





About BlazeSports

Mission

To change the lives of children, youth and veterans with physical disabilities through adaptive sport, physical activity and recreation.

Vision

Our vision is that every individual with a physical disability has the access and opportunity to experience the joys and benefits of sport and physical activity in all aspects of their lives.

Values

BlazeSports America and its programs are guided by the following set of core values:



Integrity

We act with integrity and steadfast adherence to ethical standards with the people we serve, the decisions we make, and the communities we support.



Empowerment

We tenaciously pursue individual and collective empowerment of persons with disability and disenfranchised individuals through advocacy, visibility, the prevention of chronic illness, and the active pursuit of human rights.



Teamwork

We pursue a vision of teamwork that incorporates mutual respect, humor, rigor, and communication while building synergy and increasing the effectiveness of all involved.



Excellence

We strive for excellence by promoting superior performance through self-evaluation, accountability, personal discipline, creativity, and a passion for learning.



Innovation

We value and encourage original thought, fresh ideas, dynamic programming, and evidence-based practice.



Stewardship

We embrace the responsibility for being good stewards of all resources entrusted to our care and ensuring the sustainability of the organization and programs we provide.



Annual Events

Triumph of the Human Spirit Awards

CBS TV News Anchor Karyn Greer hosted the 5th Annual Triumph of the Human Spirit Awards™ on December 5, 2019. This prestigious award ceremony honors Georgia athletes, coaches, and organizations who have made a significant impact in adaptive sport and physical activity while demonstrating leadership, a positive attitude, best practice and inclusion. Guests enjoyed an evening of great food, memorable speakers, a silent auction and DJ Rockin Wheels spinning great tunes. Many thanks to event sponsors and partners.



From left to right: 1 — Congratulations to all the 2019 Triumph of the Human Spirit Award Winners! #MyBlazeHero; 2 — John Tien, Chief Operating Officer for Citi Retail Services, retired US Army Colonel; 3, — Dominique Wilkins, NBA Hall of Famer, Vice President of Basketball and Special Advisor to the CEO of Atlanta Hawks organization with Bailey Moody, BlazeSports Athlete and TeamUSA Women's Wheelchair Basketball; 4 — Karyn Greer, MC and CBS TV News Anchor; 5 — Andy McNeil, Chairman, BlazeSports Board of Directors with guest Cheri Blauwet, Physican, Paralympian and USOPC Board Member; 6 — David Lee, Executive Director of Atlanta Hawks Foundation with youth award winners, Braxton and Elizabeth

Patriotic Blaze 'N Raffle

On Sunday, November 3, 2019 BlazeSports hosted its annual Patriotic Blaze N' Raffle — an afternoon of fun, friendship and great food at Jeffrey's Sports Bar in Braselton, GA. Raising over \$10,000, event proceeds were donated to BlazeSports youth and veteran programs. Thank you Jeffrey's Sports Bar for graciously hosting us again.

Lisa Simmons Reaches New Heights in Support of BlazeSports America

In 2018, Lisa Simmons, BlazeSports volunteer and supporter, hiked the Grand Canyon "Rim to Rim". In 2019, she set her sights even higher to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa and tallest freestanding mountain on earth, in support of BlazeSports programs and services. And she did just that from August 12 – 20, 2019, raising just over \$30,000 for BlazeSports youth and veteran programs and services. Lisa Simmons is president of Beacon Management Services, business leader, philanthropist, cancer survivor, passionate supporter of kids & vets with disabilities, hiker, climber of all things tall and winner of the 2019 Triumph of the Human Spirit Awards.



Big Peach Slam Jam Wheelchair Basketball Tournament – Largest Tournament of its kind in the Southeast

January 26-27, 2019 | Suwanee Sports Academy

Sanctioned by the NWBA, the 3rd Annual BlazeSports Big Peach Slam Jam Wheelchair Basketball Tournament, presented by the Atlanta Hawks, hosted 18 of the best teams from 11 states in the varsity and prep divisions for a two-day tournament of athleticism, sportsmanship and fun. Congratulations to 1st place winners TIRR Memorial Hermann Jr. Hotwheels (varsity) and Lakeshore Foundation Sharks (prep). We are grateful to the 100+ volunteers and our generous sponsors and partners who made the event a success.



