



STUDENT PROGRAM FOR ACADEMIC & ATHLETIC TRANSITIONING

Case Statement



Everett Bass
Photographer

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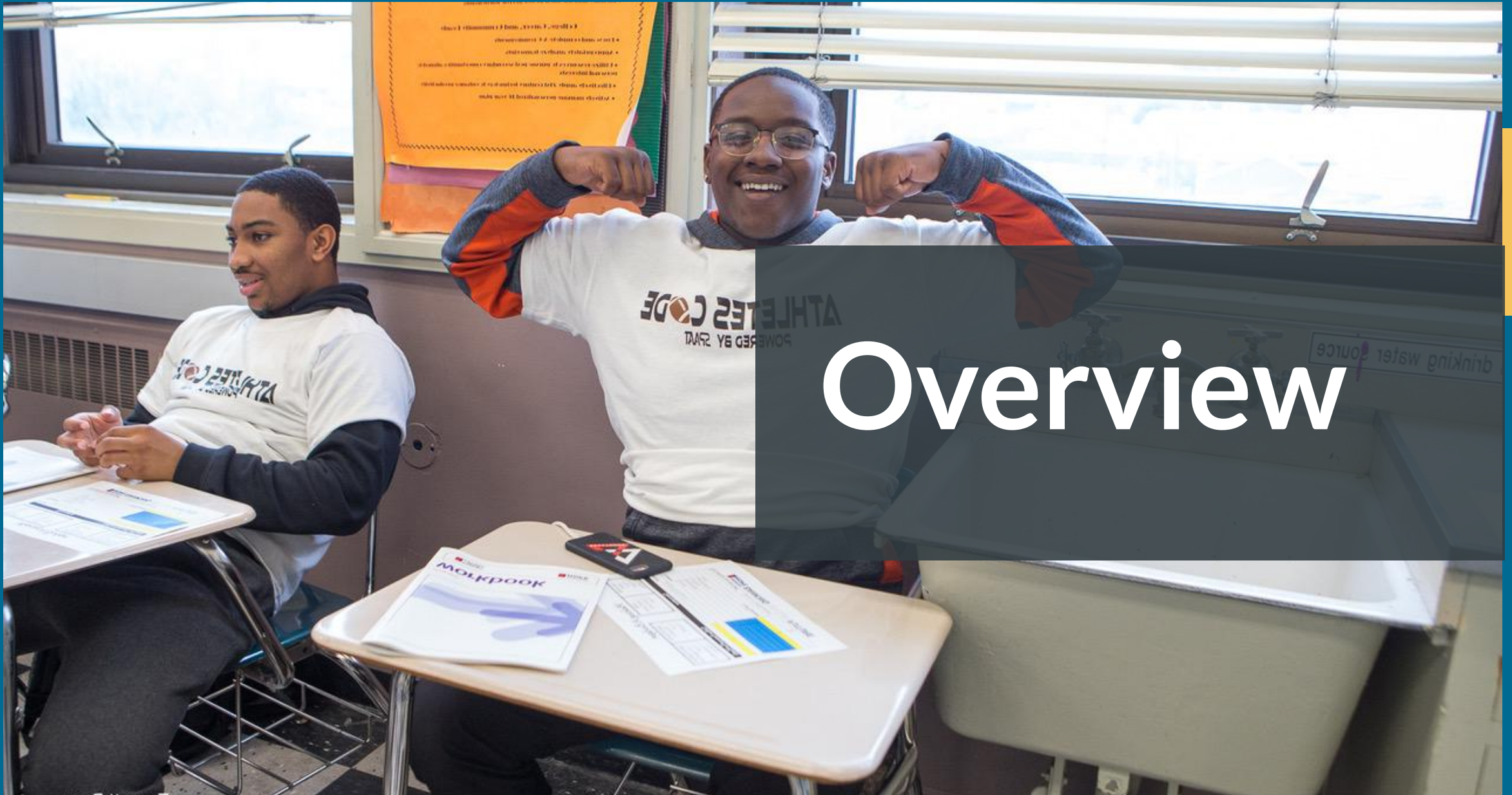
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Mission

This mission of the Student Program for Academic & Athletic Transitioning (SPAAT) is to increase the number of students and athletes prepared for success in college, careers, and life after sports.






