

Sports Teams and Social Impact: An Analysis of Recent Developments and Best Practices

An MBA Project for Eagles Youth Partnership

Completed by students at The Wharton School

Lisa Alexander, Liz Eavey, Kat O'Brien and Melissa Torres Buendia

with the assistance of faculty members Jeff Klein and Katie Krimmel

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Sincerely,

Lisa Alexander, Liz Eavey, Kat O'Brien, and Melissa Torres Buendia
Wharton MBA Class of 2011
The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

In 2010, Beyond Sport (www.beyondsport.org), a global organization that “promotes, develops, and supports the use of sport to create positive social change across the world”, recognized Hapoel Tel Aviv Mifalot, Manchester United, and the Philadelphia Eagles as the top three professional sports teams in the world for the social impact created “off the field”.

(Congratulations to Hapoel Tel Aviv Mifalot, a soccer team that works with 20,000 Israeli, Palestinian, and Jordanian youths, for its selection as Best Team). During the Beyond Sport Conference last September, representatives from these three top teams agreed to develop best practices that could be helpful to advancing the field of sports philanthropy among professional sports teams.

For this reason, Eagles Youth Partnership partnered with The Wharton School to develop an MBA student project for Management 653, the Field Application Project. Sponsored by Sarah Martinez-Helfman, Executive Director of Eagles Youth Partnership, the MBA course provided the opportunity for a team of four Wharton MBA students to develop and execute a field research project that included secondary research, interviews with exemplary teams and industry experts, and the preparation of this report on behalf of the global sports community. Jeff Klein and Katie Krimmel, Wharton affiliated faculty and Wharton Leadership Program teammates, offered the course in Spring 2011. The Philadelphia Eagles, as one of the exemplary sports teams in the area of social impact in sports, wanted to take a leadership role in contributing to the betterment of sports philanthropy efforts.

The Field Application Project explores some of the best practices in the field of social impact in sports, an area that has grown in recent years but is still in the relatively early stages of development. Specifically, the team of students asked the question: *How can a professional sports team best leverage their brand and resources for social impact off the field?*

The methods of research involved an exploratory overview of certain leagues worldwide, including the NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL and various worldwide soccer (football) leagues, in an effort to understand the current status of their initiatives. These initial examinations helped the student team identify some clubs that truly stood out in this area. The team then chose a selection of exemplary clubs and industry experts, conducting interviews with nine teams and nine experts, some of which were facilitated through Eagles Youth Partnership and its contacts. In an

effort to appropriately focus their efforts and research, as well as to better analyze and compare philanthropic efforts, they primarily focused on team initiatives, excluding league-wide initiatives and individual player foundations from this analysis. The goal through this stage was to determine what common threads and key learnings existed among these highly regarded teams and what knowledge they might be able to impart to their colleagues in the global sports industry.

The team concluded that as the field of social impact in sports matures, there is a rising functional duality. The original, driving motivations of social impact in sports was inherently altruistic; that thinking is now increasingly complemented with a new school of strategic thinking. Through the team's research, a simple yet clear theme has emerged: *success hinges on a comprehensive and continuous evaluation of organizational core competencies through the entirety of the social impact process.* The student team evaluated all stages of an organization's social impact efforts, from establishment of a mission to evaluation and sustainability. What they learned is that successful organizations in sports philanthropy remain intrinsically committed to creating value and do not view social impact development as a linear or independent endeavor.

Furthermore, while seemingly fundamental in nature, these overarching themes are at times overlooked. This paper seeks to define specific examples of success under this theme through the frame of social impact in sports while challenging organizations to evaluate their own core competencies and, therefore, avenues to success. The hope is that these learnings will be useful to clubs who are seeking to expand their philanthropic efforts, improve upon or make more efficient their work, learn about other clubs' involvement, and/or launch their philanthropic arm.

PART I: An Overview of Social Impact in Sports

Sports philanthropy has grown into a major endeavor in the past several decades, with more attention and research finally beginning to be devoted to the area. Maria Stefan, Managing Partner and President at Chase America, has been involved in this area for most of that time. She stated the merging of sports and philanthropy is not a new concept. Working with the Board of Directors of the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association as Executive Director, one of her earliest involvements was in changing the business model of the Association's major trade show. The change involved taking excess revenues from the show and contributing it back to grassroots

sports organizations to support increased participation in sports, research on the value of sport to the “whole of society,” and engagement with community non-profits, teams, and leagues to use sport as a vehicle for education, peace, and social development. One project that created major impact in this arena was Major League Baseball’s RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities), a program that has since been replicated nationwide with great acclaim. Stefan further stated that internationally what spurred the industry forward in the area of corporate responsibility were the “soccer ball” child labor issues, resulting in industry working together with major NGOs and subcontractors to develop global standards of conduct and practice.

