

2025

Annual REPORT



METRO DETROIT SLED HOCKEY

**ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025**



www.metrodetroitshockey.org

WHO We Are

Metro Detroit Sled Hockey is a nonprofit 501(c)3 dedicated to making hockey accessible to athletes with physical disabilities. The program offers competitive opportunities for youth and adult players across Southeast Michigan. Through the power of sled hockey, Metro Detroit Sled Hockey builds confidence, community, and a love for the game, proving that hockey truly is for everyone.

TESTIMONIALS

"I played stand up hockey from age 3 to 14 and started playing sled hockey after my paralyzation. My favorite part is the physicality and community." - John H, 2025 USA Hockey Tier 4 National Champion

"These athletes are hockey players just as much as we are and they are bringing back championships!"
Darren McCarty, DRW Alumni

"Vladdy's teammates. These are the celebrities. They train everyday. They are zipping around the ice like crazy. We have a very competitive team." - Dr Jeff Pierce, Athletes Unlimited & Michigan Sports & Spine Centers



VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers contributed an estimate of **2000 hours** this year.



Our volunteers are another critical contributor to our program. Without their hours put into the organization, we wouldn't be where we are today.

What they do

- **Fundraising** events, such as our annual golf outing and the Red Wings 50/50
- Outreach events like **Try Sled Hockey**
- We have an **all volunteer** working board
- All of our **coaches** are volunteers

ACHIEVEMENTS

Tier 1 Wins

MIDWEST SLED HOCKEY LEAGUE
CHAMPIONSHIP

Hosted the First

NORTH AMERICAN WOMEN'S SLED
HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

6,000 Reached

THROUGH 11 OUTREACH EVENTS, 2
EXHIBITION GAMES

Team USA

TIER 1 PLAYER EARNED A POSITION
AS AN ALTERNATE FOR TEAM USA'S
WOMEN DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Tier 4 Wins

USA HOCKEY'S SLED HOCKEY
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Player Expansion

BY 15%, RESULTING IN OVER 40
PLAYERS AGED 5 TO 65



"The true impact is watching someone with a disability—who's spent years cheering on the Red Wings, thinking they could never play—realize they can play hockey, and not just play, but compete as an athlete."

-Deanna Garrity



ACHIEVEMENTS



Reached New Areas

HOSTED A 3:3 TOURNAMENT IN GAYLORD, MI, AN EFFORT TO GROW SLED HOCKEY IN NEW PARTS OF THE STATE

Youth Traveled

TO 7 TOURNAMENTS AROUND THE MIDWEST

Youth Player Growth

3 PLAYERS UNDER 18 PROVED THEIR SKILLS ON THE TIER 4 ADULT TEAM

2024-2025

This year, there were two goals we honed in on: **raising awareness for sled hockey** and other adaptive sports, and **how we could offer our athletes the best opportunities.**

WE MET BOTH GOALS.



OUR IMPACT

Expanding Competitive Opportunities

Thanks to donor support, we successfully launched a Tier 1 team in the Midwest Sled Hockey League — a crucial step for athletes aiming for the U.S. paralympic team. This team provides a high-performance environment where elite players sharpen their skills and chase Paralympic dreams.

Five athletes advanced from our Tier 4 adult team to compete at the Tier 1 level — a clear sign of growth made possible by our investment in development.

Our Tier 1 roster proudly includes one **U.S. Women's National Team** alternate and six **Team Canada Paralympians**, reinforcing our role in preparing athletes for international success.

Where we are

Our athletes come from multiple counties in SE Michigan

Washtenaw
Wayne
Oakland
Macomb
Livingston
Monroe
Windsor



OUR IMPACT

Community Outreach and Awareness

We introduced **36 new participants** to the sport through three Try Sled Hockey clinics — often their first time ever on the ice.

We reached over **6,000 people** by attending 11 community events, sharing the power and possibilities of adaptive hockey with families, fans, and future athletes.

Every dollar contributed helped expand awareness and inclusion

We, in partnership with Meijer State Games, Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports, and U.P. Sled Hockey, hosted a **3-on-3 tournament in Gaylord, Michigan**, using fast-paced action to grow awareness of sled hockey across the region.

Removing Barriers, Creating Access

Because of your support, players didn't have to choose between paying medical bills and playing the sport they love.

We supported **44 players** this year — and for many, that meant everything from travel to tournaments to having the right equipment.

We hosted **two tournaments**, welcoming over **200 athletes**, creating more competitive opportunities and showcasing our players on home ice.

We provided equipment to **12 players**, and **44 athletes had their tournament registration covered** — giving them the chance to compete without financial strain.



PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

This year, in her **8th** **season** of sled hockey, Cate made the women's national team as an alternate, and is currently training hard to earn a full time roster spot.



