



NATIONAL PAL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ATHLETIC/ACTIVITIES LEAGUES, INC.

Spring 2025 Newsletter

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2



Kids, Cops & Communities

Table of Contents

<i>Message from National PAL Board President</i>	2
<i>2025 National PAL Training & Conference Recap – 80 Years of Impact!.....</i>	3
<i>Celebrating Excellence at the 2025 National PAL Gala.....</i>	4
<i>Strategic Leadership Councils Pave the Way for National PAL's Growth.....</i>	5
<i>Play Like a Girl – A Day with WNBA Legends!.....</i>	5
<i>Introducing GRIT: A New Chapter in Wellness and Leadership at National PAL.....</i>	6
<i>Feature: Riverside County PAL Brings Families Together at Spring “Pancakes with PAL” Event.....</i>	6
<i>Feature: Run, PAL, Run! Youth Shine at the LA Marathon.....</i>	7
<i>Feature: DeKalb County PAL's New Facility.....</i>	7
<i>Feature: Henrico PAL Flight Discovery Aviation Program and Spring Fest.....</i>	8
<i>Feature: Hollywood PAL – Sports Champions.....</i>	9
<i>Feature: Programming at Oxnard PAL.....</i>	10

Message from our National PAL Board President

Greetings Local PAL Chapters,

On behalf of the entire National PAL Board, I hope this message finds you, your teams, and the youth you serve in good spirits. As always, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to you and the National PAL staff for your unwavering dedication to America's youth. I am optimistic that this spring season presents an opportunity for all PAL Chapters across the country to strengthen existing partnerships and cultivate new ones to further engage and empower our young people.

Recently, mentorship grants were awarded to our local Chapters. Although the individual grant amounts were slightly reduced this year, we were able to distribute more grants nationwide—an achievement that reflects our commitment to broadening our impact. As a reminder, during our previous conference in San Diego, CA, I challenged each of us to embrace the discomfort that often accompanies growth. Neither organizations nor individuals can grow within the confines of comfort. True progress requires us to stretch beyond our usual boundaries. Through these sacrifices and a disciplined focus, we are positioning National PAL to grow stronger and to better serve our local Chapters with enhanced resources.

At our recent conference, we shared important updates about the exciting changes underway and new partnerships being forged—all with the goal of positioning National PAL as a recognized and trusted name across the nation.

Thank you once again for your trust and confidence in me as your Board President. I assure you that the Board remains committed to exploring opportunities for growth that best support our Chapters. It was a pleasure seeing so many of you at the 80th Annual National PAL Training Conference in Memphis, TN.

With gratitude,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Ragland', written in a cursive style.

Kenneth L. Ragland
National PAL Board President

2025 National PAL Training & Conference Recap – 80 Years of Impact!

Earlier this month, we proudly celebrated the 80th Annual National PAL Training & Conference in Memphis, Tennessee — and what a milestone it was! From May 13–17, PAL leaders, law enforcement officers, community advocates, and partners gathered from across the country (and beyond) to learn, collaborate, and uplift the youth and communities we serve.



HIGHLIGHTS:

- A lively **Welcome Reception** featuring our PAL Coin Exchange and some sports jersey pride!
- A powerful **Opening Convocation** led by Cindy Hartsburg of Insurlynx LLC and our esteemed panel of experts on risk management and insurance.
- Thought-provoking breakout sessions covering everything from **Digital Transformation** and **Leadership Development** to **Psychological First Aid** and **Cops, Kids & Community**.
- Our **President's Luncheon** and **Regional Meetings** created space for peer-to-peer connection and recognition of outstanding work across the PAL network.
- A fun-filled **Host City Night** at the historic Orpheum Theatre — complete with Memphis-style cuisine, music, and dancing!
- A memorable **Awards & Sneaker Gala**, where we honored the incredible work happening in PAL Chapters nationwide.
- We closed out the week with our cherished **Community Day of Service** at Youth Villages — a heartfelt reminder of our purpose and shared mission to give back.



From engaging training sessions to unforgettable moments of camaraderie, the 2025 National PAL Conference was a true reflection of our commitment to serving youth and supporting one another.

