

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

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SERC Youth Sports Video

<http://www.aahra.org>

Scroll to bottom of page – click on tab “Changing Lives Video”



# LaGrange

HOUSING AUTHORITY

*New Voice, New Vision, New Opportunities*



## OUR SERVICES

Our Service is geared to expand the knowledge base options of life, for any child we may come into contact. Hoping to spread to other children that we may not be able to touch within our community; To break the false sense of a limited paradigm future.

Integrating the knowledge of old, with innovating new ideas we can shift and expand the five senses of touch, taste, smell, seeing, hearing, and maybe even add one.



**THE YOUTH ARE**

**NOT JUST OUR PROFESSION**

**IT'S OUR PASSION**



## CREATIVE IDEAS

Each year our Jr. Tech Professionals will pick a world service project to help others in need. This year we will be collecting gently used shoes to send over to Uganda.

Partnering with different regional agencies, we are able to expose the kids to exotic foods, classical orchestras, operas, and many more. During the summer months, the kids are also able to work side by side with our staff to learn business practices that will give them an extra skill set in job searches.



## PRODUCT DETAILS

After School Enrichment Program offers an after-school enrichment program for students ages 5-18. The program focuses on K-12 school readiness and incorporating technology into the classroom.

The program has a staff with certified teachers with an extensive background in education. The program runs Monday – Thursday from 3pm-6pm for students ages 5 – 12.

Children ages 13 – 18 participate in our Youth Leadership Program which runs Tuesday – Thursday from 4pm-7pm, and on occasional Mondays from 4 - 7 pm.

The Youth Leadership Platform focuses on college preparedness, adolescent growth, and leadership skills.



This Summer **Our** Youth  
Have **Learned** and  
**Implimented** Skills To  
Mannage **Our** App From  
**Computer** Content  
**Side**



Learning how to manage app from the computer side will give kids a different view of the technology that they currently use on a daily basis.

Introducing kids to the IT world at an early age has the potential to spawn unlimited possibilities for future jobs or even creating their own app businesses.



## Partnerships With LaGrange Housing Authority

**With local partnerships we are able to provide a vast array of servics to our community.**

- LaGrange College: Servant Scholars,Black Student Union, Financial Aid andAffordability Department ( partnership inprogress), Learn 2 Serve program • **Home Depot** • Communities in Schools
- **Clark Atlanta Educational Talent Search** • Peach State • **Amerigroup** • WellCare Feeding the Valley
- City of LaGrange • **Delta Simga Theta Inc** •Troup Transformation Homelessness Coalition
- Accountability Courts •**West Georgia Technical College** •LaGrange Art Museum
- Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine of Art**(Auburn, AL) •Twin Cedars: Darkness to Light • **Omega Psi Phi** • Troup County Prevention Coalition • **Girl Scouts of America (Troop 462)** • PNC Bank
- **The Ester Project Ministries** •Splendid Events •**Teachable Moments Learning Center**
- Pride and Joy Learning Center • **Child Care Network HeadStart** •Community Action for Improvement
- LaGrange Troup County Parks and Rec •**Troup County School System** • Junior Service League
- **Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Center** (Drugand Alcohol Prevention) • **Upskale Hair Salon** • BB&T

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THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY

# Opinion



On August 6, 1991, in a public ceremony at the White House, the President of the United States recognized Gadsden as an All-America city.

## Tournament offers rewards

*Players learn more than basketball skills in community housing league*

**T**his week brought a group of rising young athletes to Gadsden for the Seventh Annual Alabama Public Housing Authority's State Championship tournament, which ended Wednesday. You may never see any of the young people — from fifth-graders to high school seniors — in the NCAA Final Four, or playing in the NBA.

But these are young people on the rise nonetheless. They are raising their grades in school, improving their self-esteem, and broadening their educational experiences, says Tom Wachs, state coordinator of the tournament.

The tournament brought a record 56 teams — 750 players and coaches — to Gadsden. That's good for Gadsden. The economic impact is estimated at \$1.5 million. And it is good for the young people who attend. As Wachs says, most of these young people do not get the opportunity for vacations and travel. This tournament is a reward and a chance for them to tour some sights in Gadsden, to learn about this city as they did the host city of Mobile last year.

But we think the entire sports season that culminates in this tournament is a reward to the

### EDITORIALS



young people involved, and to the families who live in our housing communities.