Celebrating Olympic & Paralympic Day

June 21, 2019 | MOVE LEARN DISCOVER Come & Try | Centennial High School, Roswell, GA

Sponsored by Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation, Amerigroup Foundation and Disabled Sports USA, the event brought together youth with and without disabilities to experience adaptive sports – sit volleyball, wheelchair basketball, soccer, and archery. Adaptive sports sessions were taught by BlazeSports youth athletes and coaches with disabilities. Youth enjoyed other fun games, face painting and healthy snacks and beverages.



Olympic Day Track & Field Meet

June 22, 2019 | Centennial High School, Roswell, GA

The 5th Annual BlazeSports Olympic Day Track & Field Meet is a USA Track & Field sanctioned event for youth, adults and veterans with physical disabilities. On Saturday, June 22, 2019 athletes from Georgia and surrounding states competed at Centennial High School in Roswell, GA. The event serves as a qualifying meet for Junior Nationals, as well as, a Paralympian meet and greet with Paralympians Jarryd Wallace and Jessie Galli Cloy. We are grateful to presenting sponsors Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation, Amerigroup Foundation, Disabled Sports USA and US Department of Veterans Affairs. It was a great day in the Georgia heat with top performance, personal bests and several national records.



Laureus Day of Sport Atlanta

Sept 21, 2019 | Supporting Atlanta's Westside Community with Inclusive Play

READY SET SERVE BlazeSports, along with many other community-based organizations and schools, celebrated Laureus Day of Sport with some sit volleyball, a perfect inclusive sports for kids of all abilities.





Athlete Accomplishments

BlazeSports Athletes achieved many accomplishments throughout 2019 demonstrating their perseverance, strength, athleticism and can do attitude.

2019 Seniors - Cameron Elzey and Jordan Kozloski

Achieving 100% high school graduation and 100% post-secondary education or employment is a goal for BlazeSports athletes and we are committed to helping them get there. Congratulations to Jordan (pictured on right) and Cameron as they join the BlazeSports Alumni Club! Jordan received a wheelchair basketball scholarship at University of Arizona where she is studying Criminal Justice. Cameron is working at Forsyth County Parks and Recreation in the Therapeutic Recreation Department.



Bailey Moody

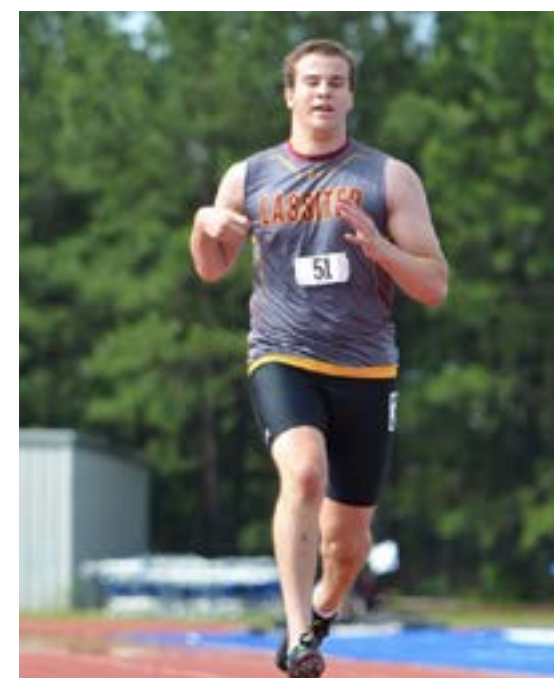
Bailey has been a member of the BlazeSports Atlanta Jr Hawks Wheelchair Basketball team since she was 13 years old. At the age of 10, Bailey's right leg was amputated due to cancer. Not only is she a great wheelchair basketball player but a leader and mentor on and off the court. It is no surprise that Bailey was selected for the 2019 US Women's National Wheelchair Basketball Team with sights to compete in the Tokyo 2021 Paralympic Games.



Meet BlazeSports America's 2019 High School All Americans

BlazeSports Youth Athletes, Carson Lundhagen and Collin Lancaster, were recognized as 2019 US Paralympic High School All Americans. Only sixty-nine high school athletes, with various physical and visual impairments, across the country were selected. Recipients are chosen based on their performance in competition.

Carson Lundhagen



Collin Lancaster



2019 Positive Athlete Award

Congrats to all BlazeSports athletes who were nominated and won a 2019 Positive Athlete Award. We are so proud of your accomplishments.