Thank you to all who made this event a success — our speakers, sponsors, staff, volunteers, and every attendee who brought energy and purpose to Memphis. We're already looking ahead to next year!

Celebrating Excellence at the 2025 National PAL Conference Gala

During this year's National PAL Conference Gala, we proudly recognized a group of outstanding individuals and Chapters whose dedication, leadership, and service have made a meaningful impact on their local communities. Each honoree represents the spirit of National PAL—working to build stronger, safer communities through mentorship, and collaboration. Here's a spotlight on this year's winners:



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Jesiy Richards, Santa Barbara PAL, CA

Jesiy has spent the past seven years shaping youth programming in Santa Barbara through creativity and leadership—from organizing SBPAL's Haunted House fundraiser to mentoring a future Latina architect. A top-tier professional in her field, Jesiy embodies the power of giving back and serves as a true role model for girls and women in STEAM.



STAFF OF THE YEAR

Christopher Michael Eason, Dunn PAL, NC

A former PAL youth turned PAL leader, Christopher is the Operations Director of Dunn PAL, where he's led transformative change. From expanding programming to spearheading citywide initiatives, his work is defined by heart, purpose, and a personal connection to the mission. He also serves in the Air Force Reserve and holds a Master's in Public Administration.



CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

Riverside County PAL, Riverside County, CA

A regional powerhouse, Riverside County PAL unites multiple law enforcement agencies to deliver dynamic programs across the county. Their mentoring, archery, and community events foster leadership, connection, and growth. Their collaborative spirit and innovation have made them a shining example of what PAL can achieve.



FEMALE YOUTH OF THE YEAR

Angelly Camarena, Vacaville PAL, CA

Angelly is a standout youth leader and advocate. A senior at Vacaville High School, she's also the youth director for California PAL and program sergeant in the police cadet program. Bilingual and culturally engaged, she bridges gaps between law enforcement and community—lifting others as she leads.



MALE YOUTH OF THE YEAR

Jhon Almonte Vidal, Nashua PAL, NH

Jhon began at PAL at age 10 and has grown into a confident, driven young man. From Jr. Staff to youth leader, he's shown resilience and leadership at every step. Now a high school senior with dreams of real estate, he's already landed a summer internship with help from a PAL mentor.



LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Corporal Matthew Mozingo, Riverside County PAL, CA

A 20-year PAL veteran, Corporal Mozingo is a cornerstone of Riverside County PAL. Known for his mentorship and quiet strength, he helped expand PAL programs and inter-agency cooperation.

Strategic Leadership Councils Pave the Way for National PAL's Growth

National PAL recently convened two pivotal meetings that mark a significant step forward in shaping the organization's future. On April 3rd, the Chiefs and Sheriffs Council met in Washington, D.C., followed by the Corporate Council gathering on May 1st. Both councils were formed as part of a strategic initiative to bring together national thought leaders and champions of youth development.

These meetings signal a new era of momentum and opportunity for National PAL. Together, these councils will serve as high-level advisory bodies to the National PAL Board, providing insight and direction on how to expand the mission, strengthen chapters, and enhance impact across the country.

The Chiefs and Sheriffs Council is comprised of distinguished law enforcement leaders, including active and retired chiefs and sheriffs from across the nation, bringing deep experience in public safety and community engagement. The Corporate Council includes executives from industries such as sports, public policy, insurance, and technology, who are committed to supporting youth development through innovative partnerships and resources. These councils are united in purpose—working collaboratively to elevate National PAL and help chart a bold course for the organization's future.

Play Like a Girl – A Day with WNBA Legends!

On Saturday, May 4th, the *Play Like a Girl* community event was a resounding success, bringing together youth, families, and community leaders for an unforgettable afternoon of empowerment, sports, and cultural connection.

Held at the stunning BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in Robbinsville, NJ, the event featured an incredible lineup of WNBA legends—Tamecka Dixon, Val Walker, and Adrienne Goodson—who inspired attendees with their stories of leadership, resilience, and achievement on and off the court.