Meet Cate

A cancer survivor with a spinal cord injury, who attends the University of Michigan studying Supply Chain Management and Finance.

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PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

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Meet Benton

This year was Benton's first season playing sled hockey. He scored his first hat trick, made friends, and aims to inspire others to try our sport.

Benton found sled hockey after losing his leg to cancer. Since then, he's gotten stronger, and wants to help others learn how to play.

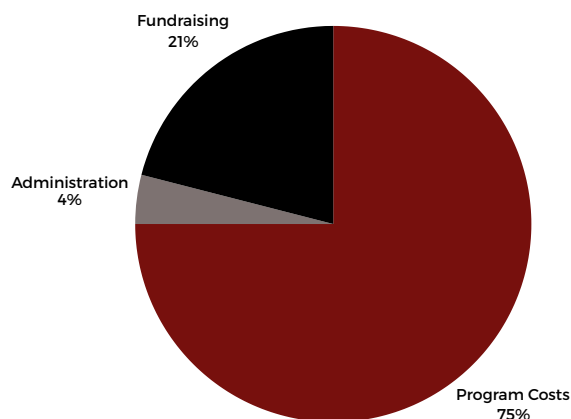


FINANCIALS

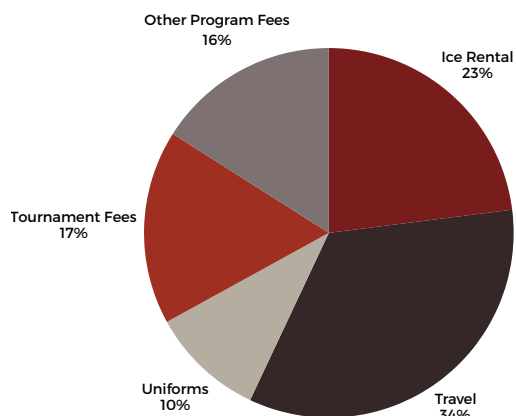
Without your support, we couldn't do it. Here's a breakdown of our financials for the year.

We're proud to share that 75% of our expenses go directly toward supporting our programs—and **we're working hard to raise that to 80%**. To reach that goal, we're expanding and diversifying our fundraising efforts so we can continue growing the sport and making an even greater impact.

Where Money is Directed



Program Costs



Unlike traditional youth sports with neighborhood leagues, our players must travel across the Midwest—and often nationwide—to participate in tournaments, league games, and development camps. These experiences are essential for athlete growth, exposure to high-level competition, and fostering a sense of inclusion and teamwork.

SPONSORING

How People Sponsor

One of our biggest fundraising events of the year is our **annual golf outing**. It's success determines how much support we can provide the next season.



We also have tournament sponsorships, team sponsorships, and raffles.



Your support matters more than ever.

Athletes with disabilities face unique challenges that go beyond the rink. In addition to training and competition costs, many rely on specialized mobility aids, adaptive equipment, and ongoing medical care - expenses that most athletes don't have to consider.

Your partnership ensures that cost is never a barrier to participation and that every athlete has the chance to reach their full potential.

By sponsoring our programs, you're not just funding ice time or gear—you're helping level the playing field. You're giving these athletes the opportunity to **compete**, **grow**, and **thrive** in a sport they love, without the added financial burden of their disability.

OUR OUTLOOK

We always strive to improve our organization and offer more for both our players and sponsors - this is how we aim to improve next year.

Advocacy

Advocate for proper level of play for all players in adaptive sports

Growth

Increase Recruitment and Retention of youth players

Continue to provide opportunities for girls and women in sled hockey

Assess the need/viability of an adult house team

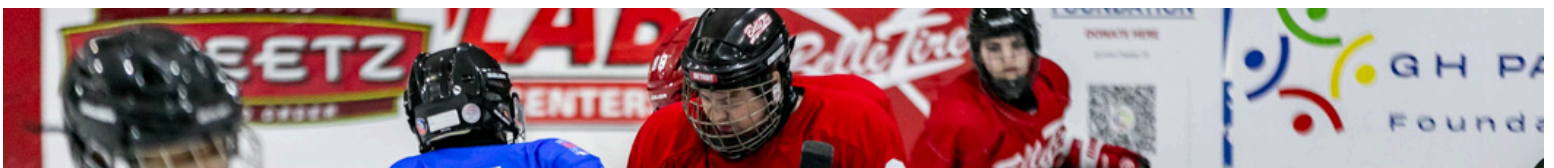
Administration

Implementing accounting software

Aligning fiscal year with programming

Funding

Expand funding to eliminate financial barriers to participation





THANK YOU

Without our supporters, we couldn't do it.

They give our athletes a chance to be the best they can be, and provide ample opportunity for dreams to happen.



Our supporters are what keep our organization up and running.

Thank you.



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