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CUSTOMER STORY

Team Ansars: Building a Sustainable Sponsorship Engine

How a 25-year community legacy became a year-round, multi-sport program — and how Ansars Family and Youth Services is turning proven community demand into durable, sponsor-backed capacity.

A legacy renewed

Team Ansars is the sports and recreation program of Ansars Family and Youth Services (AFYS), a nonprofit in Richmond, Virginia. Its roots run roughly 25 years deep — the program's current director, Tariq Alkebu-Lan, played on its first championship team as a young athlete. "What was built for us," he writes, "we now have the opportunity to build for them."

In Spring 2024, AFYS relaunched that legacy with a deliberately modest first step: a **free, four-week Run Club pilot** rooted in endurance, character, and community. Families responded immediately — and their response made the real ask clear. They were not looking for a single seasonal activity. They were asking for a sustained recreation ecosystem where athletic competition and Muslim identity could belong in the same space.

Two years later, that pilot had become a **year-round, five-sport program** — outdoor soccer, indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball, and running/track — serving hundreds of program-season enrollments, primarily for Muslim youth while welcoming non-Muslim participants alongside them.

Two years of documented impact

420+
documented program enrollments (program-season participation)

5
sport areas, from a single free pilot

1,500+
estimated volunteer coaching hours

289+
outdoor soccer enrollments — the flagship program

67
known fee-waiver enrollment instances

$5,600+
minimum documented registration-fee assistance

Enrollment counts reflect program-season participation — a young person returning for multiple seasons or sports contributes one enrollment per experience. Coaching hours are modeled conservatively from documented schedules and team counts. Source: Team Ansars Impact Report, Spring 2024 – Spring 2026.

> *"Just to see our Muslim youth being together as a team on the field is an accomplishment in and of itself. Our community needed this."*
>
> — Team Ansars parent

From a free pilot to a year-round ecosystem

Each new offering was a response to demand the community had already demonstrated — proof, season over season, that families wanted this work to continue.

SPRING 2024	**Run Club pilot.** A free four-week endurance program rooted in Islamic character, work ethic, and brotherhood.
FALL 2024	**Outdoor soccer.** Five divisions establish the renewed team-sports foundation.
WINTER 2024–25	**Indoor soccer · Basketball · Volleyball.** Three indoor soccer teams, three basketball teams, and weekly volleyball open court and games.
SPRING 2025	**Outdoor soccer · Run Club returns.** First spring soccer season of the renewed program.
SUMMER 2025	**Track Series.** Organized sprint and relay competition joins the calendar.
FALL 2025	**Largest soccer season yet · Girls volleyball.** Soccer reaches its highest documented participation; volleyball moves into organized competition.
WINTER 2025–26	**Expansion indoors.** Indoor soccer grows to five teams; basketball fields 10U, 12U, and 15U squads.
SPRING 2026	**Year-round cycle complete.** Another spring outdoor soccer season closes the loop.

Access is part of the design

Financial assistance is not an afterthought at Team Ansars — it is how the program keeps community recreation within reach. Across the reporting period, AFYS documented **67 known fee-waiver enrollments** — roughly one for every six enrollment instances — worth a minimum of **$5,600 in registration-fee assistance**. The program's next step is converting that improvised generosity into a planned **$8,000 annual Youth Access Fund**, so no family's participation hinges on a volunteer's ability to quietly cover a fee.

The real audience: growth this consistent — across five sports and eight consecutive seasons — is the strongest possible evidence to put in front of a sponsor. The demand is proven; the open question is capacity.

The sustainability challenge — and the plan

Volunteers built Team Ansars. The honest reckoning in AFYS's own impact report: growth cannot depend indefinitely on the same small group absorbing an expanding workload.

More than 1,500 hours of volunteer coaching carried the program's first two years — a conservative estimate that excludes registration, scheduling, fundraising, facilities, equipment, and parent communication. Meanwhile, recorded registration income covered less than half of documented program costs. The gap was real, and it was being closed by sacrifice.

AFYS's answer is a two-level community investment campaign:

- **$100,000 core — stabilize.** Shared part-time administrative capacity, a predictable seasonal coach stipend pool, facilities and operations, the Youth Access Fund, seed capacity for broader AFYS programming, and an operating reserve.
- **$150,000 stretch — stabilize and build the next layer.** Expanded administrative capacity, coach training and employment transition, additional AFYS pilots, expanded youth assistance, and reserve flexibility.

Sponsorships from local businesses sit alongside donors, grants, and recurring supporters as a deliberate pillar of that plan — the "sponsorship engine" this story is about.

How SponsorWell helps

AFYS is SponsorWell's design partner — the platform is being built alongside the organization running this exact playbook. Team Ansars' public sponsorship presence lives at **sponsorships.ansarsfys.org**, powered by SponsorWell, and the AFYS team uses the platform to keep sponsor relationships in one place: a pipeline from first conversation to commitment, the acknowledgments each partner is owed, and a renewal queue that treats every returning sponsor as a relationship to re-earn — never an automatic renewal.

> *"SponsorWell has helped Team Ansars turn corporate sponsorship from something we hoped to pursue into a real component of our fundraising strategy. As a growing nonprofit with limited administrative capacity, having another way to connect our mission with businesses that want to invest in youth and community development has made a meaningful difference."*
>
> **Treasurer** — Ansars Family and Youth Services, Inc.

Your program's story could be next

SponsorWell gives mission-driven organizations the sponsorship pipeline, fulfillment tracking, and renewal discipline that programs like Team Ansars run on — without adding administrative headcount.

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