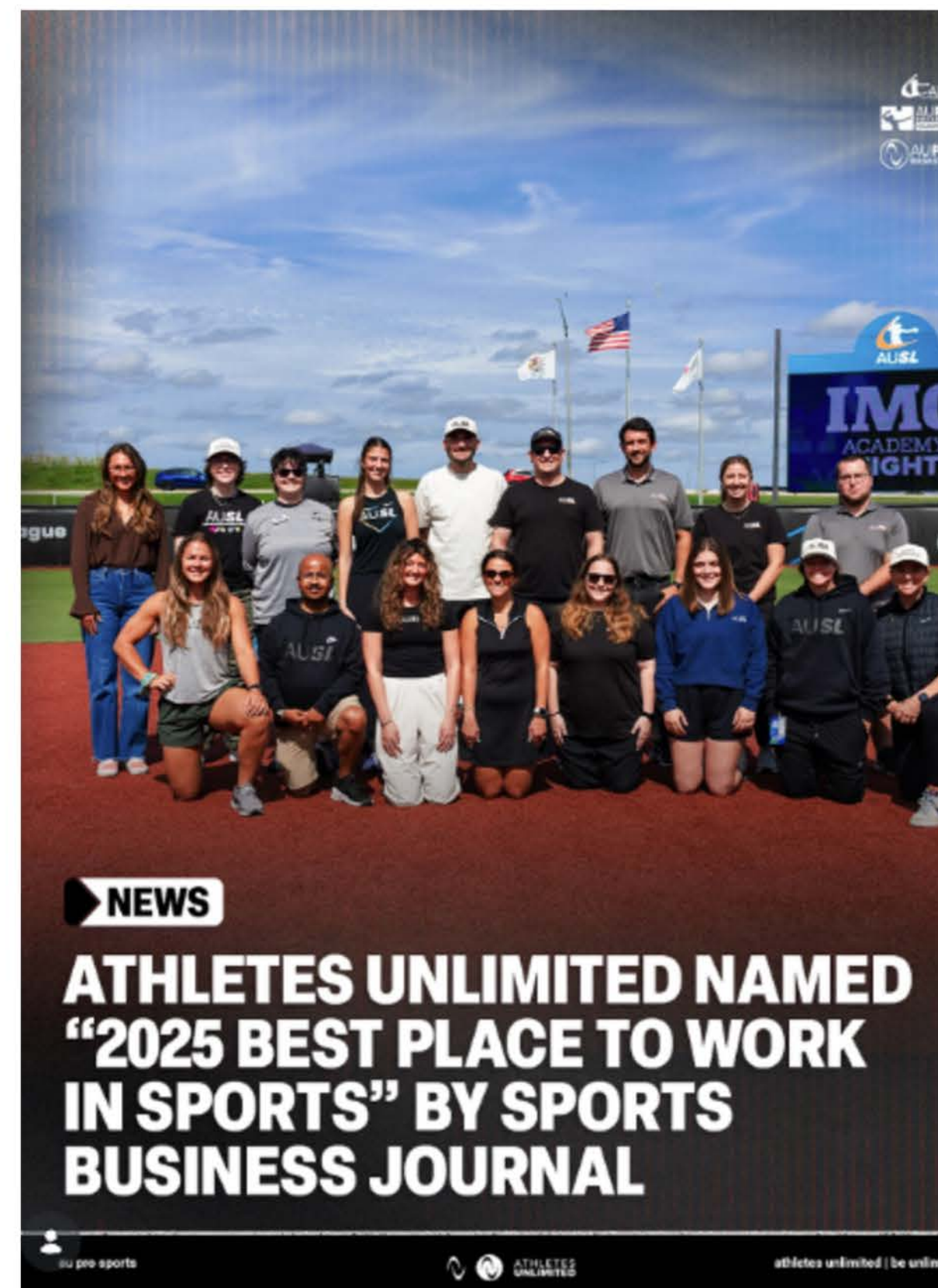
Beyond these routine operational considerations, the Athletes Unlimited Board of Directors recognizes the importance of the benefits we provide to our key stakeholders. This is a topic thoughtfully integrated into both formal Board meetings and more informal discussions.

Two of the seven seats on the Board are now held by Athletes Unlimited athletes, who are selected by a vote of all current and former Athletes Unlimited athletes.

Athletes Unlimited successfully achieved its stated public benefits, substantially meeting its key metrics, with strong and consistent support for these benefits from our employees and Board members.

We also maintain several stakeholder touchpoints, including an annual Insider Update meeting. This meeting is offered online to all athletes, staff, sponsors, investors, Board members, and the general public, accessible via free livestream without any registration requirements. It is also streamed on LinkedIn.

Board meetings continue to be open not only to Board members but also to observers. Athletes Unlimited leadership ensures participation from staff with relevant expertise to provide comprehensive answers to all Board members' inquiries.



**NEWS**  
**ATHLETES UNLIMITED NAMED "2025 BEST PLACE TO WORK IN SPORTS" BY SPORTS BUSINESS JOURNAL**

# CONCLUSION

This report is more than a summary of our impact; it's proof of our commitment. While we already match the standards of leagues decades our senior, our goal isn't to follow their lead—it's to redefine the game. We've accomplished a lot, but we're just getting started. Thank you for being part of this trajectory.