Natalie Allen | *BlazeSports Swim*

Maya Kahn | *BlazeSports Swim*

Adam Kiel | *BlazeSports Track & Field*

Jordan Kozloski | *BlazeSports Wheelchair Basketball*

Kathy Luna | *BlazeSports YouthLEAD Retreat*

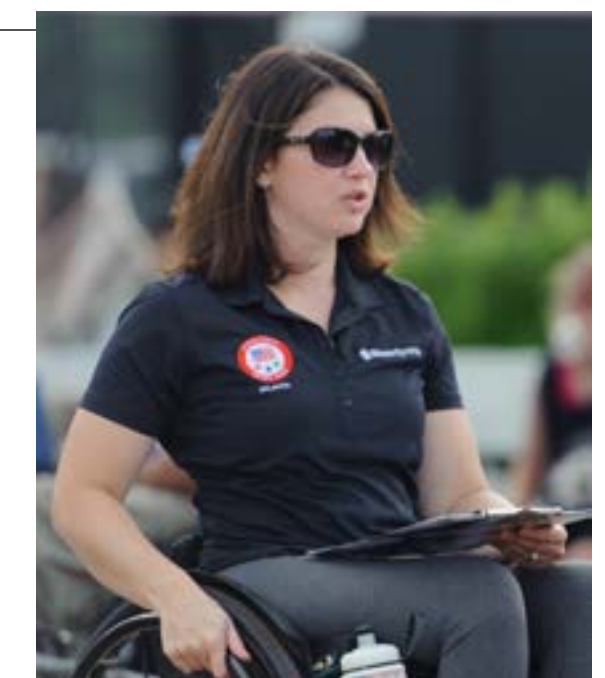
McClain Hermes | *BlazeSports Swim*

Colin Lancaster and Adam Kiel were two of just twenty U.S. athletes selected to represent Team USA at the 2019 World Para Athletics Junior Championships in Nottwil, Switzerland, August 2019. Lancaster (U17) medaled in several events including Gold in 1500M and Silver in 800M for his class. Kiel (U20) placed 7th in Long Jump and 5th in Javelin.

Adam Kiel



Jessica Cloy



*"A good coach can change a game;
a great coach can change a life"*

Coach - Jessica Cloy

BlazeSports Track & Field coach and 4-time Paralympian was inducted into the Adaptive Sports USA 2019 Hall of Fame for her service and dedication to the Paralympic sport. We could not think of a more deserving individual.



Training & Education

Building Capacity in Adaptive Sport and Physical Activity Nationwide



In 2017/18, BlazeSports Institute for Adaptive Sports and Recreation released the Certified Adaptive Recreation and Sports Specialist (CARSS) certification. In 2019, we focused on building partnerships with universities and community-based organizations to incorporate the CARSS curriculum into their existing courses and staff professional development.

New BlazeSports Institute Partnerships in 2019 | Growing Future Leaders

BlazeSports welcomed the following new colleges/universities as CARSS University Partners, who are integrating the CARSS curriculum into their classrooms and course work.


- Catawba College, North Carolina
- East Carolina University, North Carolina
- Eastern Connecticut University, Connecticut
- University of New Hampshire, New Hampshire




BlazeSports Adaptive Sports & Recreation Southeast Conference, December 5-7, 2019

A total of 81 practitioners and students from the US and Canada attended the 2019 BlazeSports Institute Adaptive Sport & Recreation Southeast Conference December 5-7, 2019 in Decatur, GA. The conference theme was "Building Strong Connections and Core Competencies". Dr. Cheri Blauwet, MD served as the conference keynote speaker. Dr. Blauwet spoke about importance of sport and recreation for individuals with spinal cord injury and other disabilities. Many thanks to the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation and US Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Number of training opportunities

18 
Compared to **5** in FY2018

Number of individuals trained

550 
Compared to **608** in FY2018

Number of new CARSS registrations

150 
Compared to **159** in FY2018



Youth Programs

BlazeSports uses sport as a vehicle for positive youth development, improved health and success on and off the field of play.

Youth Programs Offered Year-Round

- Wheelchair basketball – Prep, Varsity Red and Varsity White Teams
- Track & Field
- Swimming – Learn to Swim and Learn to Train
- Annual All-Star Summer Camp
- 3rd Annual Big Peach Slam Jam Wheelchair Basketball Tournament
- Olympic Day Track & Field Meet
- Olympic Day Come & Try Inclusive Sports Day

Wheelchair Basketball – A Growing Youth Sport

In 2019, our wheelchair basketball program grew from two to three teams. The BlazeSports Atlanta Jr. Wheelchair Basketball program, sponsored by the Atlanta Hawks, is one of the nation's largest and most successful junior wheelchair basketball programs within the National Wheelchair Basketball Association.

