



MPAC'S VISION

We've been scratching our heads, listening, listening, listening and talking with folks all over Western North Carolina for years about the state of community, community culture and movement facilities in our area.

We decided to sit down and put it to pen and paper and articulate what we believe a **Positive Community Culture** looks like. Strap in, because everybody here at MAYSA & MPAC is committed in more ways than we can tell you to the following. We hope you'll come along with us:

Bottom Line: We want to create a culture where kids and adults **love** to play the games and move. They look forward to practices, games and social interaction as times when they will have **fun**. The joy they find in **playing, learning, moving and growing** will last a life time. We are committed to investing in the health and wellness of our population; Not only for our kids, but for our entire community

In a positive community culture, all resources flow evenly through out. All citizens have equal options determined by their ability and interest. Elite participants compete in "meritocratic" environments in which a place on the team and playing time are determined by ability, performance and effort. Less talented or skilled participants, or simply participants who want a different kind of experience, have the option to play in developmental or recreational programs in which they are guaranteed the right to play at least a part of every game. All citizens have equal access to **play, learn, move and grow**.

We believe that the fabric of Community can be rewoven by reestablishing models for social interaction on the field and court that carry over to streets, schools, business and all aspects of community.

At every level, participants are proud to have their families and friends see them play. Knowing that they are an important part of the team and community contributes to this proud feeling; their coaches are supportive at all levels; kids are confident that their parents are supportive; and ultimately, they know that those watching are proud of them whether or not they win the game. Their parents and coaches recognize and support that this is **their** game.

All involved in community (participants, coaches, parents, officials, administrators and fans) realize and support what a special time this is for the participants and those involved in any movement and community activity. They look at their involvement as a privilege that they never want to dishonor. They realize further that sports and movement provide a time when they get to interact with people they do not see on a daily or even regular basis, and they come to cherish and respect this time. Participants know that this is a time when they can learn from each other (as

well as from the coach), and the coach sees how much can be learned from the participants. Participants look forward to playing and performing against challenging opponents because they push them to perform to their highest potential.

Coaches feel the responsibility not only to teach their players the skills and strategy behind the game, but also a respect for the tradition of the game and for all who are involved (teammates, opponents, officials, and fans). Learning to **Honor the Game** contributes to a growing sense of responsibility and maturing moral reasoning that helps athletes prepare to become contributing citizens of the larger community.

Coaches realize that what they are teaching their participants carries far beyond the field into the classroom, the home and even into future jobs. Coaches have their participants (and team as a whole) focus on their effort and personal improvement, rather than simply on the result of the game. They help participants recognize that mistakes are an inevitable and important part of the learning process and that a key to success is being able to rebound from mistakes with renewed determination. This way, players gain a sense of control over their own development and confidence in their ability to succeed, in life as well as in sports. Everyone realizes that it is **life's lessons** learned through participation in the sport, game or activity that are their greatest value.

participants have an important voice in creating this positive culture, and there are multiple and ongoing opportunities for them to shape their own environment. During team discussions participants speak and contribute. When decisions are being made that affect the entire team or league, coaches and league organizers make a concerted effort to be approachable and participants' ideas are sought out and considered. Having this voice increases participants' sense of internal motivation, and they feel a stronger sense of control over their surroundings.

This positive culture encourages participants to play multiple sports and activities and never pressures players to specialize in one sport too early in their "careers". Coaches resist the urge to pressure their participants to give up other sports or activities besides their own; realizing that what might give them the best winning percentage is not always the same as what is in their participant's best interest.

All of this in interaction shapes the foundation of positive community culture.

We are further convinced by volumes of scientific research that all of this is investing in the health and wellness of our population. Not only our kids.

THE CHALLENGE

When the game is on the line, can we really live up to this description of a positive culture? Can we really expect coaches, participants, players, fans, and parents to uphold this positive culture if it might result in losing the game? The answer has to be a resounding "Yes!" Culture is a very rigid yet pliable human experience. Cultural changes begin with individual change in vision. They become greater cultural reality through **collective commitment to not accept anything else**. All involved must realize that winning cannot be the only goal. Maintaining a positive culture where positive **character traits** are developed in our participants must come **first**. When a game is on the line and tensions are running high, it can take a high level of moral courage to keep our focus on what is really important, but if we can do that, we will teach our children an invaluable lesson. We must believe that maintaining this positive culture is so vital that we are willing to stand up to others that are putting it in danger. We remind them quietly and kindly to **Honor the Game!** Our vision will stretch far beyond winning a specific game, tournament or league championship to making a lasting, positive impact on the lives of our players and in the fabric of community through translation from the field to positive community interaction.

Fund us and we will build you better employees!

Our primary focus will remain on:

- Community interaction
- Fitness Development
- Sports Skills Development
- Game Skill Development
- Health and Wellness Education
- Healthy snacks/nutrition actions and activities/information
- Healthy parenting skills
- Posture for a pain-free life (all ages)
- Senior health
- Toddler Development

All with the goals of increased health and the reestablishment of positive community culture!