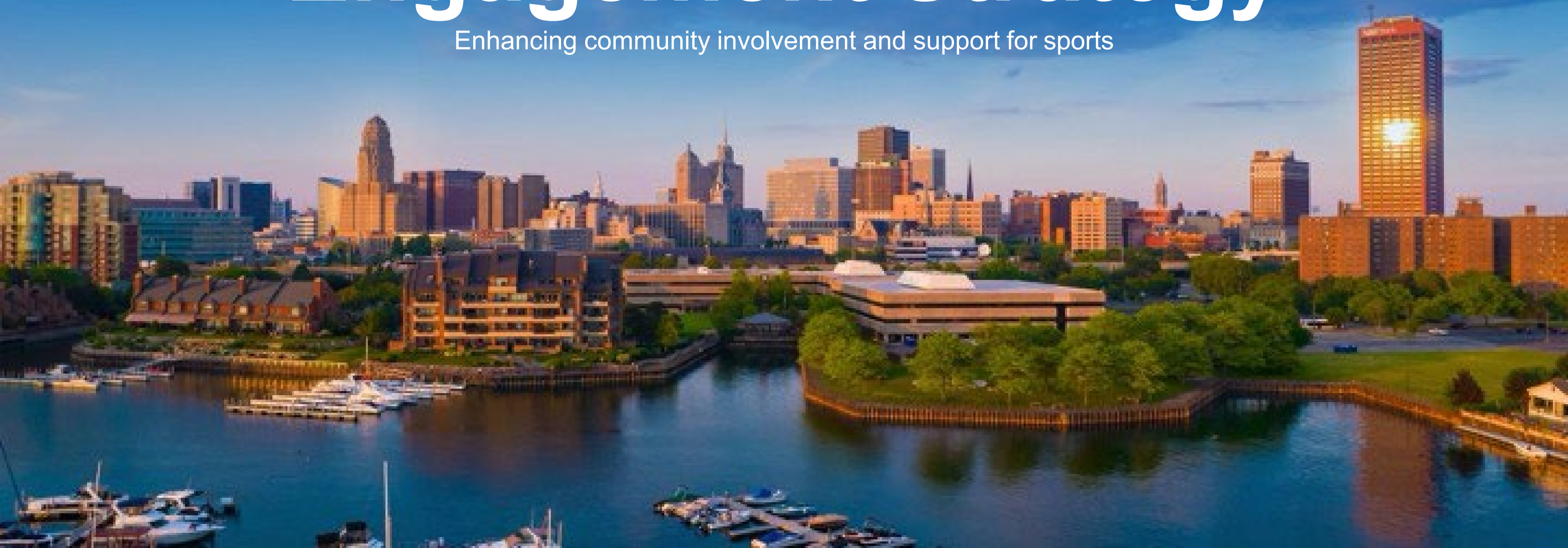


# UB Athletics Engagement Strategy

Enhancing community involvement and support for sports



## Presenters



**Laurie Barnum**  
Sr. Associate Athletic Director,  
Internal Operations



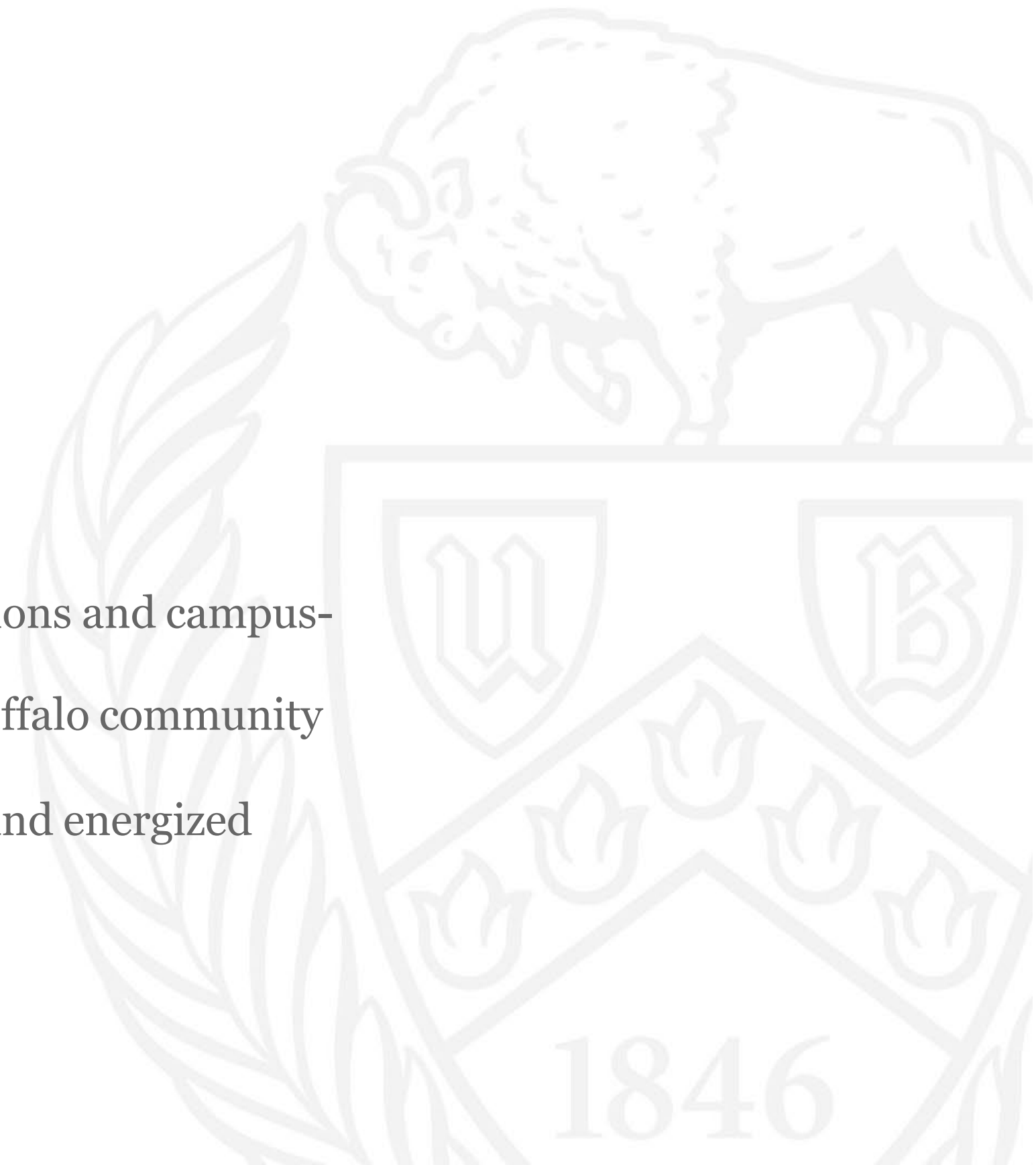
**Melanie Bliz, PhD**  
Assistant Athletic Director,  
Student Athletic Enrichment



