

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



TRANSFORMING
YOUNG LIVES
ON AND OFF
THE BOARD



RKCF Mission:

To bridge the educational opportunity gap for Chicago students by providing chess-centered programs that support their academic, social, career, and leadership success.

FOUNDERS MESSAGE



Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners,

2023 has been a transformative year for Renaissance Knights. As we reflect on our journey, we are filled with immense pride in the strides we have made in advancing our mission of empowering Chicago's youth through chess education. Our programs continue to thrive, bringing together diverse communities and fostering a generation of critical thinkers, leaders, and advocates for positive change.

This year, we have expanded our reach, deepened our impact, and strengthened our partnerships across the city. We are grateful for the unwavering support of our donors, volunteers, and community partners who have made our work possible. Together, we have created opportunities for thousands of students, providing them with the tools they need to succeed in school and life.

Thank you for being part of our journey. We look forward to continuing our work together to empower the next generation of leaders in Chicago.

With gratitude,

Sheila and David Heiser

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2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Academic Chess: The Academic Chess program, managed in partnership with Chicago Public Schools, continued to flourish, with over 110 schools participating. This year, we served over 2,300 students, offering them high-quality competitive chess programming that nurtures their intellectual and social development.



Cops & Kids Chess: Our partnership with the Chicago Police Department and Chicago Public Schools has continued to grow, promoting non-violence and positive engagement between youth and police officers. This year, 25 schools hosted the program, serving more than 300 students annually.

Pan-American Youth Chess Festival: This was the first time the event was held in the USA, which saw the largest participation ever; 645 players from 21 countries. 115 players were provided with lodging & meals so they could compete in this prestigious event.



Summer Knights: The program saw 105 students participating in one of our five camps, hosted in various communities across Chicago.

Youth Development Trips: We provided over 100 students with opportunities to explore their city and beyond. These trips included visiting colleges & engaging in cultural exploration.



CHESS INSTRUCTION IN CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Many Options with the One
Goal of Providing Free & High-
Quality Learning Opportunities

111

schools
enrolled in in-
person learning
programs



2,360
students

in 111 schools
learned & plays
chess in an
Academic Chess
after-school
clubs

310
students

in 25 schools
fostered positive
relationships with
police officer in Cops
& Kids Chess clubs

113
students

traveled to
Baltimore on a
Chess Exploration
Trip and played in
a National
Championship

COMMUNITIES WE SERVED

Albany Park
Archer Heights
Armour Square
Ashburn
Austin
Avalon Park
Avondale
Back of the Yards
Belmont Cragin
Brighton Park

Chatham
Chicago Lawn
East Side
Edgewater
Edison Park
Englewood
Fuller Park
Gage Park
Humboldt Park
Hyde Park
Irving Park
Kenwood
Lake View
Lincoln Park
Lincoln Square
Logan Square
Loop
Lower West Side
Marshall Square
Montclare
Morgan Park
Mount Greenwood
Near North Side
Near South Side

Near West
SideNorth Center
North Lawndale
North Park
Norwood Park
Oakland
Portage Park
Rogers Park
Roseland
South Chicago
South Shore
Washington Park
West Elsdon
West Englewood
West Garfield Park
West Lawn
West Pullman
West Ridge
West Roseland
West Town



INTERNATIONAL SPONSORSHIP:

We successfully sponsored 115 students from 17 countries across the Americas to participate in the 2023 Pan-American Youth Chess Festival, covering their lodging and meals.

115

Students

17

Countries



2023-2024 TOURNAMENTS

Pan American Youth Chess Championship: In a historic achievement, Renaissance Knights organized the 2023 Pan American Youth Chess Championship, which saw participation from 645 players across 21 countries. This was the largest participation ever for this event and marked the first time it was held in the USA, solidifying our reputation on the international chess stage.

KCF All-Girls National Chess Championship: Our commitment to empowering young women in chess remains steadfast. The 2024 All-Girls National Chess Championship reached new heights, attracting 512 players, the largest number of participants in its history and reinforcing its status as the most prestigious tournament for girls under 18 in the nation.

Greater Chicago K-12 Chess Championship: In collaboration with the Kasparov Chess Foundation, the 2024 Greater Chicago K-12 Chess Championship became the largest US Chess-rated tournament held annually in Illinois, drawing 731 participants from across the state and beyond.

Chicago Public Tournaments: Renaissance Knights organized a series of public chess tournaments across Chicago, including:

- CPS All-Stars: 46 schools/344 players
- CPS Jr Prep Bowl: 36 schools/258 players
- CPS Kings & Queens: 56 schools/294 players
- CPS HS Championship: 16 schools/190 players
- CPS K-8 Playoffs: 62 schools/535 players
- CPS K-8 Championship: 23 schools/108 players

Additionally, we hosted weekly online blitz tournaments from and monthly online rapid tournaments from October to May.



