



Impact Report

2023 – 2024

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Executive Summary

GTZ Athletics was established in the summer of 2023 through a microgrant from Nevada's First-Generation Network at the University of Nevada, Reno. The organization was created to support student – athletes from low – income backgrounds, as well as those who would be first – generation college students, with academic tutoring, mentorship, and athletic guidance at no cost to students, families, or coaches.

In just 18 months, GTZ Athletics has served **238 student – athletes** across Reno and Sparks:

- 101 students were in high school, and 137 students were in middle school.
- 57 students were successfully transitioned from middle school to high school.
- 68 joined extracurricular clubs, including multicultural and math clubs, which demonstrates higher engagement and stronger decision-making skills.

Through tutoring, workshops, and one-on-one mentorship, student – athletes reported feeling more confident in academics, athletics, and goal setting. High school seniors supported by GTZ achieved a **100% graduation rate**, with graduates moving on to trade school programs in fire science and HVAC. Middle schoolers became more open to exploring sports and clubs, while high school teams like Wooster's girls' soccer program gained unity, leadership skills, and community involvement.

Not every outcome was positive; barriers such as injuries, family challenges, and lack of transportation prevented some student – athletes from reaching their goals. Still, GTZ provided a critical bridge between teachers, coaches, and families by filling gaps in communication and accountability.

Looking forward, GTZ Athletics envisions growing its services through technology driven solutions, stronger family engagement, and expanded programming beyond Reno/Sparks. With additional support, GTZ can continue building pathways to academic achievement, athletic participation, and lifelong success for Nevada's youth.



History, Mission, Vision and Purpose of GTZ Athletics

History: GTZ Athletics officially began as a non-profit in the summer of 2023, through a grant provided by Nevada's First-Generation Network (NFGN) located at the University of Nevada, Reno. GTZ Athletics was given the grant to help provide services such as tutoring, mentorship, and coaching with an emphasis on helping student-athletes who come from low - income families and/or will be the first generation in their family to attend a higher education institution.

Mission: GTZ is committed to continuing its support for local student-athletes in the Reno/Sparks area. Our services include providing comprehensive academic tutoring across all subjects and guidance related to athletic participation (whether they are continuing in a current sport or exploring a new one), giving encouragement and hosting thoughtful discussions about life beyond middle and high school. We also strive to actively involve families in every step of their student-athletes' journey. This helps foster a strong support system both on and off the field.

Vision: GTZ aspires to provide as many services to as many student-athletes and families as possible, with hopes of reaching beyond the Reno/Sparks area.

Purpose of GTZ Athletics, Directly from the Non-Profits' Articles of Incorporation:

Article 2. Section 2. Specific Purposes and Objectives

The specific objectives and purposes of this corporation shall be to create and operate an independent educational resource that provides tutoring and mentorship opportunities for student – athletes considered at-risk youth as well as youth living in specific low-income socio-economic situations. To fulfill this purpose, the corporation will:

- (1) operate and manage the GTZ Athletics services;
- (2) provide weekly guidance and or tutoring services;
- (3) create blueprint pathway of options towards academic and athletic success;
- (4) establish support throughout the school year building a rapport with the student athletes involved in sports,
- (5) encourage to join extracurricular activities in order to improve their overall experience in education and finally,
- (6) to promote higher education such as but not limited to four year universities, community colleges and trade schools.



Impact by the Numbers

The microgrant provided by Nevada's First-Generation Network was funded for 18 months, spanning from the summer of 2023 to December of 2024. The grant helped pay for services such as academic tutoring, hosting team workshops, one-on-one meetings, and family informational meetings. It also helped purchase sports gear for teams/individuals, coaching or advising for student – athletes, and finally professional development for coaching staff to help better build their programs. All these services and resources were provided for free to the student–athletes, their families/guardians, and the coaches who were interested in the program.

A total of 238 student–athletes received different programming that met different needs.

- 101 High school student–athletes were served.
- 137 Middle school student–athletes were served.
- 57 student–athletes were 8th graders in 2023 who went onto high school in 2024.
- 50 middle school student–athletes joined the multicultural club at their school. *
- 18 middle school student–athletes joined the math club at their school. *

** It was important to note that student–athletes who committed to joining a club showed more engagement and tools of success within the program and throughout the school year.*

- An average of 20 hours of programing per month were delivered in general.
- Typically, services were provided Monday through Friday ranging anywhere from 30 minutes up to 2 hours.
- Most athletes asked for individual training in their sport during vacation/school breaks.
- Most teams/coaches asked for workshops/support during their sporting season.

Student–athletes making the transition from middle school to high school reported feeling better prepared and more confident in their sport, as well as in academics.

Student–athletes already in high school were able to make strong decisions regarding their short-term and long-term goals.

Middle school student–athletes were more open to being involved in trying out more sports and clubs after participating in the program. They reported feeling a sense of empowerment within the school. Student–athletes who did not commit to at least one sport or club did not demonstrate an ability to use the appropriate tools for success and often made poor decisions when confronted with obstacles.