A commitment to the community has multiplied for many teams in recent years, with it now being not just a nice touch to the organization but in many cases, an essential part of their team. Sports organizations have increasingly recognized the unparalleled impact their brand has on members of their community and believe in the notion of giving back to the community they are a part. Alexandra Chalat, Head of Social Innovation at Beyond Sports, notes that within the United States, rapid urbanization is leading to increased brand prestige and popularity of sports teams within their communities, and that sports teams thus feel a greater obligation to affect their communities beyond the field. The Philadelphia Eagles, for instance, have continued to grow their community presence since Jeffrey Lurie and Christina Weiss Lurie bought the team in 1994. Said Sarah Martinez-Helfman, executive director of Eagles Youth Partnership (EYP): “Jeffrey and Christina and Joe (Banner, Eagles team president) are all civic-minded and recognized the fanaticism of the fan base and the power of the brand, and wanted to leverage that to make a difference in the community.” So the Eagles established the EYP shortly after the Luries purchased the club. Todd Crosset, Professor of Community Relations and Sports Business at the University of Massachusetts, believes that the “unique relation between the audience and the performance of their team” leads to a greater club obligation.

Eli Wolff, Director of the Sport and Development Project at Brown University, detailed some of the reasons that sports teams have for being involved in the community. From a business standpoint, they often find it leads to more tangible business results and consumer connections with their community engagement. It also follows the overall trend of increasing awareness in sports of “doing the right thing.” Finally, there is a personal connection level as many team executives, players and managers bring commitments and attachments to certain community

issues related to their families and upbringings that they hope to give back to now that they are in a position to effect change. Grant Cornwell is the director of the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation (English Premier League), one of the clubs with the greatest reach in its community. Cornwell said: “I think clubs have started to take it more seriously. It used to be sort of nice if you could do [sports philanthropy]. Now I think it’s actually integral to everything that certainly our club does. . . . Clubs like ours are becoming more socially responsible. They realize that we have a massive impact on our community [with our games] once a week. I think our club realizes they have to prove that it’s more than just once a week.”

In fact, many teams feel that their social impact efforts are now inextricably wrapped up in their identity. FC Barcelona’s (Spanish La Liga) slogan is “Més que un club” or “More than a club”. In its Global Compact with the United Nations, FC Barcelona divides itself into four areas: spectacular football, a multi-sport club, social commitment, and philosophy of effort. The Chairman of Chelsea FC (English Premier League) Bruce Beck agrees, “CSR (corporate social responsibility) is at the heart of Chelsea.” As Christina Weiss Lurie of the Philadelphia Eagles said, “We very purposefully, back in 1997, started “Day of Service” here within the organization because we wanted to build this into the fabric of the organization. . . . Everyone understands when they come to work for the Eagles, this is an organization that puts community investment right up there with winning championships.” Added Martinez-Helfman, “There’s a lot of support from ownership and from the organization, every single aspect of it.”

A Note about the Differences between U.S. Domestic Teams and International Teams

For the purposes of this paper, it is important to differentiate between U.S. (domestic) and international teams, as we offer many examples of both throughout the paper. The basic laws and social structures governing sports teams and social impact in the United States are starkly different from those in existence in other countries. To begin, many of the international clubs (particularly soccer) have fan bases that reach around the globe and thus international teams’ core competencies and the needs of their community may be much broader than those of domestic clubs. Another major difference is that the laws governing the existence of foundations and the classification of non-profit organizations are quite different from those of the U.S. Each country has its own regulations, but in England, for instance, charities not only have to be charitable for all purposes, but only certain charitable purposes qualify as a result of the Charities

Act of 2006. Further, four distinct types of structures are permitted, and all charities with income of more than 5,000 pounds must be registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. In the U.S., the definition of charitable organization is somewhat more general, though in order to qualify for exemption from federal income taxes, there are requirements; the U.S. distinguishes between private foundations and public charities according to where one does its fundraising, and where it uses its resources. Finally, public funding is far more available in places such as Europe than in the United States. Most domestic teams must rely on fundraising to a far greater extent than European teams, which greatly limits the resources domestic teams have at their disposal. Within the United Kingdom, for instance, there is a Commission that includes guidelines on transparency and the donations of money; as a result, less fundraising is required. Grant Cornwell of Tottenham Hotspur Foundation estimated that ninety-five percent of their funds come from the public sector.