Overview

Founding Purpose

SPAAT uses the power of sport to systematically transform lives at the individual level and to create positive change in the greater community.

SPAAT's programs serve students ages 12-19 who are passionate about their sport but struggle academically. SPAAT's innovative curriculum creates a college-environment culture and provides student-athletes with the knowledge and support they need to make informed decisions about their academic futures. It prepares them for success in college, their careers, and life beyond sports.



Each year, SPAAT makes a life-changing difference to hundreds of Bay Area student-athletes, and, since 2003, has assisted student-athletes in securing millions of dollars in collegiate academic and athletic scholarships

Today, SPAAT is the leading provider of student-athlete support services in the East Bay.

SPAAT Up for Life

The name, SPAAT, relates to a 'spat', the protective outer sleeve or tape that fits over cleat shoes worn on artificial turf fields. It supports the ankle, allowing the player better control over body movement and overall athletic performance. Putting on spats is part of a player's ritual of getting ready to play a turf-field match.

Just like the on-field spat, the Student Program for Academic & Athletic Transitioning (SPAAT) was created to provide student-athletes with the support they need to be ready to thrive in the game of life, with a goal of individual self-actualization.

SPAAT is 100% redefining the definition of student-athlete in Oakland and beyond. SPAAT's student-athletes:

92% From Low-income Families

88% First-generation college-bound students

87% Increased college readiness

84% Graduated College-ready (satisfied all courses need for University)

100% High School Graduation Rate (graduation rate in Oakland is 44%)

97% Accepted to a College/University of Their Choice



Too many Oakland students are headed towards academic failure

Oakland student-athletes face a number of obstacles in completing high school and attending a college or university of their choice -- relative scarcity of positive role models in their community and school, lack of information regarding the college application process, limited access to college preparatory programs, reduced expectations from surrounding communities and inadequate preparation due to poor educational facilities and resources.

SPAAT programs steer student-athletes away from criminal activities, alcohol, and drugs by increasing their college awareness and decision-making skills, then giving them healthy values, enhancing their self-esteem and offering them positive group mentorship.

The goal is to ensure that the student-athletes enrolled in SPAAT programs recognize the need for a strong academic plan and have the academic support they require to reach their academic potential.



Less than **17%** of African American students are proficient in English and math



Only **72%** of students of color graduate high school



Less than **39%** of African American males graduate high school college-ready.

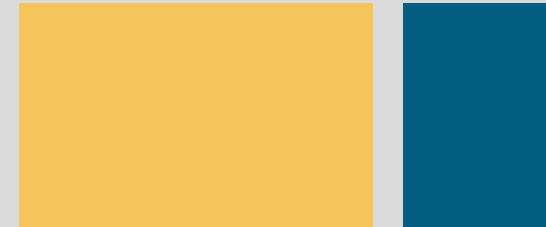
Sports as the Solution



Athletics is a \$3 billion dollar global industry and an effective gateway to increase student engagement and achievement.



While many youth gravitate to sports as a way out of poverty the chances of playing at the professional level are minimal. The odds of experiencing the success these men have in the sports industry are less than 1%



What are the odds of a high school athlete making a pro roster?

Of every student athlete, only a rare few will go on the playing professionally. The following are the odds of a student athlete going pro for 4 major sports:



1,860 : 1
NBA Basketball

764 : 1
MLB Baseball

603 : 1
NFL Football

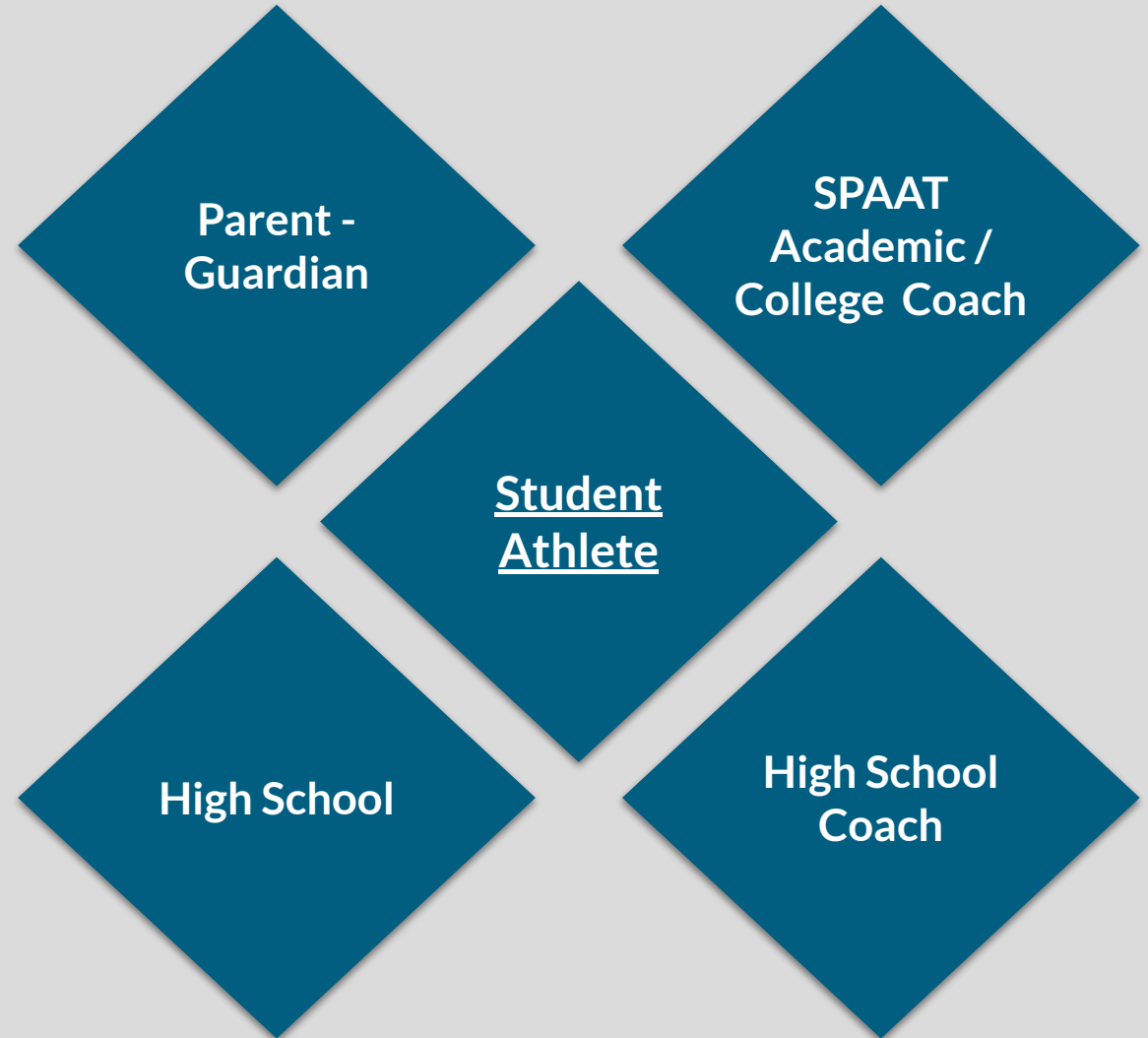
835 : 1
MLS Soccer

SPAAT's goal is to **leverage sports** as a means of creating a safe space for youth to grow, take risks, develop life skills, and thrive as young people, while also preparing them for **life after sports**

To that end, SPAAT has developed its "**Village Model**." This model integrates within a students' already existing school and home lives. The Village Model garners buy in from parents by delivering a series of one-on-one sessions, workshops and camps catered to the needs of the most vulnerable students and athletes.

