



Fight For Children Quarterly | Q1 News & Updates



A Message from Our President

Dear Fight For Children Family,

As we begin 2026, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for each of you. Whether you're a nonprofit member, program partner, funder, community stakeholder, government agency, policymaker, or a professional sports team, your role in supporting youth sports programs is invaluable. Together, we ensure young people can access the life-changing power of sports, positively impacting their futures and communities.

2025 was an incredible year for Fight For Children, and I'm excited to share a few highlights:

- **A New Look for FFC:** Our updated [website](#) features a refreshed brand identity, reflecting our clear mission statement: *"We unite and fuel the youth sports community in the DC metro area, ensuring more young people can discover and access the life-changing power of sports."*
- **Youth Sports Town Halls:** We hosted two [Town Halls](#) in 2025, one in June with then-Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie and another in December to "Meet the Moment" during the government shutdown. These events allowed us to connect with stakeholders across the youth sports ecosystem.
- **New Members & Partners:** We welcomed three new members to our [Youth Sports Collaborative](#) - 703 Warriors, Dance Place, and Life Pieces to Masterpieces—and gained new funding partners, including Under Armour, JK Moving, and the Alzner Foundation. We were also selected as a MOVE Fund grant recipient, focusing on coalition building.
- **Youth Sports Day:** We hosted our annual [Youth Sports Day](#), a celebration that brought together over 2,000 community members to celebrate the power of youth sports.
- **Launch of Early Access to Sports:** In partnership with 2-4-1 Sports and DCPS, we launched our [Early Access to Sports](#) initiative. This before-school program helps kids get to school on time and ready to learn. It offers a variety of sports activities, promoting sport sampling, reducing truancy, and providing a positive, structured start to their day.
- **Expanding Our Team:** In 2025, we added Shiree Skinner, our Chief Development Officer, in June, followed by new Board member Chike Aguh and Program Officer Joe Hooks in December. Learn more about them below.

As we move into 2026, our mission remains more important than ever. Through our Youth Sports Collaborative, we continue to provide free, high-quality programs to over 45,000 young people, despite the rising costs of youth sports.

I'm excited for the year ahead and look forward to sharing more with you. Stay tuned for our updates, and please feel free to reach out to me, our team, or any of our members.

With gratitude,
James Kallusky, Ed.D.
President

New Faces, New Momentum

We are thrilled to grow our team and our leadership with two powerhouse additions to the Fight For Children family.



Chike Aguh | Board of Directors

To **accelerate** systemic change, we need visionary leadership. Chike is a nationally recognized expert in innovation and economic mobility, with experience shaping policy and strategy at the highest levels—including as Chief Innovation Officer for the U.S. Department of Labor.

His Mission: Ensuring future industries create clear, equitable pathways for every child through smart policy, innovation, and systems change.

The Vibe: A visionary strategist with a heart for his hometown—driven, insightful, and future-focused.



Shiree Skinner | Chief Development Officer

Shiree helps **fuel** and **accelerate** our work by strengthening the fundraising and development systems that sustain our mission. With decades of nonprofit leadership experience, she brings deep expertise across major gifts, grants, sponsorships, board development, and long-term sustainability.

Her Mission: Fueling our four-pillar model by building the resources and partnerships that allow youth-serving organizations to grow, lead, and thrive.

The Vibe: Strategic, steady, and deeply committed to lifting up nonprofit leaders.



Joseph Hooks | Program Officer

Joseph joins us to help **recruit** and **fuel** our member organizations. With over a decade in sports-based youth development and as the founder of the **480 Club**, he knows exactly what grassroots leaders need to thrive.

His Mission: Expanding equitable youth sports opportunities and building partnerships that support wellness and academic engagement across the DMV.

The Vibe: Energetic, community-focused, and ready to play.

**Member Spotlight: So Kids SOAR
Building Pathways to Independence**



This quarter, we're celebrating **So Kids SOAR** for the successful wrap of their "Your Path to Success" program. By combining vocational training with inclusive sports, they are proving that "playing" is the first step toward "becoming" independent.

- **Why it matters:** This program bridges the gap for youth with physical and developmental disabilities, fostering a sense of belonging that lasts long after the game ends.

[See the Impact in Action](#)

Rallying the Community: D.C. Youth Sports Town Hall



We closed 2025 with a full house! Our second **D.C. Youth Sports Town Hall** brought together nonprofit leaders, policymakers, and partners like **DC**

- The highlight? A fireside chat with **Lewis George** centered on a singular goal: **Equitable Access**. The energy in the room confirmed that while the challenges are systemic, our collective power is unstoppable.

[Watch the Recap](#)

The 2026 Playbook: What's Next

As we move further into 2026, FFC is focused on accelerating the youth sports ecosystem by:

- **Serve more youth:** Expand our Early Access to Sports Program to additional elementary schools
- **Radical Collaboration:** Turning 37+ individual organizations into one unified front for D.C. youth.
- **Data-Driven Equity:** Using the DC Youth Sports Fund to invest where the need is greatest.

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