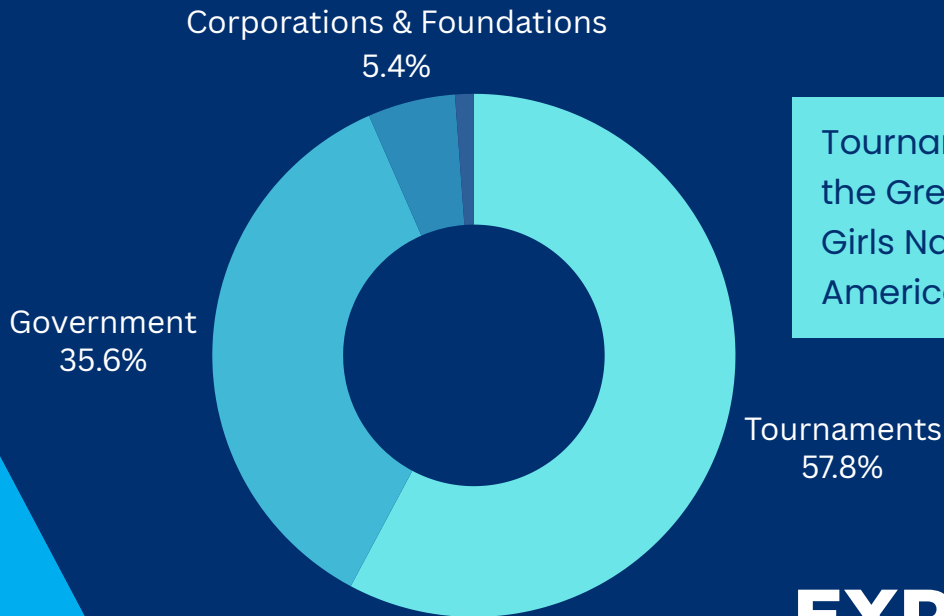
THE IMPACT OF RKCF'S PROGRAMS THROUGH EDUCATORS' EYES

Program Survey

- 94% Chess had a meaningful positive impact on students.
- 91% Chess developed students' analytical and logical skills.
- 89% Chess improved students' math skills.
- 94% Chess helped my students concentrate better.
- 91% Girls and boys are equally interested in chess in my class.
- 97% Off students want to participate in chess next year.
- 93% Chess enhanced my students' cooperation skills.

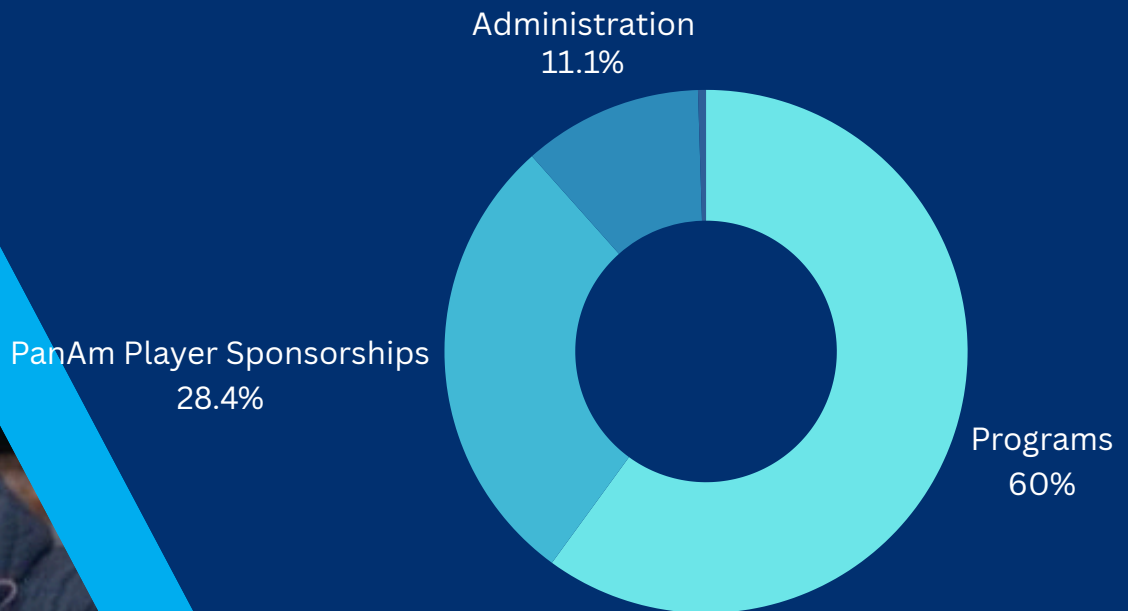


REVENUE SOURCES



Tournament revenue was from the Greater Chicago, KCF All-Girls Nationals, and Pan American Championships

EXPENSES



Our financial management practices have allowed us to continue delivering high-impact programs while maintaining financial sustainability. We are committed to ensuring that every dollar is used effectively to further our mission and reach more students across Chicago



WHAT'S NEXT

As we look forward to 2024-2025, our focus remains on expanding our reach and deepening our impact. We plan to:

- Increase the number of schools participating in the Academic Chess Program.
- Expand the Cops & Kids Chess Initiative to more communities.
- Develop new partnerships to support all our programs.
- Continue our commitment to financial transparency and accountability, ensuring the sustainability of our programs for years to come.

We are excited about the future and the possibilities it holds for the students we serve. With your continued support, we are confident that we can achieve even greater success in the coming year.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David A Heiser – President & CEO

Sheila Heiser – Vice-President

David E Heiser – Director

Renaissance Knights Chess Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All Chess Chicago Public Schools programs are always free of charge to all students. We can only do this with the support of RKCF's donor community.



To find out how you can help, contact us at info@renaissanceknights.org

773-844-0701

www.renaissanceknights.org

Thank You to Our Supporters!