While acknowledging some of the limitations of domestic sports organizations, we also recognize the expansive efforts of many international organizations. Real Madrid, from La Liga in Spain and which aims to reach thirty-six countries, commented on its reasons for devoting social impact resources to international entities. In its booklet on Fundación RealMadrid, the team states: “The national projects are fundamental, but Real Madrid is a club, a brand and a reference of universal character, so the borders of the Fundación RealMadrid are the world. There are millions of people outside of Spain that need our involvement and we want them to feel the support of the best football club in the world.”

PART II: Assessing the Needs of the Community

The first step for organizations seeking to be socially impactful within the communities around them is to determine a guiding mission. To do so, the organization must assess the needs of the communities it seeks to serve. Our research overwhelmingly concluded that organizations must be sure to focus on serving *actual*, rather than perceived, needs. If the needs of the community are misperceived, teams run the risk of providing a service that is not valued by the community and therefore may waste resources. As John Shiels of Manchester United (English Premier League) advised, “Make sure you’re providing what the youngsters need, rather than what you think they need.” Two of the biggest projects of the EYP are its bookmobile program, which

promotes reading and literacy among children; and its eyemobile program, which helps children get vision screening exams, as well as glasses, if necessary. Said Martinez-Helfman: “I’m hyper-aware that the money that Eagles Youth Partnership is working with is not our money, and that we’re stewards of that money, and that we need to use that in the best possible way.”

Kathy Babiak, a Professor of Sports Management at the University of Michigan, noted that one of the characteristics of successful teams in social impact is “being relevant to the community.” At a base level, teams should engage with local organizers, politicians, non-profits, and schools to gain a firsthand account of the issues. This exploratory phase will enable the team to be in direct contact with potential benefactors of the initiatives. An example of this approach to developing a mission is the Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation, which serves as the philanthropic arm of the Falcons under the The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation. To define its mission, it worked closely with more than fifteen community leaders to determine what cause elicited the strongest connection between the community and the football club. Together they made the decision to focus on childhood obesity, which is a major problem in the Atlanta area, and with this decision, the Falcons also gained the support of local leaders and potential future partners.

In other instances, teams established their mission through formal studies done on local populations. For example, The Movement, the social impact organization associated with the Derby County Football Club (Football League Championship), developed the mission after a study on the surrounding area displayed that more than 50% of young girls failed to reach the minimum of sixty minutes of physical activity per day. From this result, Derby’s Sharon Dale said the club sought to deliver “an inclusive, creative and innovative program of sports, dance and physical activity to young girls; it aims to empower them to make positive decisions about their lifestyle and increase aspirations to those who would not normally engage in any form of physical activity or dance.”

In assessing a community, it is inevitable that multiple needs will surface. As Kevin Brown of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers noted, “The hardest part of this job is realizing that you just can’t do it all.” Therefore, the needs of the community should be assessed in tandem with what the team *can* do; in other words, simultaneously evaluating the needs of the community alongside the core competencies of the team and its resources to ensure that the organization is set up to create an actionable, meaningful impact in the community. As Martinez-Helfman put it, “I do think it’s

important to research your environment and understand your needs and understand what needs your professional sports team is uniquely positioned to address. I think a lot of times, it's not very strategic because that initial understanding and mission hasn't been unearthed and grappled with." With limited resources, sometimes teams choose to dive in right away instead of taking the time to truly evaluate the situation. In the long run, though, that initial assessment period of community needs and club core competencies truly pays off.

PART III: Assessing Organizational Core Competencies and Resources

In some instances, the mission of the organization is formed organically and is also in line with the needs of the community; in these cases, the team can offer the community its passion for certain issues, while directing its resources efficiently. For example, when Wayne and Delores Weaver became owners of the Jacksonville Jaguars (NFL), they brought with them their vision to assist economically and socially disadvantaged children in the local community. The Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation was started at the same time as the team, with the Foundation awarding the first grant even before the team played its first game. Similarly, the Philadelphia Eagles Youth Partnership (NFL) began its Eye Mobile initiative in 1996 when Jermaine Mayberry, a former player and first-round draft pick, expressed his passion for ensuring children had access to vision care due to his own childhood vision deficiency.