**Brandon Mumaw**  
Director of Marketing

# Game Plan

- **Role of UB Athletics**
  - Leverage for visibility, engagement and student recruitment
  - Alignment with institutional mission
- **Impact of UB Athletics**
- **Student Athlete Success & Impact**
- **Campus & Fan Engagement**
  - Cultivate school spirit and pride through themed game promotions and campus-wide initiatives
  - Strengthen connections with students, faculty, staff, and the Buffalo community through collaborative events and partnerships
  - Enhance the in-game experience to foster a vibrant, inclusive, and energized campus atmosphere
- **Closing**
  - Questions
  - Survey



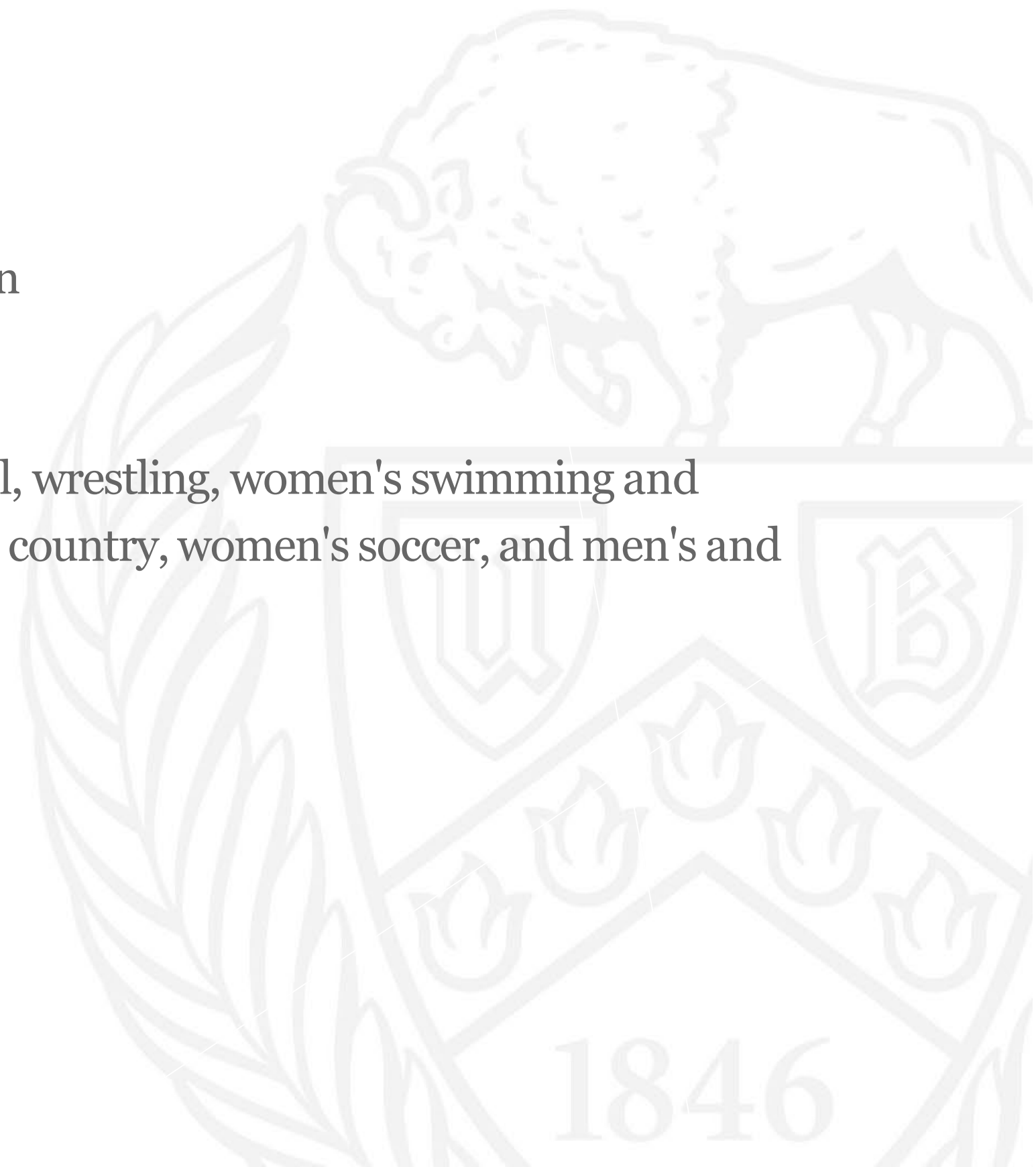
# Role of UB Athletics





# UB Athletics

- National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I institution
- Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS)
- Prestigious Mid-American Conference (MAC)
- 16 sports: football, women's volleyball, men's and women's basketball, wrestling, women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis, softball, men's and women's cross country, women's soccer, and men's and women's indoor and outdoor track and field.
- 350+ student athletes



# Role of UB Athletics



- Flagship/AAU member = excellence
- Out-of-State enrollment
- Diverse student population
- Alumni & community engagement
- Campus engagement and pride
- Corporate relations & engagement
- National exposure-UB brand recognition & value



# Role of UB Athletics-Mission Alignment:

## University Strategic Goals

- Achieve greater societal impact locally and globally
- Deepen engagement in the regional community
- Provide our students with transformative, innovative and research-grounded educational experiences
- Promote a university-wide culture of equity and inclusion

## Athletics Goals

- Academic and Athletic Excellence:
  - Achieve sustainable competitive excellence across all sports for increased UB brand awareness
- Community Engagement and Impact:
  - Provide an exciting and engaging environment to serve as a point of pride and connection for the university community
- Student Experience & Retention:
  - Provide a transformative student-athlete experience
  - Provide opportunities for self-improvement, wellness and recreation for all students
- Inclusion:
  - Continue to promote a culture of equity and inclusion through recruitment and educational opportunities