Services offered by SPAAT through the Village Model include:

- Academic skill building
- Case management
- Academic advising
- College entrance exam prep
- College & Career planning





Founder's Story



In high school, SPAAT's co-founder, Harold Pearson, wanted to play sports and go to college but knew nothing about the college admissions process. His school never provided the resources to help him apply for and succeed in higher-level education.

After graduating high school, Harold attended a 2-year college where his counselor advised him to stay in a remedial math class and take an English as a Second Language course even though English was his first language. In response, Harold took it upon himself to seek out a new counselor and put himself on track by transferring to a four-year university. He went on to graduate from the University of California at Berkeley with a BA degree in Business Communications.

Harold's experiences as a high school star athlete, a 2-year college transfer, a Division I football player and a business professional inspired him to create SPAAT. His life story serves as a model for SPAAT students, showing them a pathway to achieve success in their own lives.

Awards

Financial Assistance



Oakland ESPY Awards

The Oakland ESPY (Excellence in Sports Performance Yearly) Awards is a red-carpet event recognizing Oakland's top student-athletes for their academic, athletic and community achievements as well as their extraordinary coaches.

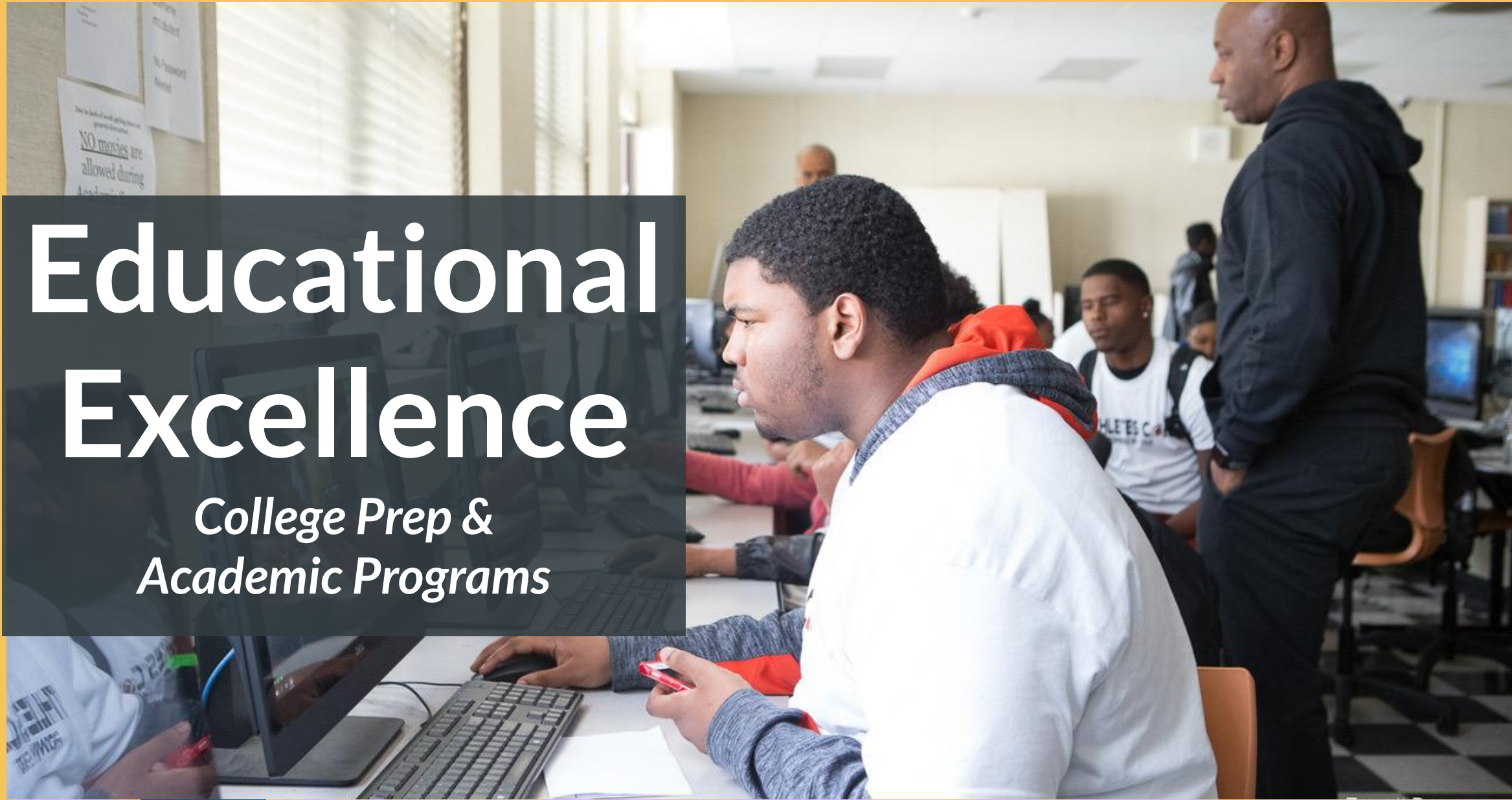
SPAAT works in collaboration with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) and the Oakland Athletic League (OAL) to host the Oakland ESPY Awards. The annual event honors student-athletes that have displayed excellence in the classroom, on the field, and in their community.