Assessing these resources allows many teams to realize a natural competitive advantage early on: in the area of social impact programming, many successful organizations choose to tie their mission to sports. For example, Mifalot, the educational and social initiative on behalf of Hapoel Tel Aviv (Israel Premier League), uses soccer to build more active, compassionate, just and cohesive communities. To this end, they engage youth in their programs such as "Around the Ball" which helps develop social, motor and developmental skills for young children and "On the Field" which focuses on using soccer as a tool for encouraging moral, social, and educational values. Per Chris Clarke, Business and Development Manager for the Everton FC Foundation (English Premier League), Everton FC similarly leverages its program "Imagine your Goal" as a means to allow soccer to help children with disabilities improve their conditions.

From an organizational standpoint, sports teams are highly streamlined operations; thus, assets must be managed precisely and program expectations should remain in-line with what is achievable based on the resources available. Within domestic teams, there are two major organizational classifications. Some domestic teams implement their social impact initiatives through a Community Relations department, which has the end-goal of increasing fan participation and excitement about the team; however, most of the teams we researched operate with a separate non-profit foundation that focus solely on social impact, with a defined mission and separate resources that are distinctly different from Community Relations. As such, the breadth of a team's resources – both human and capital – should generally serve to inform the breadth of the mission. The Jaguars Foundation (NFL), for example, operates with a full-time staff equivalent to three people, which allows the foundation to provide grants to thirty or forty local agencies annually. On the other hand, organizations like Everton FC Foundation (English Premier League) have a full-time staff of thirty-one that allow them to engage with over 30,000 participants annually.

In addition to staffed employees, the presence of a Board serves as an advisory committee for a foundation as well as a tremendous competency for organizations to explore. The Board may consist of community organizers, experts in the field, corporate executives, academic leaders or anyone whom the foundation deems helpful for advancing their mission. The potential value of these members as a core competency of an organization cannot be overstated. For example, the Board at Everton FC Foundation includes two members from local universities. Through this connection, the Foundation has developed partnerships that provide academic value-add and evaluative expertise to their programs.

Due to the exceptionally lean nature of sports organizations, we have further witnessed the importance of dedicated volunteers. While securing these volunteers is admittedly a challenge, there are clear, replicable examples of success. Everton FC (English Premier League) utilizes past participants of their programs to serve as current volunteers. Through this, they are able to secure volunteers who are not only knowledgeable about the program, but also bring with them passion towards the program. Mifalot taps into their sponsors for volunteers. One of their sponsors provides scholarships for local soccer players, and in turn, requires that the recipients volunteer with the organization. Mifalot is a prime example of an organization with the ability to

leverage its human resources with flexibility. With a full-time staff of twelve, a part-time staff of twenty, and a strong network of volunteers, the organization has been able to reach over 20,000 children. It additionally has an Advisory Board, which consists of Israeli leaders in politics and business and four external committees of volunteers (auditors, professional sports players, special needs, and pedagogical). Each of these committees work together to advise the organization on the various issues it faces and helps it to develop effective programming.

Lastly, organizations should not fail to overlook the totality of their assets, all of which can be used to advance a social impact mission. The Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation (NFL) uses the players, cheerleaders and mascots to address its mission of childhood obesity. They found that each group is useful in addressing different audiences: young boys relate to players, young girls relate to cheerleaders, and the mascot motivates children in elementary grades. Tottenham Hotspur (English Premier League) uses their club stadium as a resource to tackle the issue of health inequalities and obesity. They host events in their stadium with the aim of linking soccer and healthy eating, using not only soccer-playing but also the soccer-playing environment to reach their target audience.

Professor Todd Crosset has observed that sports organizations frequently attempt to have a larger-scale mission to avoid offending any groups in their fan community; however, this can become counterproductive when a team's resources are stretched so thinly that each initiative is only marginally impactful. On the contrary, proper alignment of human resources in conjunction with a mission has positive results. As mentioned above, the Movement of Derby County Football Club initially focused on improving the activity levels of young girls rather than all youth. By first approaching their mission with targeted specificity, they were able to utilize their team resources effectively enough to establish a stronghold among girls within Derby and are now expanding their mission to include young boys.