# Impact of UB Athletics





# Impact of UB Athletics

## Academic and Athletic Excellence: Points of Pride

### Academic Excellence

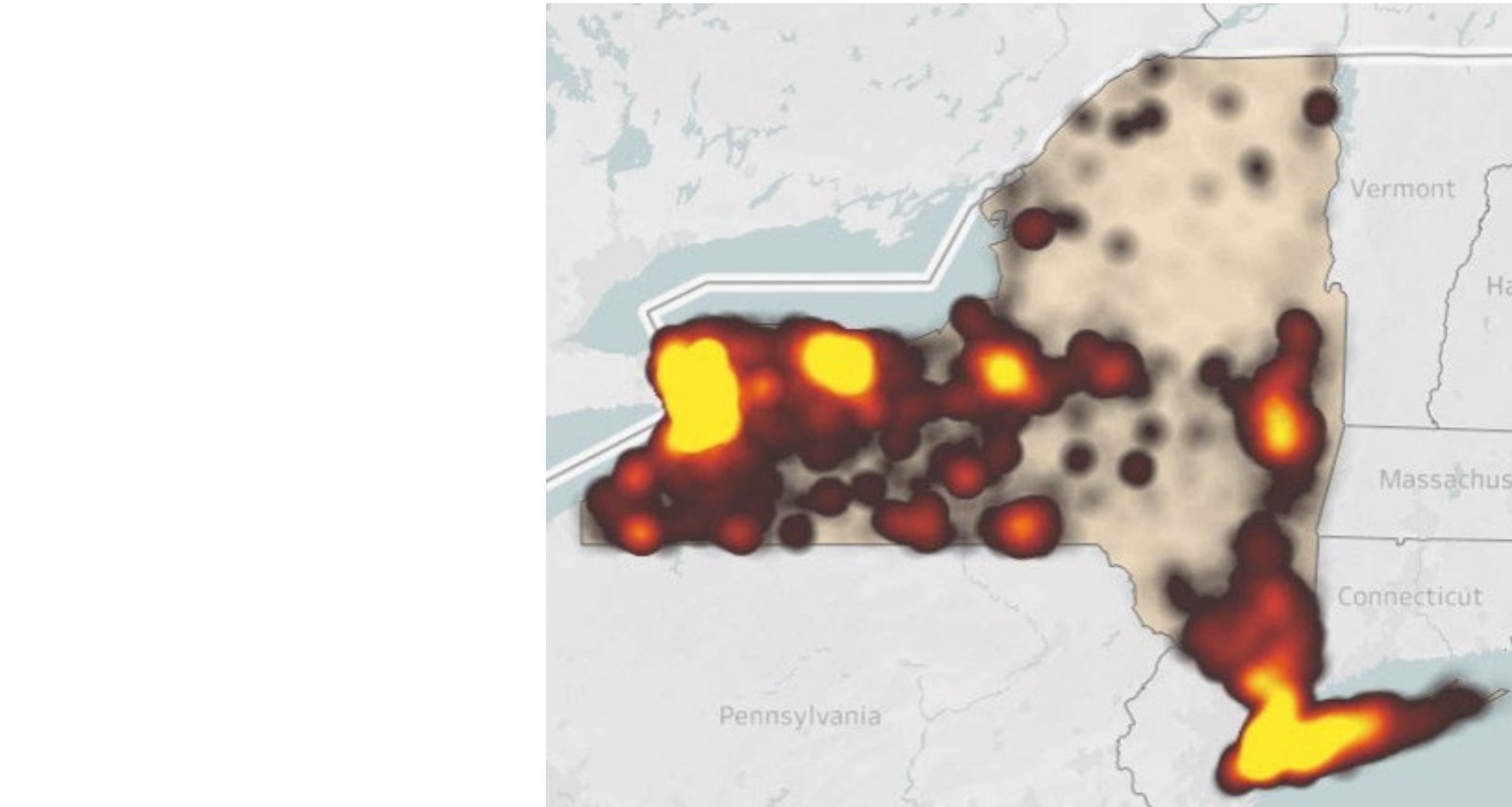
- Academic Progress Rate
- Graduation Success Rate
- Team and Department GPA
- Conference/national recognition for academic success

### Athletic Excellence

- Conference Championships
- National Championships
- Bowl Games
- Team and Individual conference and national recognition

***Developing future leaders~***

**80% of Fortune 500 executives and 94% C-suite women were collegiate athletes ~Cornell University study**



**Reach**  
**430,000+**  
**Buffalo Fans in**  
**Western New York**  
**and even more**  
**beyond**

Red Murdock was selected  
as a finalist for the 2025  
William V. Campbell Trophy

Recognizes an individual as  
the absolute best football  
scholar-athlete in the nation  
for his combined academic  
success, football  
performance and exemplary  
leadership

1 of 16 finalists Nationwide



NCAA ALL-TIME Record  
Holder for Forced Fumbles

2025 AFCA Good Works Team

Butkus Award Semi-Finalist

Graduated May 2024 with a  
Psychology BA

Graduating Fall 2025 with  
Education Studies MS



# Bowl Wins and Contemporaries

## Academic Excellence

- Academic Progress Rate
- Graduation Success Rate
- Team and Department GPA
- Conference/national recognition for academic success

## Athletic Excellence

- Conference Championships
- National Championships
- Bowl Games
- Team and Individual conference and national recognition

*Developing future leaders~*

**80% of Fortune 500 executives and 94% C-suite women were collegiate athletes ~Cornell University study**





## UB Athletics

### *Bahamas Bowl News Media Metrics*

- **Online print: \*\*\*\***
- News stories: 2,772
- Potential impressions (sum of reach) across all placements: 16.4B
- Ad Value Equivalency (AVE): **\$152M**
- **Broadcast:**
- News stories: 616
- Potential impressions (sum of reach \*\*\*) across all placements: 9.5M
- AVE news broadcast: \$214,479
- AVE ESPN game broadcast: **\$1.4M**
- **Total AVE (print and broadcast): \$154M**

\*\*\*\*Online Print: does not count content behind paywalls

\*\*\*Reach: content aired in the stations' local markets and not syndicated outside of that market

Source: UB University Communications

1846



# NCAA MARCH MADNESS





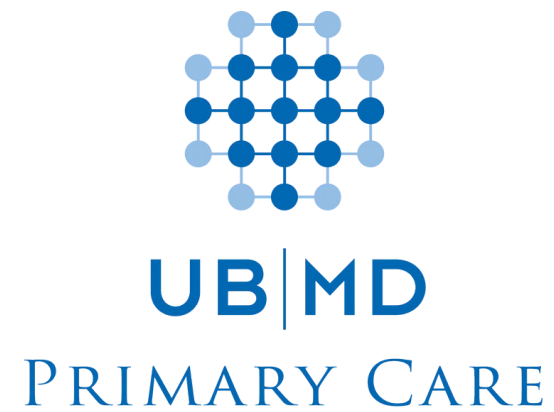


# WNIT

- SOLD OUT ALUMNI ARENA – **5,650**
- **11,000+** total fans over 4 games
- **743** pieces of content
- **2.6M** post reach
- **\$100k+** in ticket revenue



# Corporate Partnerships - Team UB





Q & A



# Student Athlete Success & Impact





# Student-Athletes and Academic Success

370 Student-Athletes

- 45 International

Record Team GPAs (2024-2025)

- Swim & Dive: 3.746
- Men's Basketball: 3.441
- Wrestling: 3.239
- Football: 3.182
- **All teams over a 3.0!!**

78% Student-athletes above a 3.0

Graduation Success Rate: 91% - 3 consecutive years



Even with the transfer portal, we are still retaining at a high rate because of the BULLS experience

# Athletic Excellence: Points of Pride

**Women's Basketball** – 2024 MAC Tournament Runners Up and were crowned the **2025 WNIT Champions**.

**Volleyball** – The Bulls Abby Leigh and Katrin Trebichavska each earned MAC First Team Honors. Completed arguably the most successful 3-year span in program history.