The ESPY Awards Ceremony has become an inspirational and memorable annual occasion for approximately 300 guests, coaches, sponsors and student-athletes that are in attendance. Previous years' special guests have included NBA legend Gary Payton, NFL cornerback Marcus Peters, Mayor Libby Schaaf, MLB legend Bip Roberts, NBA player Adonal Foyle, NFL cornerback TJ Carrie, and HBO comedian Tony Roberts.



Awards include:

- OAL Male & Female Middle School Athletes of the Year
- OAL Male & Female High School Athletes of the Year
- OAL Middle & High School Coaches of the Year
- OAL All-Academic Team
- OAL MVPs
- Oakland Legends Award



Educational Excellence

*College Prep &
Academic Programs*

SPAAT offers a variety of academic services and college preparation resources to students year-round.

ACADEMIC & ATHLETIC CASE MANAGEMENT

SPAAT works closely with teachers and coaching staff in the Oakland Unified School District to regularly monitor the academic and athletic progress of student-athletes. Academic and athletic progress is assessed in several ways, including progress reports completed by faculty and coaches and self-reporting completed by students in regular meetings with SPAAT staff.

COLLEGE CONDITIONING

Just as students need to be physically conditioned to play sports, they need to be mentally conditioned for college. The College Conditioning program is facilitated through our 'College Playbook - The guide for the college-bound student-athlete'. This resource features a unique series of college access activities that ensure students have the conditioning to be ready for success in college



ACADEMIC SKILL-BUILDING

Some student-athletes have trouble advancing from basic to complex assignments, tests and projects. SPAAT's academic skill-building workshops cover the core subject areas, including algebra and English, giving students the foundation needed to progress to the next stages of their education. These skill-building workshops, facilitated by SPAAT academic coaches and college advisors, are held weekly at local Middle and High Schools throughout the school year to provide consistent one-on-one and group tutoring as well as academic performance training sessions to help improve grades, test scores, and academic confidence.



SAT/ACT AWARENESS

All colleges and universities require students to take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) as part of college admissions requirements. Beginning their junior year, SPAAT students take a seven-week SAT or ACT preparation course held on their school campus. At the end of the program, students can identify the types of questions on the SAT/ACT and respond successfully.

ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE TRAINING

SPAAT has also partnered with the Oakland Unified School District's Oakland Athletic League to offer a series of student-athlete camps every year. The goal of each camp is achieved by educating students in the areas of academics, college readiness, nutritional awareness, physical fitness, financial fitness, and personal development. The curriculum features a series of tests, evaluations, workshops and professional and motivational speakers.