PART IV: The Critical Role of Partnerships in Measuring and Sustaining Impact and the Necessity of Backwards Induction

While assessing the internal human resources of an organization will aid in defining the program scope, it may also serve to highlight gaps in the organization and address areas where synergies

with partners can be found. In no cases did the team observe an organization that operated without some assistance from external partnerships. In fact, one of the driving factors of success hinges on key partnership alignment. John Bare of The AMB Family Foundation/Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation (NFL) suggests that organizations secure partners as soon as possible to determine immediately the best ways to work together. Gal Peleg of Mifalot/Hapoel Tel Aviv (Israel Premier League) echoed a similar sentiment, noting that their success is almost entirely local partner-based. Partnering with local schools and community centers decreases the workload of full-time staff, enabling them to better leverage their resources and be more effective in the communities they serve.

Choosing partners therefore becomes critical, as partners should have similar missions and access to the community in which the organization seeks to work. Organizations that opt to focus on non-sports initiatives may be particularly reliant on external partnerships. The Philadelphia Eagles Youth Partnership (NFL) has advanced its mission of enhancing opportunities and improving the quality of life for children and youth in the Greater Philadelphia region through health and education partnerships, with the incorporation of the Eye Mobile and the Book Mobile. These initiatives focus on providing prescription eyeglasses and books to children who otherwise may not have access to these items. Recognizing this challenge, EYP built strong partnerships with external entities to leverage existing community resources in vision care and the school system. Similarly, the Jaguars Foundation (NFL) relies on health affiliates with its “Straight Talk” initiative. Focusing on reducing the incidence of teen pregnancy and the spread of AIDs and sexually transmitted infections, the Jaguars use media to reach its target audience through a town hall meeting called “Teens & Sex: The Real Truth” on local networks as well as public service announcements featuring players from the team. Though this initiative is outside of the realm of the team’s core competency – sports – these key partnerships lend expertise and credibility to their mission.

Universally speaking, one of the greatest challenges faced by organizations engaged in social impact initiatives is turning a mission into action that is both measurable and sustainable. On a fundamental level, this hurdle can be attributed to an organizational inability to elicit follow-up on social impact initiatives, despite well-meaning intentions. Professor Kathy Babiak notes that while many teams are “doing good,” they are struggling with measuring and evaluating the

effects of their impact. She attributes this to a lack of time, human resources, capital and expertise, stating that “many [teams] are skilled at marketing, but not research.” While our research does not seek to address how impact can more be accurately measured, it does highlight that post-engagement follow-up is cited often by both experts and teams as a significant threat to sustainability. In some cases, there appeared to be no explicit plans in place to follow community engagements; thereby organizations run the risk of rendering the engagement a “one-off” event.

The question of how to measure and sustain impact is not simply a chronological one. To maximize success, an organization should not find itself at the point of a program’s conclusion wondering how to evaluate the results; instead, organizations should backwards induct through all facets of their social impact process to secure key partnerships upfront. Specifically, sustainable impact will hinge on an organizational ability to measure the impact of results and quantify success; likewise, the ability to measure impact will hinge on an organizational ability to align with partners at the early, critical stages of formation.

Sports organizations may be limited in their resources and expertise of measurement, thus many organizations select partners on the basis of their specific ability to provide sustainable and quantifiable services. Barclay’s Spaces for Sports, a global initiative providing sustainable sports sites and projects to disadvantaged communities, embodies this philosophy; Barclay’s works only with non-profit partners that have sophisticated “M&E” (measurement and evaluation) capabilities, such as Grassroots Soccer. Kirk Harrison shared with us that Barclay’s partners not only must be able to provide the scale and experience desired by a large, international bank, but they are required to sign a detailed partnership agreement upfront to this end. This agreement commits the partners to providing quarterly, bi-annual and annual reporting of budgeting, financial performance, and impact metrics, as well as a full program report after three years. To retain control of finances through each program’s duration, Barclay’s disperses the funds on an annual basis, rather than in totality; moreover, Barclay’s has the right to stop funding the project if the anticipated results are not achieved. For Barclay’s this defines why they refer to their programs as “community investment” rather than “corporate social responsibility”: for the investment that Barclay’s is making in the organization, they expect a return to the community in the form of tangible results.

Sherryl Kuhlman, Managing Director of the Wharton Program for Social Impact, concurs that one component that is most needed in the field of social impact at large is a deeper analysis of which business models of non-profits actually work to support their intended mission. Therefore, it is not surprising that with nearly all of the successful partnerships we researched, measurement and evaluation were critical components. The Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation (NFL) selects grants recipients on capabilities of measurement. Recipients are required to submit progress reports and final analyses of programs, while the Foundation's staff regularly follows up with the partner to evaluate implementation. The San Francisco 49ers (NFL) encourage not only reporting but also exceptional results: if a partner is generating greater-than-expected impact, the beneficiary will receive an additional financial bonus.