Unfortunately, there was a third group of student – athletes who could not achieve their goals due to circumstances such as injuries, transportation issues, or lack of parent/guardian/family support at home.



Students That Were Successful

Of the 238 student-athletes served, 57 transitioned from middle school to high school within a matter of weeks, therefore there is no real data other than a sample population that reported feeling more confident moving onto high school and more prepared either in their academics, sports, or both.

The remaining 181 student-athletes all had different definitions of success.

- A) The Wooster High school girls' soccer team (26 girls total) were given three workshops: one before season, one during season, and one at the end of the season. They missed the playoffs by one game, but they reported that they learned a lot, were more unified, and wanted to become more actively involved.
 - a. A perfect example of this is when they hosted a youth girls soccer camp for the community.
- B) 18 high school student-athletes were given tutoring to raise their grades or given guidance in their sport. Out of the 18 high school student-athletes, two were seniors and have graduated, which gives us a 100% graduation rate. These two students will enroll in trade schools: one will enroll in fire science to be a fireman, the other will enroll in trade school to repair AC/HVAC units. The rest are still in high school.
- C) The remaining 137 student-athletes served are still currently in middle school.

Students Who Fell Short

- A) Out of the 16 high school student-athletes, two students quit their sport. They are entering 12th grade. One student reported feeling overwhelmed with trying to balance their schoolwork and their interest in both music and sports. The other student reported that during their freshman year they didn't know when tryouts were, and when they did try out as a sophomore and junior, they didn't make the team both times.
- B) At the middle school level, the data regarding the number of student – athletes is not accurate and was not tracked as extensively. Nonetheless, there are still inferences that can be made from the data.
 - a. Middle school student-athletes were more prone to bullying. For example, the girls' soccer team had 3 girls bullying each other, whereas the boys' team had 2 boys who would bully other students throughout the school.
 - b. Middle school student-athletes were open to trying more activities (such as sports and clubs) but less likely to commit or dedicate themselves to excelling to their full potential.

Some things that I learned during the last two years is that the amount of support and help that is needed for these young student-athletes is immense. Although teachers, coaches and families are trying their best, there still remains such a void and lack of communication between the three groups. GTZ hopes to continue being that nexus, and providing that support by bringing together the teachers, the coaches, and the families of the student-athletes. One improvement that can be made to better support students who make poor decisions is to increase follow-up meetings and collaborate with families and coaches to develop solutions to ensure everyone is on the same page.



Examples of Services Provided

In general, most of the student–athletes just needed answers to their many questions, and they did not know where to look or how to interpret information. This was especially true when it came to playing sports in college. Many student–athletes were not aware that there are potentially “7 different paths to playing sports in college,” which will be discussed on the following page. When provided in full detail, it can be overwhelming to most student–athletes.

General Services Provided

- Many student–athletes needed tutoring or help picking up their grades.
- Half of the student–athletes wanted to improve their training in their sport which included drills, speed, strength, nutrition and breaking down film.
- Workshops were provided to full teams based on the coaches’ specific requests, which included college sports information, how to overcome obstacles both individually and as a team.
- Meeting with coaches and working together to help improve their program.
- Meeting with family members (face-to-face or via Zoom) to help them understand how to better support their child being a student–athletes.

Unique Examples:

- 1) One student–athlete was on the high school bull riding team. This student was a 12th grader that was missing credits already and working part time. He got in a fight during welding class and was removed from that class, which was his favorite class. He disliked school in general and decided to drop out. His mom asked me to help guide him and motivate him to get his GED. We were able to figure out how to use his work hours to get him school credits and get him enrolled into online courses to get back on track to graduate high school. He was able to stay on the bull riding team and then enrolled in a fire science program to become a fire fighter.
- 2) Another student–athlete was a 10th grader who wrestled as a 9th grader, but she got a concussion at the end of the season. Her mom didn’t want her wrestling anymore due to fear of additional concussions and the fact that she was the only girl on a wrestling team that was full of boys. Her grades dropped from A’s and B’s to D’s and F’s. One of the main reasons she said her grades dropped was because she was not “in-season”, and she was not motivated. We were able to work with her to bring her grades up through extensive tutoring. Then we met with her mom over the summer to have a plan for fall to get ready for wrestling during the winter season.