**Women's Soccer** – The Bulls were 2024 MAC Tournament Runners Up. Lexi Thompson earned **back to back Goalkeeper of the Year** honors. Thompson and Frederique St.-Jean each earned MAC First Team honors.

**Football – 2024 Bahamas Bowl Champions.** First year head coach Pete Lembo, set a season wins record by a first-year head coach at UB with nine wins. Shaun Dolac, led nation in tackles and was named a unanimous 1<sup>st</sup> Team AP All-American, the first player to do so in school history, as well as MAC Defensive Player of the Year.

**Men's and Women's Tennis- BOTH** teams were **2025 MAC Champions**. UB was one of only six schools in NCAA Division I to win conference championships in men's and women's tennis.





# Student-Athlete Impact



# Stronger Together Task Force

The Stronger Together Task Force (STTF) was created in September 2020 to reaffirm our commitment to sustaining a culture of diversity and inclusion across all dimensions and embrace and promote equality for all.

The STTF is comprised of coaches, staff, and student-athletes.

Special Interest Groups:

- 1) Black Student Athlete Association
- 2) Bulls PRIDE (LGBTQ+ allies)
- 3) I-Bulls (international student-athletes)



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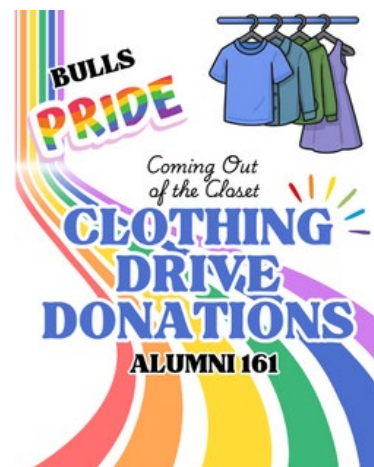
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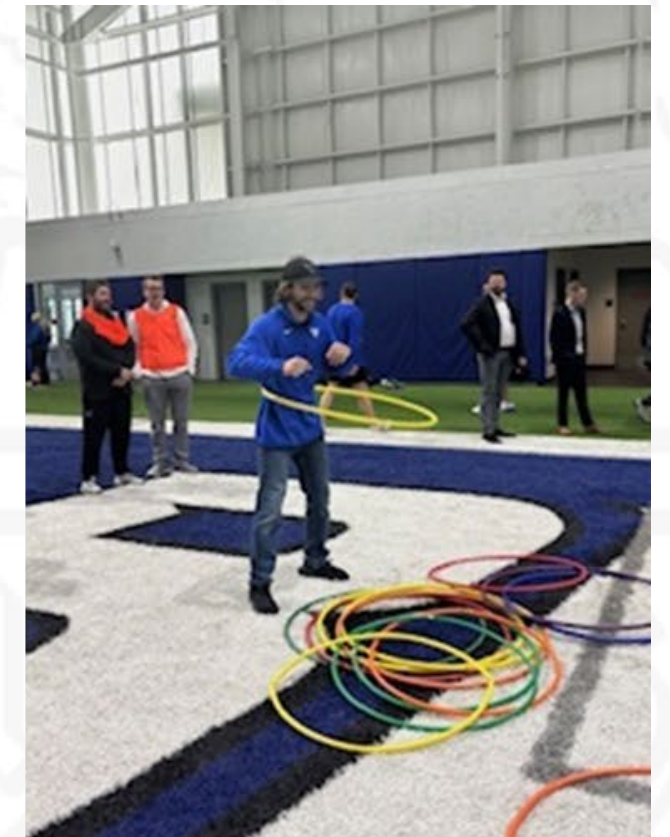
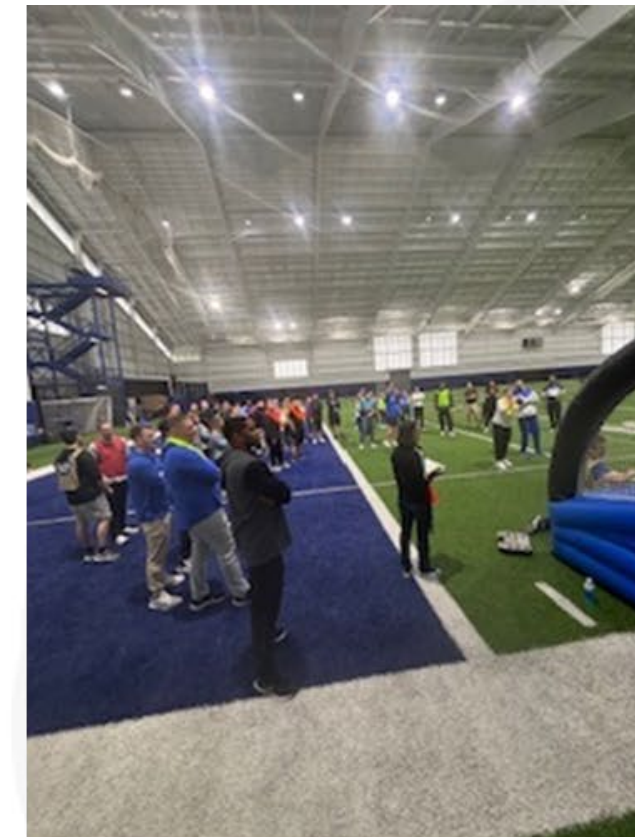
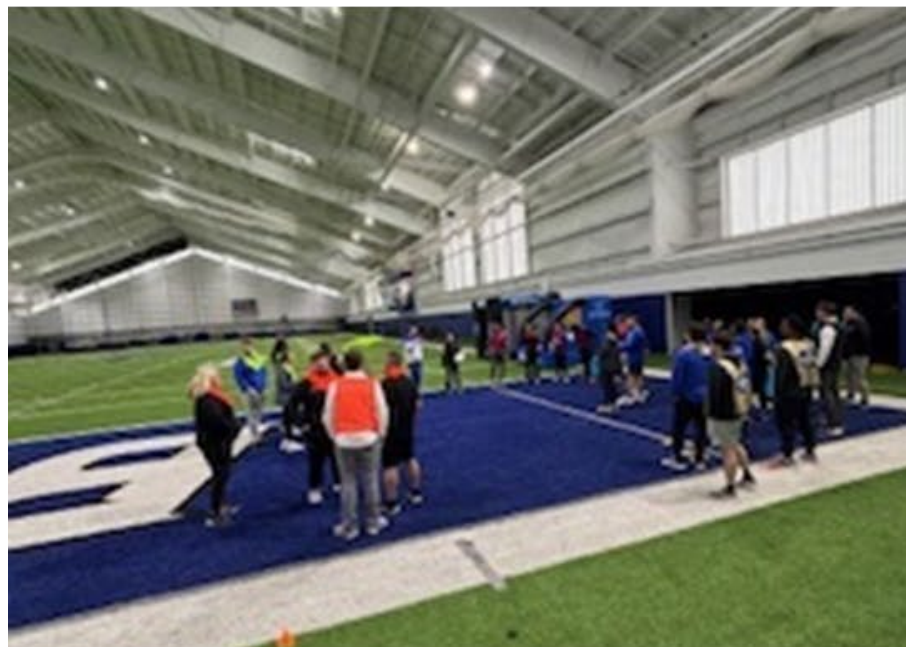








## Year Long Staff Olympics





# Moments that Matter

## Horns Up Against Hunger Food Drive

- Fall 2024- Raised over 1,100 lbs of food for Feedmore WNY
  - November 1<sup>st</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> 2025-- bins located throughout Alumni Arena and drop offs at all home competitions

## Become a Bull Program

- Partnership with UB's Graduate School of Education and Westminster Charter School
  - Student-athletes meet the students at Westminster for lunch
  - Two weeks later, the students come to campus for a campus tour, lunch with the athletes, and to play in Alumni Arena.