For resource-constrained organizations, partnering with specialized institutions may provide a helpful and cost-effective way to develop program metrics and measurements for teams that may not have the internal capabilities to do so. Academic and other specialized institutions such as foundations and hospitals have substantially more expertise required to develop measurement metrics for community impact programs. Additionally, these partnerships provide a live research laboratory for these institutions to engage with high-profile programs and learn from the extraction of real data. For example, Mifalot/Tel Aviv Hapoel (Israel Premier League) works closely with Tel Aviv University to monitor programs. Each program that Mifalot runs has its own criteria for success, and the "Know-How" manager is responsible for setting these goals; Mifalot taps into Tel Aviv University for their specific evaluation programs that measure the capacity of such endeavors.

In the case of some organizations, the nature of this partnership may arise from within. As previously mentioned, the board at Everton FC Foundation (English Premiere League) includes two members from local universities. Working with these local universities, the team has developed indicators that enable impact measurement in all of their initiatives. For example, with the "*Imagine Your Goals*" program that assists mentally ill children, Everton has worked closely with an affiliate to perform an independent study on the impact of their program. This study has provided very specific and positive results: 100% of the participants have more energy, 94% improve their sense of well-being, and 76% have more hope for the future, among other positive indicators. This example underscores the dual-importance of not only assessing internal

capabilities but also assessing what external symbiosis may exist with partners through organizational assets.

PART V: Selection of Impact Initiatives (A Three-Pronged Approach)

Through the process of assessing community needs, organizational competencies, and partnership alignments, organizations need to choose specific initiatives and activities in which to participate. This decision will then guide the daily operations of the organization. Not surprisingly, the team observed some of the most clearly defined - yet starkly divergent – opinions in this area. While some organizations function primarily to give grants, other organizations prefer to engage in direct service with the community. Additionally, the team saw yet another format emerge in which organizations practice a hybrid approach. At the heart of this decision is a team’s evaluation of its operational competencies. In all cases, and in accordance with the aforementioned notion of backward induction, the team observed an amplifying effect to partnering to deliver direct services or alternately providing financial support to key players.

The Grant-Giving Strategy:

One school of thought supports the notion that sports philanthropy should focus on giving grants, as is the case with the San Francisco 49ers Foundation (NFL). Joanne Pasternak, who works with both the foundation as well as the community relations group at the 49ers, strongly supports this notion of grant-giving. Through the foundation, which is now in its 19th year, the 49ers have given away approximately \$10 million to local organizations with a focus on “keeping kids safe, on track and in school.” Joanne and her team spend time fundraising on behalf of the foundation so that the funds may be channeled externally. The foundation maintains close and long-standing relationships with a handful of charities that support the overall mission (four non-profits receive 60% of the funds), all of which are vetted by the Board of Directors and carry the 49ers brand. The foundation has made the decision not to get involved with direct programs because it is the belief that “there are experts in the field who know how [to execute a social impact program],” while sports teams are experts in sports. She finds it is more efficient to spend time finding organizations that are doing the best job in their respective fields and then provide financial

resources to support those programs. Spending time and resources trying to participate in direct service would risk diverting attention away from their core cause: providing funding to existing non-profit partners.

The Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation (NFL) also focuses on grant-giving. With a targeted focus on childhood obesity, it works closely and effectively with a select group of recipients. In this case, the strategy to establish a grant-giving extension for the Falcons organization tapped into a pre-existing competency of the larger Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, which has succeeded in giving away over \$250 million since its inception.

The Direct Service Strategy:

On the other hand, Professor Todd Crosset warns of the danger around “recycling philanthropic dollars” and notes that grant-giving is best served by organizations, such as the above, that can add value and expertise to the dispersion of those dollars. For organizations lacking this capability, the student team explored a second school of thought around the notion of providing direct service activities to the community, as is the case with Manchester United (English Premier League). The Manchester United Foundation delivers soccer coaching and training programs to children in an effort to “develop them as players and more importantly as people,” including a “Hub of the Community” ambassador who is set up into local schools to act as liaison between education and sport. It synergises education and sport by linking the smaller primary school organisations with the local secondary/high school. John Shiels of Manchester United Foundation finds that its financial resources are better leveraged by offering direct, authentic programs rather than support third party delivery. This ensures quality assurance and that outcomes are monitored and evaluated ensuring good value for the investment. However, the foundation is tasked with raising substantial funding to support the club’s partnership with UNICEF.