The basketball program was born as an effort to give young people with little to do something to occupy their time, in hopes of keeping those who might be inclined to find trouble looking elsewhere.

"Basketball is the bait," Wachs said. And there are strings attached for the players. They must have a C average in school, or be involved in a tutorial program, either through school or within their housing community, and they have to stay

out of trouble to stay on the team.

The housing authority teams are an outlet for the young people who would not have one otherwise. Participants cannot be involved in their school's team.

Wachs says in the past seven years, seven or eight of the young people involved in housing authority basketball have gone on to receive sports scholarships to junior colleges.

That's the sports success. It is harder to calculate what these young people gain in other aspects of their lives.

Wachs says he hears stories all the time, of the shy child who was brought out of a shell by participating, of the young person who bordered on trouble, and was turned around by getting involved in something positive, getting some good influence from their coach or housing authority personnel, and just getting something they can look forward to doing.

There are many young people he says, who were making Ds and Fs, and after getting in a tutorial program so they could play basketball, became a B-average student.

No matter what the scoreboard read after the final game of the tournament, each and every team and player comes out a winner, in ways the numbers could never record.

SPORTS

# Youths in public housing learn lessons from basketball.

By Jay Wald  
Special to The News

Tom Wachs considered himself a long shot to make it in sports. But with hard work and desire, the youth who was cut from his high school baseball team went on to pitch three years in the New York Mets' minor league system.

Now, as youth sports coordinator for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Birmingham, the 31-year old Wachs sees kids living in public housing projects the same way he saw himself — up against the odds.

"My kids are considered underdogs in society," Wachs said. "Just living in their respective environments dictates it. Most live in single-parent, low-income families."

Wachs wanted to try to make a difference in their lives, and athletics was his chosen method.

So in 1993 he started the Alabama Public Housing Basketball Tournament for teams from public housing authorities around the state. The players range from 13 to 18 years old.

The event, which began Friday with 24 teams in a double-elimination format, concludes today at UAB Arena and Wallace Gym. The quarterfinals start at 9 this morning, followed by a slam dunk contest and a three-point shootout at noon. The semifinals start at 2, then the finals begin at 4.

"Sports is the best way to reach people," Wachs said. "Everybody loves and can relate to sports. We can teach

the kids discipline and hard work through sports."

The most important aim, Wachs said, is to give youths "a positive alternative to life on the streets. They are faced with drugs, gangs, and all the other bad things out there."

One of the requirements for playing in the tournament is the players must sign a drug free/sportsmanship agreement, which says they will not use or sell illegal drugs. They also must agree to keep up with their schoolwork.

Those agreements have been violated a few times. And when that happens, the player is kicked off the team.

Jerrell Collins of the Birmingham Suns, who scored 20 points in a 76-63 win over Decatur on Saturday to help Birmingham stay alive in the loser's bracket, said: "It makes me feel good to know somebody wanted to help me. It gave me a lot of confidence. And it's brought me closer to my friends."

"I'm all for bringing the kids together," Suns coach Sam Dansby said. "There's a lot of life's lessons being taught out here, like learning how to overcome adversity and how to get along with a group. This is not all about basketball, but it may be one of the biggest things in the country for having positive effects."

Wachs agreed. "This is a game of life," he said. "Our definition of a loser is somebody who gets involved with illegal drugs. We consider a winner to be one who stays on the right track by trying their best and striving to get better."



NEWS STAFF PHOTO/BERNARD TRONCALE

Kenny Giles (10) of Livingston moves around James Johnson.

# A must win?

## Morrison needs victory vs. Scott

Boxing at 8 p.m. on ESPN

By Doug Ferguson  
Associated Press writer

TULSA, Okla. — The "three-strikes-and-you're-out" rule could be in effect regarding Tommy Morrison.



Morrison, known for a strong right hand in the ring and a fondness for the nightlife outside of it, has twice seen his heavyweight career sidetracked by staggering losses.

He recognizes one more slip could be the end of him.

"I can't afford to lose again," he said. "This is a very unforgiving sport. When you do good, people are easy to jump on the bandwagon. As soon as you stumble, they hide under

## Duke

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"When Grant got his fourth foul," Lang said, "I said a little prayer that

in the regional semifinal win over Kansas with 29 of his own, scored just 12 against Duke and the primary defense of Lang. The 73 points Robin-