## Bulls Reading Stampede

- Partnership with Fidelis Care
  - Student-athletes go into the classrooms and read. In Spring 2025, we went into 5 classrooms and provided books to 100+ kids.





Q & A



# Community & Fan Engagement





# The Power of Buffalo Athletics

**30.3K**

Students Attend  
Buffalo

**1.2M+**

Unique Website Visitors<sub>1</sub>

**187K+**

Social Media Followers<sub>1</sub>

**737K+**

Social media  
engagements  
last year

**300K+**

Living Buffalo Alumni<sub>5</sub>

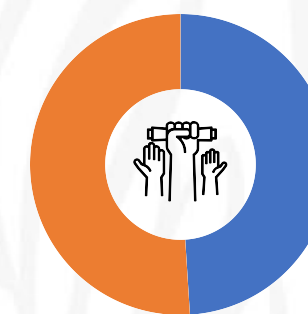
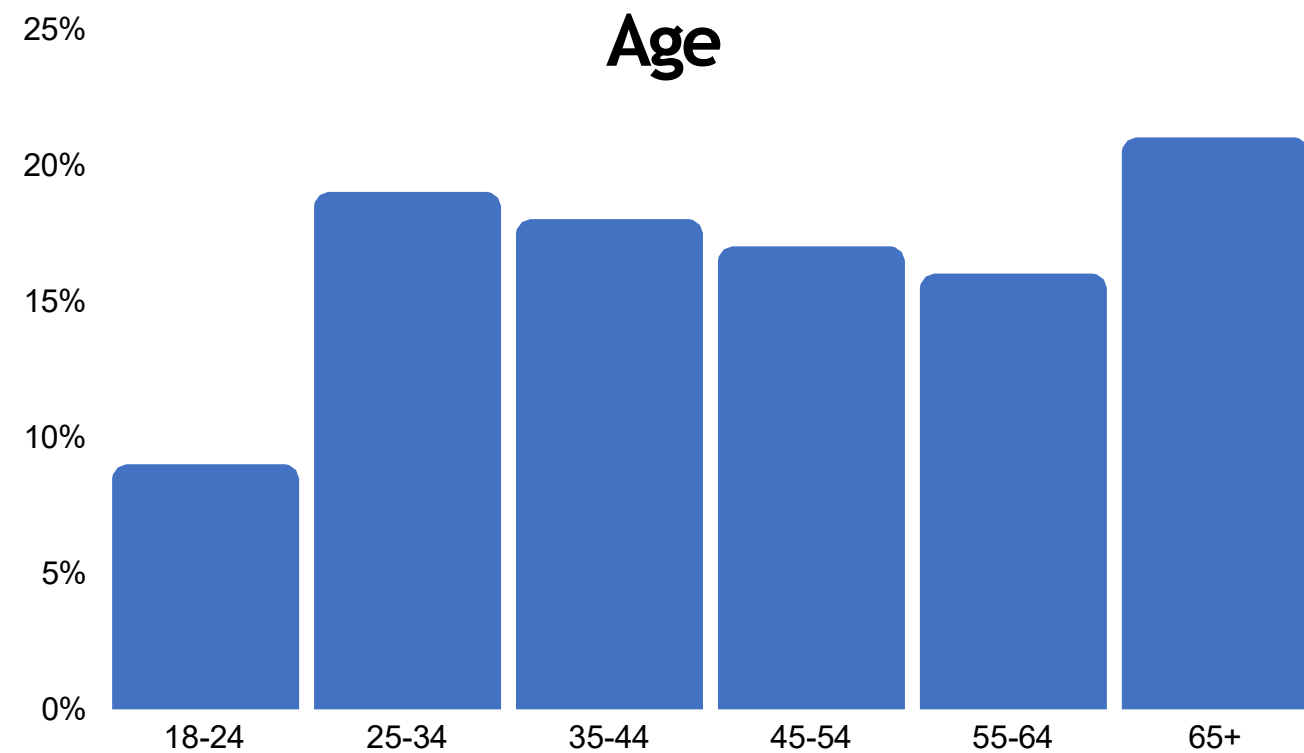
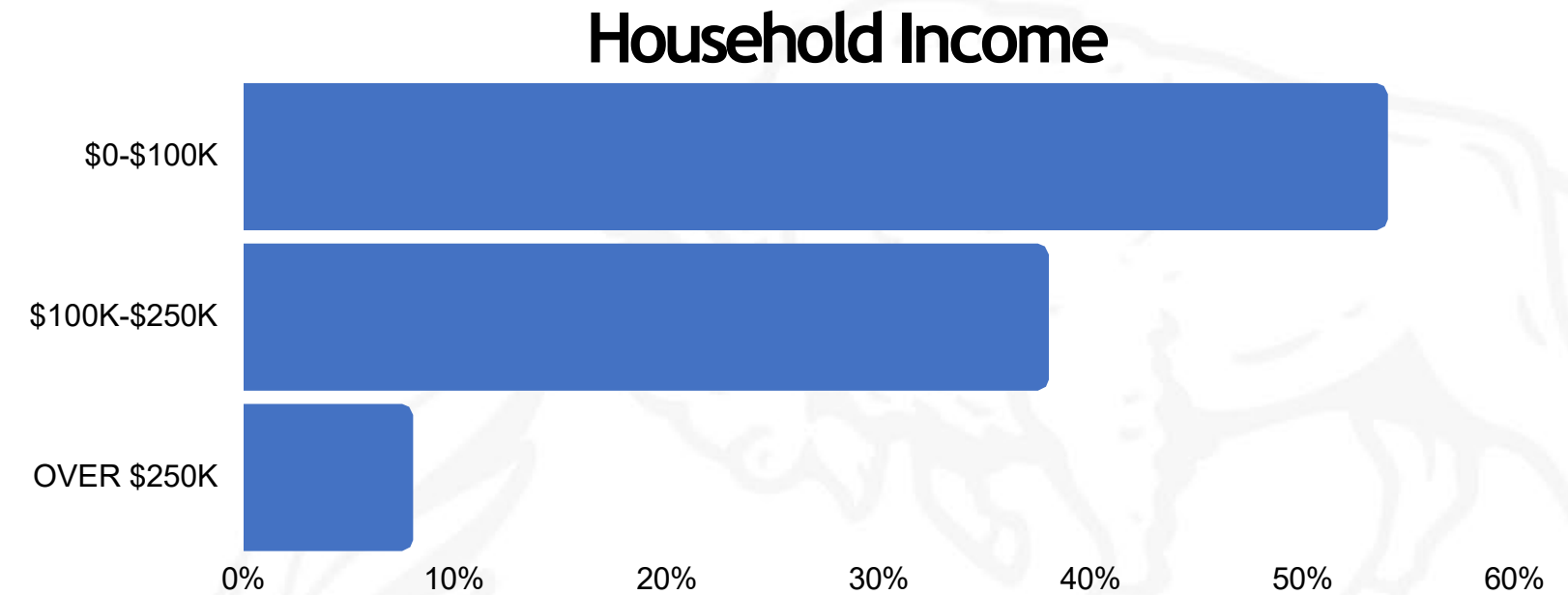
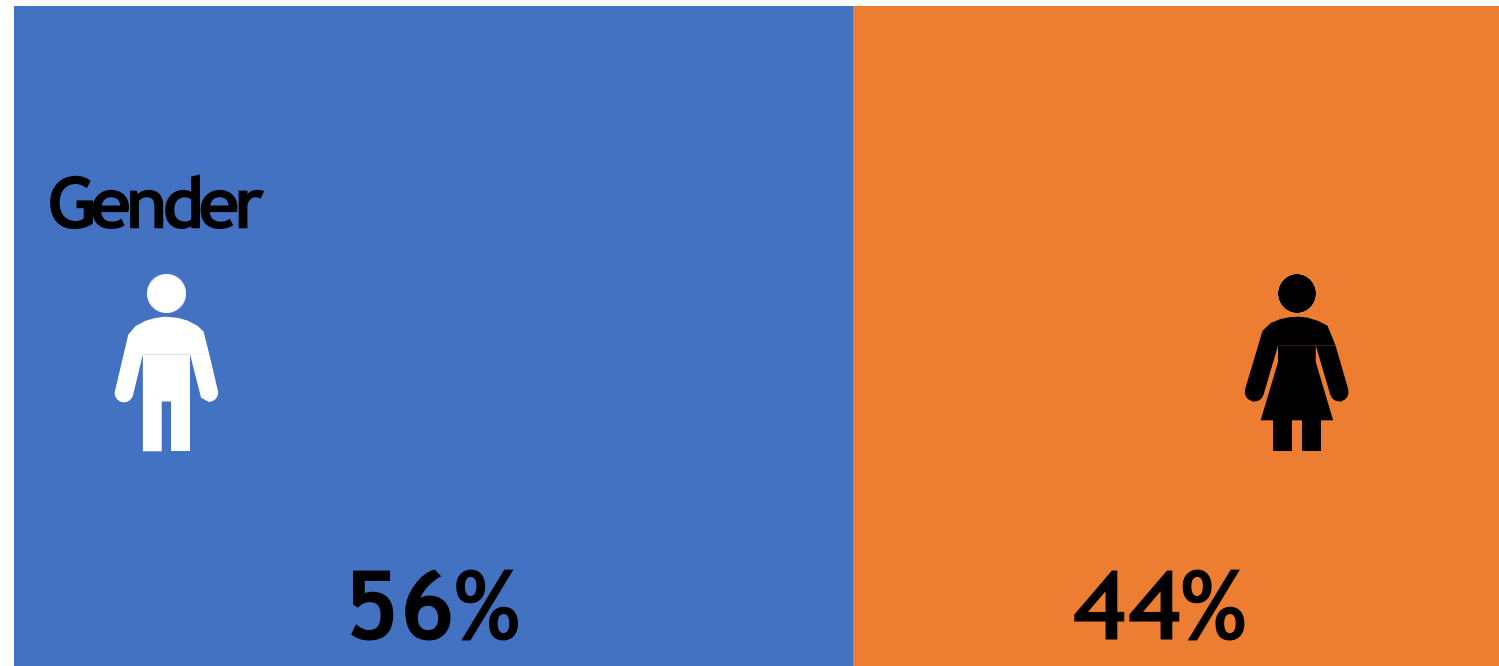
**37.5M+**