The Hybrid Strategy:

We have lastly observed the emergence of a hybrid approach to impact initiatives that combines the philosophies of grant-giving and direct service. Nearly all of the European football (soccer) teams we researched serve as both direct service providers as well as grant-givers. Chelsea (English Premier League) provided \$1M to charity within a total club corporate responsibility budget of \$5.5 million. Real Madrid (Spanish La Liga) executes sporting schools in Madrid, but

facilitated the construction of a school in Haiti through funding alone. Grant Cornwell, Tottenham (English Premiere League), practices a similar approach and notes, “We’re very targeted in where we work, and occasionally we work with partnerships to expand our reach. We’ve done some work in South Africa and China, but we’ve done that through a partnership with the Special Olympics.” In other words, partnerships create a multiplier effect on organizations’ social impact efforts by complementing their core competencies.

This hybrid approach also has served to position sports organizations in a social impact consultancy role. A successful example of this approach is the Mifalot/Hapoel Tel Aviv project, which provides sporting facilities and equipment to impact tens of thousands of youth in the Israel/Palestine region. Its initiatives are a blend of financial assistance and community integration. Mifalot provides 60% of the financing for the local athletic programs while the other 40% is funded by the community. It is important to recognize that Mifalot does not have its own resources, so the organization is responsible for raising the funds to cover that 60%. Three to four years ago, Mifalot raised 90-95% of the actual costs. At the same time, it complements funding by providing extensive planning, training, and on-the-ground implementation supervision through a “know-how” manager who ensures the successful execution of programs.

Finally, the nature and format of initiatives might change within organizations over time as core competencies are reassessed. Barclays Spaces for Sports has provided athletic facilities to youth around the world since 2004. During the first stage of the program, which was UK-based, Barclays utilized its stable of internal community investment managers (bankers) to serve as liaisons between the company’s central planning group - with a staff of two - and the local non-profit organizations that were implementing the spaces. Barclays was not only responsible for providing the sum total of the financial funding for these facilities, but the company was also integrated into the oversight of the planning and development through these community investment managers. This was a successful approach only for a very limited geographic scope; as the program expanded internationally, the central planning team faced several challenges. Not only was it increasingly difficult to manage Barclay’s community investment managers from around the world and work with them to successfully replicate the spaces, but the local community investment managers themselves were faced with increasing challenges with their respective local non-profits, who operated very differently than the original UK partners.

Ultimately, Barclays decided to remain on as the financing arm of the global Spaces for Sports, but redesigned their partnership strategy to put more accountability on their local partners in the realm of direct service, as mentioned in Part IV.

One of the most durable examples of this hybrid strategy is Eagles Youth Partnership (NFL). Joe Banner, President of the Philadelphia Eagles, shared that the organization briefly contemplated offering grants or engaging in sport-related programming at inception. As previously mentioned, EYP has been a leader in delivering direct service initiatives in the fields of vision and reading for over fifteen years. Ultimately their decision to become a direct service program was distinctly aligned with the organization's innovative and "entrepreneurial culture". Mr. Banner, along with owners Jeffrey Lurie and Christina Weiss Lurie, were aware that there were other, more traditional options to pursue in the field of social impact. Yet this group recognized that one of their leadership competencies was that they were all risk-takers and wanted to take a different path – and a path they knew could deliver results. So while EYP does a significant amount of direct service, it also gives grants in the community for things that fall outside of EYP's core competencies.

PART VI: Leveraging the Brand

The value of sports teams' and sports companies' brands in relation to their revenues tends to be far greater than brand values of other companies with similar revenues. In *Forbes Magazine's* 2010 rankings of sports brands, Nike was No. 1 with a brand value of \$10.7 billion, followed by ESPN's \$10.5 billion. The world's biggest sports teams feature massive brand values: Manchester United's \$270 million, the New York Yankees' \$266 million and Real Madrid's \$235 million. The ability to leverage that brand to make a greater impact in the community has the potential to pay huge dividends; thus, leveraging the brand should be evaluated as a competency of the team.