At the end of the 2018/19 season the prep team placed 3rd in the country and varsity took 4th place. BlazeSports athletes – new and seasoned – put in the work throughout the entire season, growing and learning as individuals and as a team.

“This team means a lot to me. It’s not just about winning, it’s about knowing that we are a team no matter what the outcome is. I also know that the team will be with me on and off the court. My teammates are like a family for me.” - BlazeSports Athlete

Coach Higgins and I realized that BlazeSports athletes with their winning attitudes have set the bar way high for the other teams we coach.....no more whining allowed! - BlazeSports Track Coach, Gus Smith

Swimming

In 2019, our swim program was assessed and restructured. We created a new Learn to Swim program and curriculum for youth just learning to swim. A separate Learn to Train/Compete program was created for more advanced swimmers and a place for younger swimmers to progress. A new adaptive swim certification training was also developed for swim programs interested in being more inclusive.

All-Star Summer Camp

July 21-26, 2019, Camp Will-A-Way, Winder, GA

Our overnight camp is unique in the fact that we cater to youth with a wide range of physical disabilities. Campers have the opportunity to experience different adaptive sports, traditional camp activities, and participate in outdoor recreational activities. By the end of the week, campers reported feeling more confident and independent, and equipped with leadership skills and have many new friends!

BlazeSports Summer Camp provides Counselor in Training opportunities for older teens with disabilities to build leadership skills and employment experience as Camp Counselors with and without disabilities as part of our YouthLEAD initiative.

“I learned what it means to lead and take care of younger campers. I also learned that I am capable of leading others in a positive way.” - Counselor in Training





YouthLEAD

Sport with a purpose. Building Leadership, Employment Readiness, Self-Advocacy and Positive Development of Youth with Physical Disabilities.

BlazeSports was excited launched the Youth L.E.A.D. Initiative 2019 to house past leadership building experiences and first work opportunities. Components include

- Youth Leadership Retreat
- Peer mentoring opportunities
- Leadership and self-advocacy in sport themes at weekly sport programs
- Tutoring support
- Summer internships & job shadowing
- Employment Readiness training
- Online resources

“Youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow.” - Nelson Mandela

1st Annual Youth LEADership Retreat

During the 1st annual YouthLEAD Retreat young athletes discussed transitioning from high school to university and/or employment, and what being a self-advocate means all within a fun outdoor recreation setting at Camp Will-A-Way in Winder, GA.

BlazeSports Equipment Loan Program Fills Need in Georgia

BlazeSports Equipment Loan Program loans adaptive sports equipment to individual members and community organizations throughout Georgia. Access to affordable adaptive sports wheelchairs and equipment is one of the main barriers to sport participation at the individual level and program start up for communities. BlazeSports fills that gap in Georgia.

In 2019, we loaned over 50 sports chairs and adaptive sport equipment to individuals and organizations in Georgia including Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Atlanta Rowing Club, Atlanta Sparks, and Athens Inclusive Recreation and Sports.



2019 YouthLEAD Initiative

Number of youth programs, camps, events, tournaments: **18**

Number of Unique Youth
320
Compared to 300 in FY2018

Number of Participant Visits
1419
Compared to 1105 in FY2018

Number of Program Experiences
101
Compared to 92 in FY2018



Veterans

Our Veteran Programs Change Lives

Veteran Adaptive Sport Programs in 2019 grew from 7 to 9.

Veterans programs offered year round:

- Archery
- Bowling
- Climbing
- CrossFit
- Cycling
- Golf
- Rowing
- Sled hockey
- Track & Field
- Yoga

Highlights from 2019

Veteran Cycling Event with Citi Financial and Team Red, White and Blue on the Silver Comet Trail in Mableton, GA | Sept 2019



Veterans TEAM = TRAIN EMPLOY ADAPT MOVE

BlazeSports Veteran TEAM Ambassador is a new initiative designed to employ Veterans as a BlazeSports Ambassador. Each experience is tailored, based on an initial skills assessment, to meet the needs and interests of our TEAM Ambassadors and BlazeSports. In 2019, we welcomed 4 Veteran TEAM Ambassadors with the following roles: Social Media Ambassador, Bowling League Coordinator, Warehouse Manager and Swim Buddy.

Veterans Archery Program and Tournament

BlazeSports hosted its inaugural Veteran Archery Tournament March 23, 2019 in partnership with the Governors Gun Club Kennesaw and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans with and without disability demonstrated their expert archery skills and techniques.