Social impressions last  
year

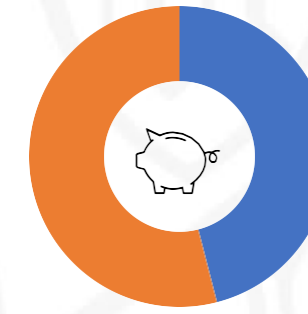




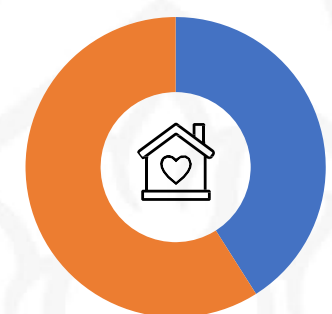
## Fan Demographics



**49%**  
Earned A  
College Degree



**46%**  
Net Worth of  
\$500K+



**41%**  
Have A Child  
Under 18

# Impact: Community Engagement

## ○ Community Events

- University Homecoming
- Athletic Hall of Fame
- Summer Sport Camps
- Girls on the Run
- ***Women's Basketball Education Day*** set new attendance record of 4,906 (4,000 were teachers, kids and chaperones)
- NGWSD Pregame Clinic and Jr. Game Day Helper
- Be the Match Donor Registry (SAAC Sponsored)
- Become a Bull Mentoring program with Westminster 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Reading Across America program w/ Fidelis Care and local schools
- Coca-Cola Fan Zone
- Welcome Back Blast in UB Football Stadium
- Football Spring Game
- Host over 25 events per year

## ○ Attendance

- 7.46% growth in Football attendance from 2023 to 2024, an increase of 5,857 fans