From interactive activities to impactful conversations, the day offered a unique opportunity to celebrate girl power, encourage healthy lifestyles, and strengthen community bonds—all in a setting that highlighted the beauty and significance of Hindu culture and architecture.

A special thank you to **Howell PAL** for partnering with us during this event and helping make it such a meaningful experience for all involved. Thank you to everyone who joined us and contributed to making this event truly special!



Introducing GRIT: A New Chapter in Wellness and Leadership at National PAL

We're proud to announce the launch of **GRIT**—National PAL's new wellness initiative—unveiled during this year's National Conference. GRIT stands for **Growth Mindset, Resilience, Initiative, and Tenacity**, and it's designed to support both PAL staff and youth in developing stronger health, emotional resilience, and personal well-being.

This initiative was shaped by direct input from PAL Chapters across the country. Surveys and focus groups revealed a clear need:

- 70% of staff requested stress management workshops and peer support groups
- Over half wanted training in youth wellness and access to professional resources
- Youth voiced interest in learning how to care for themselves and build skills for success

In response, GRIT will offer a combination of tools and experiences, including:

- The **National GRIT Playbook**: lessons, activities, and mental wellness resources
- Access to on-call support and peer learning
- **Field trips and in-person engagements** designed to inspire and uplift
- **Psychological First Aid** training for staff and mentors

This is more than a program—it's a movement. GRIT is for staff. GRIT is for PAL youth. GRIT is for all of us. Together, we're building a culture where wellness isn't just aspirational—it's achievable.

Feature: Riverside County PAL Brings Families Together at Spring "Pancakes with PAL" Event

Riverside County PAL recently hosted its **second annual "Pancakes with PAL"** spring celebration—a heartwarming event that brought together families, youth, and police mentors for a morning full of connection and community.

Nearly 100 attendees joined us for a fun-filled day that began with a delicious pancake breakfast, lovingly prepared and served by our very own police officer mentors. The event offered more than just a meal—families enjoyed a variety of hands-on spring activities, including **decorating flower pots, choosing flower seeds to plant, coloring themed activity sheets**, and an exciting **egg hunt** that had kids smiling from ear to ear.



"Pancakes with PAL" continues to grow each year, providing a space where positive relationships between law enforcement and the community can flourish. Thank you to all who participated and helped make this event a success.

Feature: Run, PAL, Run! Youth Shine at the LA Marathon

On Sunday, March 17th, a spirited team of **eleven PAL youth** joined **more than 25,000 runners** at the iconic **LA Marathon**, proudly representing PAL alongside city staff members **Snow Hansen** and **Trenton Graham**. This dedicated group was part of the **3,500 youth participants** from *Students Run LA* (SRLA)—a program that PAL has partnered with for nearly 30 years.

Over the decades, PAL has helped **more than 300 youth** train for and cross the finish line of the 26.2-mile race. This year, our fastest runner, an **8th grader from SMASH**, completed the marathon in an impressive **5 hours and 3 minutes**.



Support was strong along the course as Eula Fritz and PAL's Youth Leadership Council cheered runners on at multiple checkpoints. PAL Officer Destinee King was stationed at the SRLA checkout to ensure each youth was accounted for and safely completed the race. Many PAL participants develop a lifelong love for running through this program. We're especially proud to celebrate our **loyalty runners**:

- **Ubaldo Torres**, who has completed **18 marathons**, and
- **Leon Cabelos** (pictured in blue), who has finished an incredible **27 marathons**

Both continue to return to the PAL tent each year to check in and show their support—reminding us that the PAL impact truly lasts a lifetime.

Feature: DeKalb County PAL's New Facility

Thanks to the incredible support of the community and local leadership, DeKalb County PAL officially opened their first-ever dedicated PAL facility in DeKalb County! This newly renovated, state-of-the-art space now serves as the home for many of their core youth programs and community events. The facility includes:

- Academic computer lab and a gaming computer lab
- A fully stocked art room and movie room
- A book nook and clothing donation center
- Outdoor green space and a full basketball court



This space has begun to transform how the Chapter is able to serve youth, offering a safe and welcoming environment where they can grow academically, socially, and emotionally. It also allows them to expand programming, including their Career Development Program, Female Empowerment workshops, After Dark Basketball League, and year-round mentoring events such as *Gaming with a Cop* and *Movie with a Cop*. This new dedicated facility will have a tremendous positive impact the community in DeKalb County for years to come.

