CAUSE (Center for Allied and Unified Sports and Exercise)
Gretchen Ringler
Daemen Athletics

BACKGROUND

The Center for Allied and Unified Sports and Exercise (CAUSE), is a weekly sports sampling. Since 2017, Daemen College has provided opportunities at no cost for people with disabilities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience the camaraderie and sportsmanship that comes with athletics participation. In addition, CAUSE provides a venue for caregivers to access athletic-based care, participate in health and wellness programs, or simply experience the joy of watching a loved one compete. Under the supervision of Daemen Athletics Coaches and Faculty, Daemen Students and Student-Athletes are paired with participants to engage in activities that promote sport, exercise, and socialization. During sessions, caregivers can enjoy time to themselves, use the Fitness Center or socialize with other caregivers.

DATA

CAUSE Participants Disabilities
- Other: 17.5%
- Growth/Limb & Joint: 12.1%
- Mental Disorder: 11.1%
- Developmental: 8.1%
- Cerebral Palsy: 7.1%
- Spina Bifida: 6.6%
- Traumatic Injury: 5.9%

CAUSE Participants Ages
- 22+ years: 23.9%
- 12-21 years: 21.1%
- 11-12 years: 17.1%
- 10-11 years: 15.1%
- 9-10 years: 13.8%
- 8-9 years: 11.5%
- 5-7 years: 7.9%

SAMPLE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

CAUSE Weekly Schedule
- 1pm: Kickball Game
- 2:10pm: Athletics & Student Program Director: Gretchen & Athletes
- 3:00pm: Caregiver Program Director: Gretchen & Athletes
- 3:05pm: Caregiver Program Director: Gretchen & Athletes
- 3:20pm: Caregiver Program Director: Gretchen & Athletes
- 3:25pm: Caregiver Program Director: Gretchen & Athletes
- 3:30pm: Caregiver Program Director: Gretchen & Athletes

IMPACT

Year One Impact
- In 2017-18, CAUSE served over 60 persons with disabilities, providing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience the camaraderie and sportsmanship that comes with participation in athletics.
- More than 80% of participants who attended Sport Sampling Sundays on a regular basis showed improvements in physical goals and 73.9% showed improvements in social goals.
- 96% of caregivers indicated that participation in CAUSE positively impacted their child’s health and well-being.
- 85% of caregivers indicated reduced stress either “quite a bit” or a “tremendous amount.”
- Over 30 Daemen students increased interest and capacity to work with persons with disabilities.

GRANT FUNDING

Our Funding & Program Partners
- Amherst Youth Board
- Buffalo Bills Foundation
- East Coast Conference
- Margaret L. Wendt Foundation
- National Collegiate Athletic Association
- Parent Network of WNY
- Park School of Buffalo
- Ralph Wilson Legacy Fund of the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
- The Children’s Guild Foundation
- Wegmans

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