#SPRINT2COLLEGE

One of the many obstacles that young adults face today is a lack of information about why they should go to college, how to get to college and what it takes to succeed once they get there. The goal of #Sprint2College is to ensure each student finds their best college fit based on the details of the college admissions process. #Sprint2College provides one-on-one college admissions advice and guides student-athletes through the entire process, from college planning to the NCAA eligibility registration and guidelines.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

SPAAT works closely with teachers and coaching staff in the Oakland Unified School District to regularly monitor the academic and athletic progress of student-athletes. Academic and athletic progress is assessed in several ways, including progress reports completed by faculty and coaches and self-reporting completed by students in regular meetings with SPAAT staff.

SPAAT in 2020

SPAAT's *continued efforts* during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The organization is working to provide resources and support services to Oakland middle and high school students throughout the course of the year. SPAAT continues to identify virtual opportunities to provide its academic and college support services, as well as other activities. As of May 2020, programming will include the following virtual offerings.

Group Activities:

- Academic Tutoring
- College Advising
- Life Skills
- Athletic Training

Individual Activities:

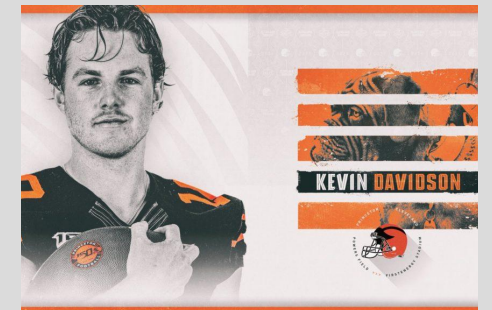
- College Advising
- Support Services

In addition, SPAAT is identifying ways to interact with students and parents virtually and via social media. SPAAT's hearts are with everyone during these unprecedented times.

Two *SPAAT Alumni* Signed as *NFL Free Agents* After 2020 NFL Draft

Kevin Davidson of Princeton University and Javin White of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, were signed as free agents after the 2020 NFL draft wrapped up Saturday night. Davidson will play for the Cleveland Browns and White the Las Vegas Raiders.

Both Davidson and White were coached by legendary 3-time state championship coach, Michael Peters at the powerhouse football program at McClymonds High School in Oakland. His son, Baltimore Raven and all-pro, Marcus Peters, was the first of now three NFL players that Michael Peters has coached.





SPAAT'S Fight for Racial Justice

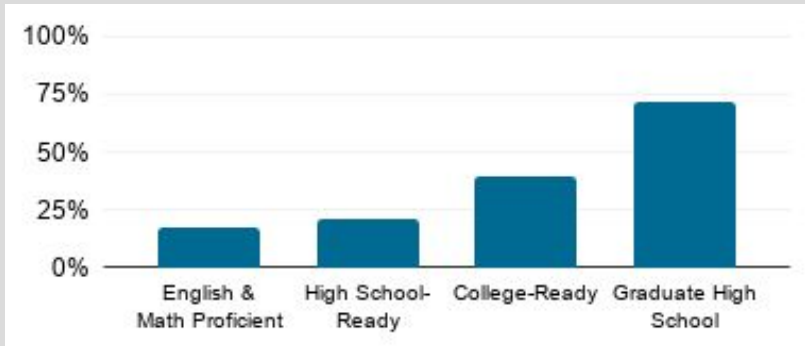
*Following the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Rayshard Brooks, the Black Lives Matter movement has brought racial discrimination to the national stage in a new light. A key component to fighting this entrenched racial discrimination lies in **guiding today's youth**. SPAAT is uniquely positioned to provide such guidance through its innovative program that uses **sports as a tool to transform lives and prepare youth for success in college, careers and life after sports***

SPAAT'S WORK

SPAAT is using the power of sports to systematically transform lives of youth in Oakland through strategic and robust programming that includes:

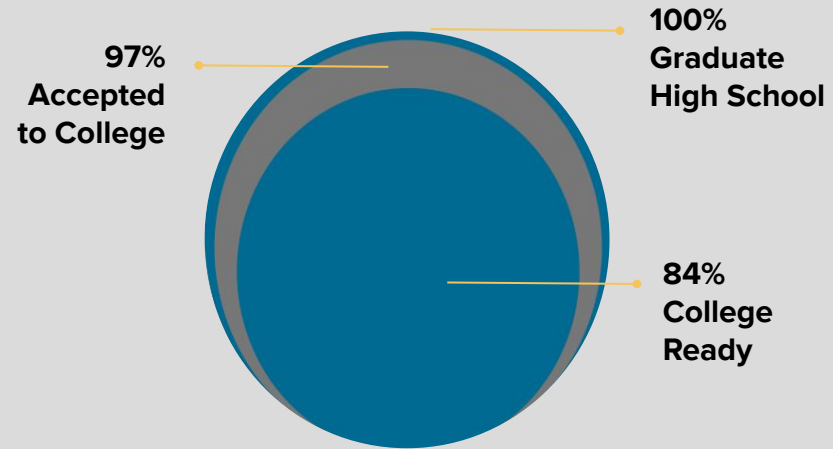
- Support for over 600 student athletes in 2019-20.
- SPAAT students receive an average of 55 extra days of school instruction in the form of academic coaching, college advising, tutoring, mentoring and skills training

Oakland's Black Students



In the face of the alarming statistics, SPAAT has assisted student-athletes in securing millions of dollars in collegiate academic and athletic scholarships to ensure all students, regardless of their socio-economic status, have the tools and resources needed to succeed.

SPAAT's Students



“Our students hear about the importance of a great education but are inundated with dreams of playing professional sports as the only opportunity for upward mobility. SPAAT was founded in 2003 to end the athletic exploitation of student athletes, especially Black males, by empowering them to view sports as an opportunity and to see a life beyond sports.”

- Harold Pearson, Founder & CEO



Vision for the Future





Through the **College & Career Performance Initiative**, the goal is to expand support programs and serve every high school and middle school in the Oakland Unified School District.

This plan includes:

- Impacting a minimum of 2300 students & families
- Increasing student attendance
- Increasing graduation rates at all OUSD schools
- Increasing CSU/UC (a-g) completion
- Enhancing college-going culture & climate
- Increasing parent involvement and engagement
- Increasing number of students receiving academic & athletic scholarships
- Increasing college completion

SPAAT Students Feel They:

90%

Do more classwork

89%

Have greater connections to caring adults

89%

Have increased confidence and self-esteem

90%

Have improved decision-making and goal setting

90%

Have learned skills they will need in the future

The Opportunity

\$6,340,000 (3-Year Statement of Need)

2020-2021	\$1,044,000
2021-2022	\$2,100,000
2022-2023	\$2,995,000
2021 OAKLAND ESPY AWARDS	\$200,000



Testimonials

SPAAT helped me to realize that there is much more to life than the streets and that a college education would be my ticket to success. SPAAT helped me to change my life and is an excellent resource for many students who need someone to turn to.

- Johnny Terrell, Oakland Technical and Humboldt State University graduate

I joined SPAAT's Ring of Champions because I was once a student-athlete with academic and career goals beyond the playing field. SPAAT allows young male and female student-athletes to develop a game plan for college, career and community.

- Brian McGhee, Ring of Champions Advisory Council

SPAAT had a big impact on (my son) Emoni's success in completing high school. SPAAT has taught my son leadership, responsibility, independence & commitment. My son was 80 credits short of graduating. SPAAT supported him through his long and difficult journey.

- SPAAT Parent

My son, Harold, enrolled into SPAAT as a freshman. Four years later, after four summer camps, college visits, hours of tutoring and counseling, SAT and ACT prep classes, and workshops on and off of the field; my son is now a proud student-athlete and high school graduate that will attend Grandview University in the fall on an athletic scholarship. SPAAT has created high expectations and offered the guidance necessary for my son to become successful.

- LaNiesha Halcomb, SPAAT Parent



Harold Pearson

CEO & Founder

As the CEO of SPAAT, Harold is responsible for leading our organization strategically to fulfill our mission. He is an innovative CEO with 13+ years experience managing and creating programs and initiatives in the fields of Education, Athletics, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Since taking leadership of SPAAT in 2008, he has developed systems that have assisted Bay Area students and athletes in securing millions of dollars in academic and athletic scholarships. Because of the support provided by SPAAT at McClymonds High School, it has the top academic performance outcomes for African American males in the state of California.