One example of a program that successfully leverages its brand is Eagles Youth Partnership. By adding its brand to the playgrounds it created, there is a powerful incentive to bring the community together. They have also used their brand to promote their Eye Mobile and Book Mobile. The Eagles make full use of their brand in an effort to get kids more interested, delivering their programs that are 'dressed-up' in all things Eagles, from the design of the

vehicles to the posters, bookmarks, bookplates and storybook man costume. It has attempted to measure the impact of leveraging its brand by testing the difference in reading when kids were given an Eagles-branded book and when they were given a non-branded book. The Eagles have observed the impact their brand has on deepening their social impact, particularly given their involvement with youths. Said Martinez-Helfman: “It’s on the front end with raising the dollars, and it’s on the back end with delivering the service. The Eagles brand helps move the needle on the child’s behavior to get them to do things they wouldn’t otherwise do. We have much higher rates of eyeglass wear than other studies that have been done without that connection.”

Another example of a team that leverages its brand is Inter Milan (Serie A Italy). With its Inter Campus Worldwide project, the main purpose is to combine soccer and Inter’s colors with the development of children in areas hit hard by social and economic problems. Soccer is used as a reward and a way to convince children to go to school and not make the wrong choices. Children receive sports kits but are also guided to go to school and “follow the right path,” with the Inter colors and logos a major branding tool.

In addition to assessing the value of the brand name, teams are afforded additional competencies by virtue of being a sports property. For example, the ability to access the media and other celebrities in a way that most cannot gives teams the ability to publicly highlight issues to a far greater extent. As Peter Racine of the Jacksonville Jaguars Foundation (NFL) noted, driving the media is important because teams can attract media coverage to bring public attention to matters and give publicity to partners in community impact. He further noted that that the team brand has brought access to the owners that they did not previously have, allowing them to speak about social issues in a more public forum. For example, the Foundation matched a literacy grant that Pepsi had received, enabling it to provide 1600 books and team-branded backpacks to children. Because of the strength of the brand of the Jaguars, they were able to hold a large press conference at their stadium, with four of six local stations covering not only the Foundation, but more importantly, the issue at hand.

However, not every team chooses to leverage its brand through its foundation. The Tampa Bay Buccaneers, for example, create an “invisible division line” between the team’s community relations group and the owner’s grant-giving arm, the Glazer Family Foundation. The Glazer Family Foundation even maintains a Vision Mobile (a great example of collaboration within the

NFL, as the Eagles provided technical assistance during the launch), although it is not team-branded; instead, the Foundation opted to work with an existing vision provider that was already familiar with the industry. Both groups are managed by Kevin Brown, who states, “The reason why it works is because the Foundation is mainly funded by the owners. The owners choose the causes, and there is not the same need to report to the public [as with Community Relations]; this allows us to wear both hats.”

A team for which we have seen brand usage transition is the Hapoel Tel Aviv Football Club, whose Mifalot program impacts more than 20,000 children. Gal Paleg indicated that each player typically has a contract that requires a certain number of hours per month of community service for Mifalot, and that the team captain is on Mifalot’s Board. Initially, Mifalot used the Hapoel brand a great deal; in fact, it was the sports brand that drove the success of the impact. Over time, however, that has changed; the Mifalot programs have now become almost standalone successes. So poignant are their abilities to deliver results to communities that programmatic impact and the Mifalot brand have continued to grow stronger. Mifalot has transitioned accordingly, leveraging its use of Hapoel less than when they began this project. It is a strong example of how teams’ social impact efforts may evolve over time, and how the most explicit external asset – the brand of the team – may serve as a tremendous platform for community impact so meaningful it becomes its own core competency.

PART VII: Summary

In this report, the student team explored some of the best practices they observed in those teams that have made substantial inroads into the sports social impact arena. They saw that many – likely all - teams possess the potential for impact in some form; however, success hinges on a comprehensive and continuous evaluation of organizational core competencies through the entirety of the social impact process. They also observed key themes, including a focused mission, a utilization of human assets and team resources, a set of strategic partnerships, and the use of the brand. Finally, they saw that successful impact does not occur in isolation; partners are critical to amplifying positive effects.

The team would like to sincerely thank all the participants in this project. As they spoke with these experts and teams, they witnessed firsthand the passion that exists for all in this rapidly

growing field; they also noted an expressed desire by all parties to increase communication within this field. They hope this report will spark fresh conversations and illicit new ideas. While the dialogue within the industry may be new, it is highly active and indicates that the next generation of social impact in sports is on the horizon.