# Women's Basketball Education Day

## Attendance of 4,906

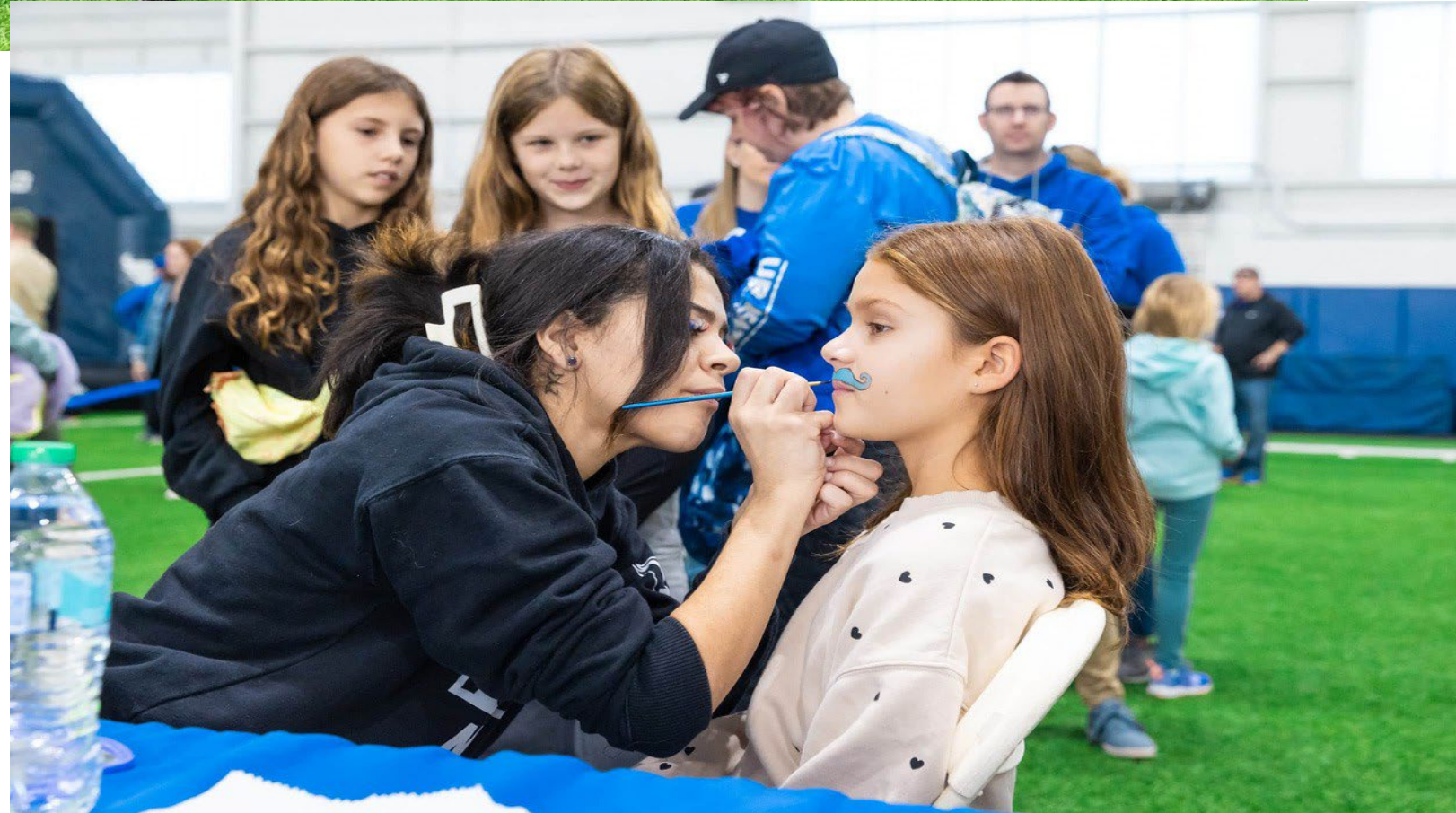
- February 5, 2025
- 50 schools from the greater WNY area
- Increased attendance from 1,300 in 2024 to over 4,000 students, teachers and chaperones
- Partnered with Dawnavyn James, UB PhD student, providing each school with a copy of her book “Beyond February” promoting Black History Month
- Benefits:
  1. Provides young students with exposure to collegiate athletics, encouraging participation in sports and lifelong support for the program.
  2. Integrates lessons on teamwork, leadership, and wellness, inspiring youth through interactive learning and positive role models.
  3. Builds connections with local schools, families, and youth organizations, reinforcing the university's commitment to outreach.
  4. Showcases the athletics program to future student-athletes, their families, and potential supporters.
  5. Opens doors for partnerships with businesses and community organizations, generating support for women's sports and the university.











# Fan Engagement and Events

## Growing Fan Attendance

Fan engagement has increased yearly, with higher attendance at events showing growing community interest.

## Interactive Fan Zone

The Coca-Cola Fan Zone offers interactive experiences including inflatables, live entertainment, and autograph sessions.

- Institute for Artificial Intelligence & Data Sciences
- School of Engineering

## Expanded City Activations

Summer events have boosted UB Athletics' presence across Buffalo and Western New York with community outreach.





# Campus Partnerships and Participation

## Student Engagement Events

Collaborative events like Welcome Back Blast and Victor's House Party boost student involvement on campus.

## Campus Collaborations

Partnerships with Student Life and student organizations enhance visibility of athletics programs.

- Homecoming Week
- FOCUS
- Greek Life

## Growing School Spirit

Over 30% of students engaged with athletics, showing increasing school spirit and participation.





# Next Steps for Engagement

## Use Your Voucher

Attend a UB Athletics game using the provided voucher to experience the excitement live.

## Invite Community Groups

Attending our home events is a fun and meaningful way for your department to come together, show school pride, and build morale.

## Game Schedule Awareness

Football - Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> - 7pm, Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> - 12pm

Women's Basketball - Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> - 2pm, Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6pm

Men's Basketball - Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> - 11am, Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> - 6:30pm, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> - 2pm