7 different paths to playing sports in college

- 1) NCAA Division 1 (D1) & Division 2 (D2) athletic scholarship – This is the highest and most competitive level of collegiate athletics governed by the NCAA. Achieving success at this level requires immense hard work, dedication, and access to critical resources such as camps, showcase tournaments, and scouting opportunities. Many people don't realize the level of commitment and effort it takes just to earn a scholarship offer for Division 1 or Division 2 opportunities.
- 2) NCAA Division 3 (D3) or the NAIA – The D3 level of college athletics does not offer athletic scholarships, but does offer other means of paying for school. Another governing association that does offer partial scholarships is the NAIA, which is considered to be around the same level as D2 or D3 of the NCAA.
- 3) Graduate school – student athletes are allowed to play college sports as a graduate student. The way to go about it is the same as D1/D2/D3/NAIA – the only thing that matters is the amount of eligibility years left to play. Technically, someone who did not play at all as an undergraduate student, could still play their eligibility years during a master's program.
- 4) Community College transfer – also known as “JuCo” is a very common pathway that most athletes know of and may choose to participate in for different reasons. The college sports entity that governs JuCo athletics is called the NJCAA. They also have Divisions 1, 2 and 3.
 - a. The NJCAA, NCAA and NAIA all govern colleges that officially offer sporting teams to compete against each other, and the schools fund the expenses for travel, coaching staff, etc. Each association provides the guidelines as to which schools can offer teams and how they will function.
- 5) Club sports – Any student at a community college or 4-year institution can start a student led club of their sport of choice. This pathway is completely student led. To start a charter, students need to find an on-campus faculty advisor, find their own coach, and must have their own governing board of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Club teams then must make their own schedule playing against other club teams from other schools and fundraise for their own travel. Some colleges have a specialized unique sports club team system, while other schools do not. Either way, any student can start any sports club and compete against other schools.
- 6) Military – There are unique examples of people enlisting in a military branch and then after they complete their contract, they enroll in either community college or four-year university to study and play sports as well. Most military branches offer sports to service members to engage in during their time serving in the military, and then the military pays for college.
- 7) Overseas – Finally, opportunities exist for student athletes to play sports in colleges in other countries outside of the United States.

Opportunities for Growth

There are so many student – athletes that need different types of support. No two student – athletes are alike. They have unique questions, are in different situations, and most of them find it hard to find answers. This is true for both youth and adults. The opportunity for growth exists for any student – athlete, any club teams, any school teams, any athletic programs, any recreation leagues, and all levels of coaching. Anyone that wants to make the adjustments for better improvement should have the opportunity to do so.

There is an opportunity in using technology to reach as many people as possible, especially both youth and adults. The website gtzathletics.com is currently only a website that gathers data for the initial meeting before the follow-up conversation. New technology could help keep track of data of the student – athletes' progress and compare them to other athletes in their age group of their sport. New technology could also explain information and provide resources to help student athletes and families stay on the path that is best for them.

Many parents eagerly anticipate the day their child begins playing sports. GTZ can help them take that first step earlier by encouraging swimming as young as six months old. GTZ would provide valuable information about the numerous benefits of early swimming, from enhanced physical development to a stronger foundation for long-term athletic success. The platform could assist parents in finding local infant swim classes, and if needed, help identify funding options to cover costs. In addition to offering resources and support, GTZ would follow up with families to help them stay on track, and ensure their children fully benefit from participating in swim lessons. This is just one of many unique examples of looking to the future by promoting growth through technology, and guiding/supporting parents of newborns and toddlers.

GTZ stresses the importance of family/guardianship support and engagement in their student – athlete's journey. In the past 18 months, access to GTZ has been through the academic school setting, coaching sport or through the position of Athletic Director. The initial contact would eventually lead to a follow up with family members at home to create a blueprint plan that is feasible and realistic. The hope is that any outcomes such as increased support at home, paying for training camps, or simply attendance at games/matches, is delivered and followed through with. A digital platform would help support families and guardians with accountability and consistency.



Final Takeaways

Impact By the Numbers Outcome Metrics – In general, GTZ supported 238 student – athletes who maintained their GPA by being able to stay academically eligible to participate in their sports throughout the year. Grade recovery was the most important priority, but we could not track any GPA increases. We could only track and see for ourselves that overall, school engagement did improve.

The Before and After Contrast of GTZ’s Role – Overall, in the 18 months of providing services, we can say there was a pattern of student – athletes overcoming obstacles when GTZ. Every situation was unique, because there is no one size fits all model. Overall, it was interesting to see the journey and the overall impact that GTZ had.

Scope and Reach – The frequency and duration of any session was spread out due to the fact that there was only one coach providing all of the services. Either student – athletes or teams met during lunch time for 30 minutes or after school for an hour or two. Services were customized for individual, or team needs.

Technology and Growth Vision Statement – Looking ahead, GTZ is exploring a range of scalable, technology driven initiatives to increase access and efficiency. We envision a digital platform that can provide student – athletes with tailored roadmaps, goal tracking, academic resources and communication tools to connect families, coaches and mentors. Such a platform would keep track of real-time data on student progress and program efficacy. Furthermore, GTZ envisions this opportunity to benefit many people, as young as 6 months old, promoting long term health and early engagement in athletics.

The goal is to reach as many student – athletes and families as possible. We want to provide tutoring in all academic subjects, along with the most accurate and up to date information regarding their sport(s), and to help them build a blueprint of success that will satisfy their short-term and long-term goals.