Number of sport programs, camps and competitions: **15**

Number of Unique Veterans
192
Compared to 150 in FY2018

Number of Participant Visits
1773
Compared to 1652 in FY2018

Number of Program Experiences
232
Compared to 218 in FY2018



Sports For All Uganda

In 2019, BlazeSports concluded a three-year project in Uganda, funded by the US Agency on International Development. USAID's Sports for Youth with Disabilities Initiative in Uganda was a sport development and health project in Kampala and Gulu. The project's goal is to contribute to the improved physical literacy and the increased inclusion of children with physical disabilities in sport and recreation programs in the target communities.

Figures for three-year project.

Number of
Individuals Trained

132

Number of
Partners Engaged

32

Number of Children
with Disabilities Active

855

Number of
Train the Trainers

12

Number of
Training Workshops

4

Number of Inclusive Sports
Festivals for Children

4

Number of mini-grant projects
supported in Kampala and Gulu

4

Call to Action – Improving Access to Sport for Ugandas Youth

BlazeSports along with Uganda Paralympic Committee and 23 in-country partners drafted and published “Improving Access to Sport for Youth with Disabilities in Uganda – A Call to Action” document. The document highlights key action strategies for each sector within Uganda to improve access to sport and physical activity for Uganda's children and youth with disabilities, especially girls.



2019 Inclusive Sports Festival Kampala and Gulu. 500 girls and boys from Kampala and Gulu with and without disabilities enjoyed an afternoon of fun and games and little friendly competition



Former US Ambassador to Uganda, Deborah Malac pictured with Mpindi Bumali, President of Uganda Paralympic Committee and Ugandan students.



Train the Trainer – Built local and sustainable capacity by training 14 community leaders from Kampala and Gulu regions in adaptive sport who are committed to training other leaders in their community



Thank you

to all our generous partners, funders, sponsors and individual donors, and BlazeSports tag owners who supported BlazeSports programs and services throughout 2019. We are grateful!