Mr. Pearson draws on his history as a highly recruited athlete, 2-year college transfer, and a Division 1 football player to address the challenges student-athletes face adjusting to life from high school to the collegiate level and beyond. He has also served as assistant commissioner for the CIF Oakland Section and was formerly a partner at a San Francisco based litigation-outsourcing firm. A graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, Mr. Pearson received a BA in business in addition to being a three year letterman for the California football team. Mr. Pearson is an active member of the Western Association of College Admissions Counselors (WACAC), and the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA)



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Attorney; Director, PolarityTE, Inc.; Retired Associate General Counsel and Corporate Secretary; McKesson

Tasion Kwamilele

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Regina Guillory

Board Member

Retired Government Administrator

Solomon Hughes

Board Member

Description

Jimmie Wilder

Board Member

Description

Fatai Oshi-Ojuri

Board Member

Description

Key Staff

Michael Peters

Head Academic Coach

Coach Peters has served as a high school coach, mentor and champion for youth in Oakland, especially at the McClymonds Educational Complex for over 25 years. As a McClymonds alum, athlete, mentor and coach Mr. Peters has developed a college eligibility criteria that supports the student-athlete's holistic academic success. He has personally assisted over 100 Oakland student-athletes in securing college scholarships through academics and athletics. Coach Peters has led the McClymonds Football team to ten consecutive Oakland Section Silver Bowl Championships. In 2018, he led McClymonds to become the first public school to win three straight CIF state titles in the modern era of high school sports. An amazing feat considering the Warriors have been moved up to a higher division for every state title run. Peters was also named the California Coaching Association State Coach of the Year, the 2018 Oakland ESPYS Coach of the Year, 2018 Cal-Hi Sports State Coach of the Year and is a finalist for 2019 National Coach of the Year. Coach Peters, is also well-known as the father of All-Pro NFL cornerback and SPAAT alumnus, Marcus Peters.³⁴³⁵

Denzale Johnson

College & Career Advisor, Athletics

Denzale is a SPAAT alum from the class of 2009. He is responsible for creating college and career plans for middle and high school students that participate in athletics. Born and raised in Oakland, CA, he was exposed to and experienced the reality of struggling communities -- the lack of social justice and educational equity. His challenging upbringing developed his passion for community development and youth empowerment, leading him to be consistently involved in diverse community-based and student organizations in the Bay Area to serve disadvantaged and first-generation students to reach for higher education. His African American identity grounds his work in bridging academic research and community praxis to empower my community in culturally relevant ways. Denzale was a standout high school student-athlete but chose to attend the University of California, Berkeley on a full-ride academic scholarship and went on to obtain his BA in public policy and city planning. Since graduating he has worked for UC Berkeley's Destination College Advising Corp and is also the Head Male Counselor for Upward Bound's Trio program



SPAAT Ring of Champions

*The Ring of Champions is a group of **passionate and influential** sports, community and business **leaders** committed to SPAAT's mission. They support, advocate and consult on initiatives that lead to **real change for youth** in Oakland and beyond.*

Akintunde Ahmad

SPAAT Alumni & Delacorte Magazine
Fellow, Columbia Journalism Review

Lorenzo Alexander

NFL Buffalo Bills, Linebacker

Na'il Benjamin

Managing Partner, Benjamin Law Group

Brian McGhee

AAMA, Program Manager

Michael Bobino

Athletes In Touch, CEO

Woodie Dixon

General Counsel, Chegg, Inc.

Chris Grant

Pac-12 Network, Vice President

Detra Paige

Oakland Athletics, Director of Alumni
Relations

Qiava Harper-Martinez

Oakland Raiders, Vice President,
Premium Seating & Service

Adriane Henderson

Kingston 11, Owner

Greg McConnell

The McConnell Group, CEO

Gary Payton

NBA Hall of Fame Legend

SPAAT's Partners



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