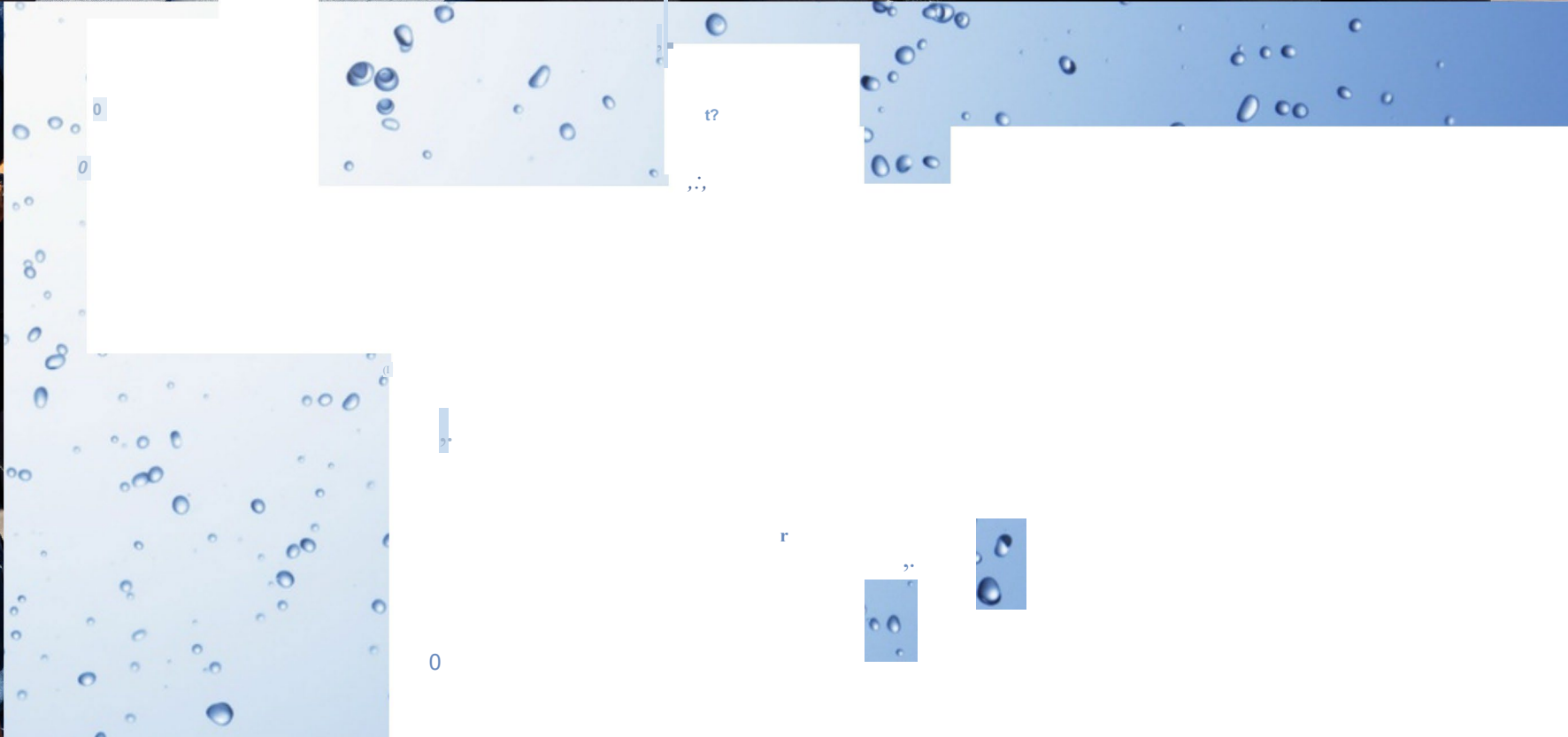
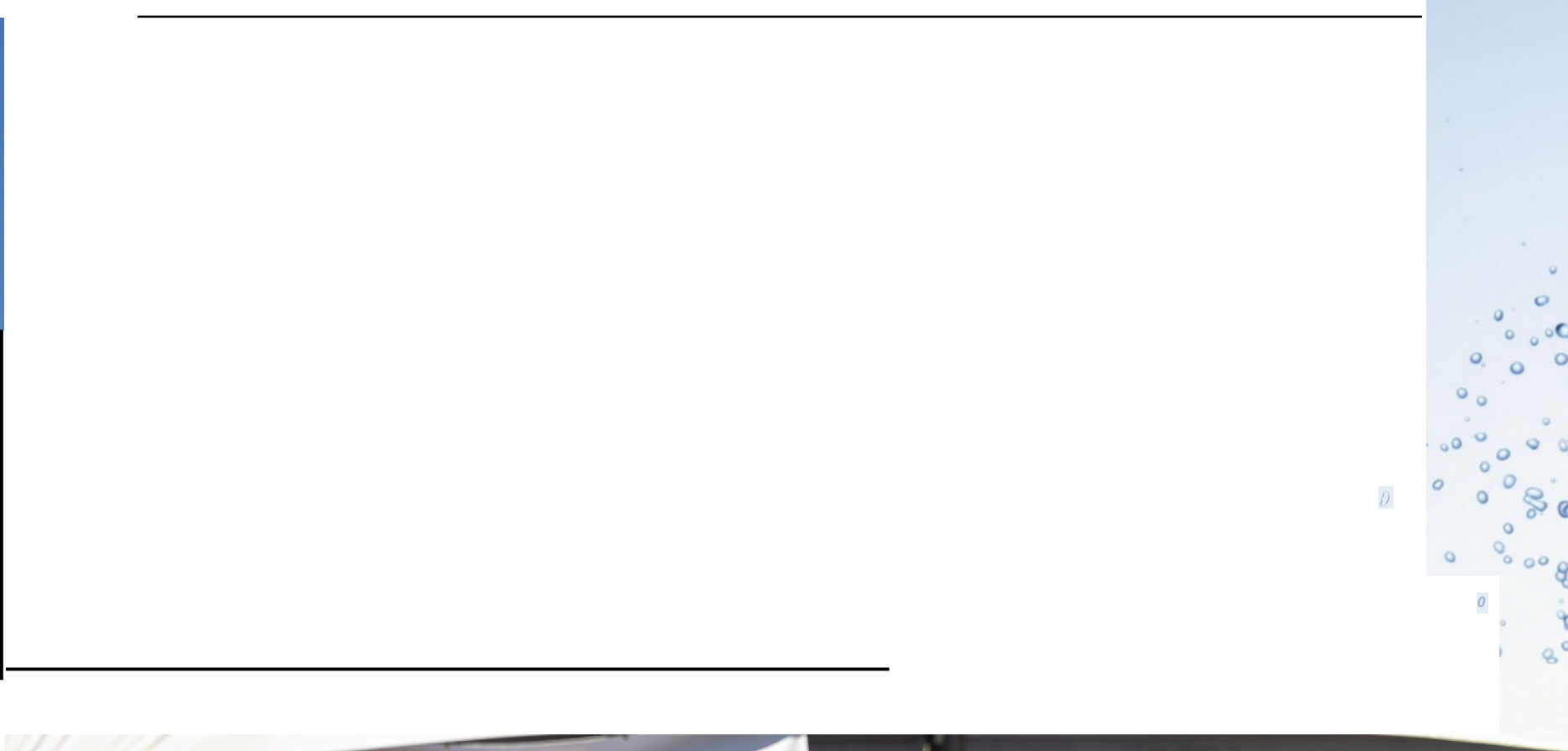
## Building Community Support

Your attendance helps build momentum and strengthen the UB community spirit.





















2018  
NCAA  
SWEET  
SIXTEEN

2018  
NCAA  
CHAMPIONS  
NCAA  
TOURNAMENT  
ROUND OF 32

2022  
MAC  
CHAMPIONS  
NCAA  
TOURNAMENT

2019-20  
MAC  
CONFERENCE  
CHAMPIONS  
1991-92  
1993-94

2019  
MAC  
EAST DIVISION  
CHAMPIONS  
2009-2019  
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UB MD ORTHOPAEDICS  
SPORTS MEDICINE  
Team Doctors for Your UB Bulls

VISION  
FINANCIAL GROUP  
a MassMutual firm

Millard Fillmore  
Suburban Hospital  
A Catholic Health Facility

Catalyst  
FITNESS

AMERICAN  
CAMP  
Where athletes  
become legends

basic  
SUPPLEMENTS

SENECA  
SUPPLEMENTS

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Q & A





## How did we do?

**Complete the session  
survey using your smart  
device:**

**Scan the QR code provided  
on your schedule.**

**OR**

**Scan the QR code shown  
here.**