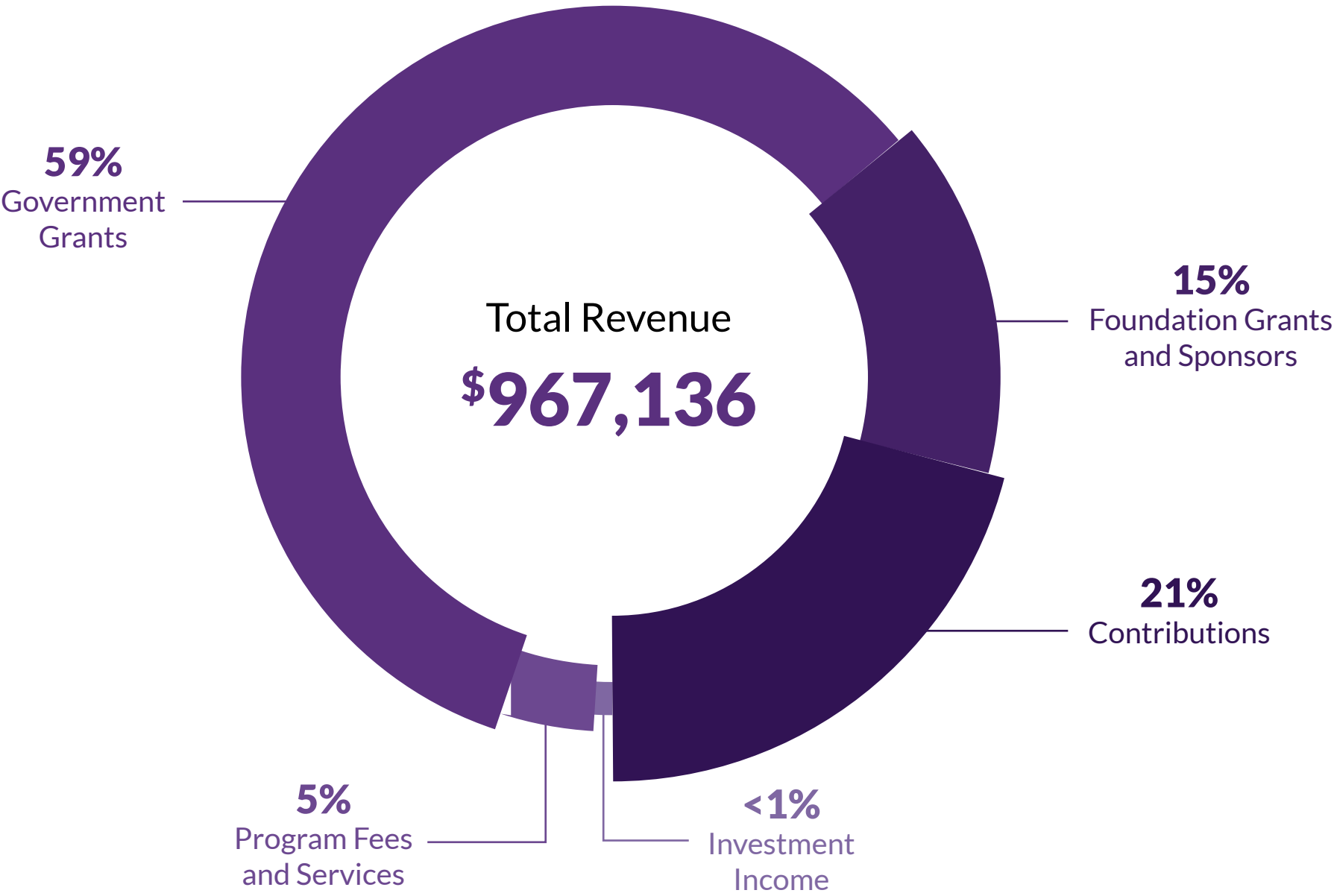
ABC Medical	Honey Baked Ham
Adaptive Sports USA	Imlay Foundation
Adnормous Graphics	Jill Valentine
AJ Williams Jr Family Foundation	John Register
Amerigroup Foundation	Laureus Sport for Good USA
AMS Vans	Miguel Fuentes Photography
Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation	Mondo USA
Atlanta Braves Foundation	Morris Manning & Martin
Atlanta Hawks Foundation	Morrow Parks Farms
Atlanta Rowing Club	National Charity League - Roswell and Alpharetta Chapters
Atlanta Track Club	National Wheelchair Basketball Association
Atlanta VA Medical Center	Northeast Passage
Beacon Management	Pat Summit Leadership Group
Centennial High School	Paul Ward Photography
Changing the Game Project	Pebbletossers
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta	Primerica
Citi Financial	Resurgens Charitable Organization
Clipper Petroleum Foundation	Shepherd Center
Co-Opportunities Inc	Southern Company Gas Charitable Foundation
CoRSU Rehabilitation Hospital (Uganda)	Tom Kiel Photography
Craig H. Neilsen Foundation	Uganda Paralympic Committee
Disabled Sports USA	University of Georgia, Department of Kinesiology
Donaco Medical	US Department of Veterans Affairs, Adaptive Sports and Therapeutic Arts
Dublin VA Medical Center	US Paralympics
Dynamo Swim Club	Yaw Motion
Georgia Beverage Association	Young Men's Service League
Georgia Southern University	
Georgia State University	
Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency	
Gwinnett Sports Academy	
Hanger Foundation	





Financials

Figures based on BlazeSports FY2019 Audited Financial Statements, Mersereau, Lazenby & Rockas LLC.



Revenue and Other Support

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Contributions	\$203,579	\$480	\$204,239
Foundation Grants and Sponsors	\$61,093	\$89,750	\$150,843
Government Grants	\$0	\$566,376	\$566,376
Program Fees and Services	\$45,555	\$0	\$45,555
Investment Income	\$123	\$0	\$123
Net Assets Released from Restriction – Satisfaction of Program Restrictions	\$637,785	\$(637,785)	\$0
Total Revenue and Other Support	\$948,315	\$18,821	\$967,136

Expenses

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Program Services	\$663,312	\$0	\$663,312
Management and General	\$169,856	\$0	\$169,856
Fundraising	\$18,537	\$0	\$18,537
Total Expenses	\$851,705	\$0	\$851,705

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
Change in Net Assets	\$96,610	\$18,821	\$115,431
Net Assets, beginning of year	\$(174,611)	\$180,749	\$5,538
Net Assets, end of year	\$(78,001)	\$19,890	\$120,969



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BlazeSports America is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and the legacy organization of the 1996 Atlanta Paralympic Games. We offer adaptive sport programs and services that support good health, build leadership skills, foster independence and inclusion and reduce social isolation. Our training and education builds the capacity of current and future leaders in the field. BlazeSports is the two-time recipient of the US Olympic and Paralympic's Rings of Gold (2016 and 2017), a member of the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee Organizational Council, and the USA Member of Cerebral Palsy International Sport and Recreation Association.