Feature: Henrico PAL Flight Discovery Aviation Program and Spring Fest

Flight Discovery Aviation Program

On April 19, 2025, Henrico PAL, in continued partnership with the Forgotten Heroes Foundation, hosted its second Flight Discovery Aviation Program. This free, one-of-a-kind experience gave youth ages 10 and older the chance to explore the field of aviation through hands-on STEM education.

Held at a private airport in Norfolk, Virginia, participants not only took part in interactive aviation lessons and activities, but each student also had the opportunity to fly in the cockpit of an aircraft—many for the first time. New this round was a creative challenge where participants designed and tested paper airplanes, learning principles of aerodynamics in a fun and memorable way. Transportation, instruction, and experiences were provided free of charge, ensuring every child had access to this day of discovery.



Spring Fest

Also on April 19, 2025, the Majestic Dynasty Dance Team hosted Henrico PAL's Spring Fest at the PAL Chapter. This free community event welcomed families for a fun-filled afternoon of seasonal activities and entertainment.

Spring Fest featured a variety of attractions including an egg hunt, face painting, kickball games, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, cornhole competitions, food vendors, and an open pond for outdoor enjoyment. A highlight of the day was a live performance by the Majestic Dynasty Dance Team, which energized the crowd and showcased the incredible talent and dedication of PAL youth.



The event brought families together in celebration of spring while reinforcing PAL's commitment to youth engagement through recreation, the arts, and community connection. Henrico PAL remains dedicated to offering opportunities that spark curiosity, promote community, and help young people discover their passions.

Feature: Hollywood PAL – Sports Champions

Hollywood PAL is thrilled to share some incredible updates from a truly remarkable quarter of programming. PAL youth continue to shine on and off the field, and Hollywood PAL is proud to celebrate their hard work, talent, and commitment.

A Special Visit from Marquise Brown

Hollywood PAL had the honor of welcoming NFL star Marquise “Hollywood” Brown to visit the Chapter and engage with youth. He generously donated **\$21,000** to support programs and took time to connect with youth—snapping photos and sharing encouragement. His visit reminded attendees of the power of giving back and staying grounded in your roots.



Flag Football Champions

Hollywood PAL's 7th & 8th grade girls' flag football team made history this season! They claimed victory over the top-ranked team in their division, earning the title of **2025 PALs of South Florida Champions**. Their grit and teamwork were unmatched.

Grand Champs in Cheer

Big cheers for Hollywood PAL's travel cheer team! Competing at Nova University, the girls brought high energy and even higher scores—earning the prestigious Grand Champions title in only their second competition of the season.



7v7 Football Dominance

Hollywood PAL's **13U 7v7 team** went undefeated, winning three back-to-back games to become **2025 13U 7v7 Champions**. This season, Hollywood PAL hosted the **largest 7v7 League in Florida**, with over **1,100 youth** and **55 teams** participating.

Community and Commitment

Hollywood PAL also recently participated in the **American Youth Football League Meeting**, further cementing their commitment to youth development, sportsmanship, and collaboration.

None of these milestones would be possible without the incredible dedication of the **coaches, parents, and athletes**. Thank you for believing in this mission and continuing to help PAL youth rise.



Feature: Programming at Oxnard PAL

Mentors in Action: Supporting the Challenger Baseball Program

This season, youth mentees have stepped up in a big way by volunteering with the City of Oxnard's Special Populations Challenger Baseball Program. This inspiring initiative provides individuals with special needs the chance to enjoy the game of baseball in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment.

Each week, they assist players around the bases, help catch balls, play alongside them, and cheer enthusiastically from the sidelines. Their energy and empathy have made a powerful impact, helping create a community built on encouragement, connection, and mutual respect. We're proud of their commitment and the example they're setting—both on and off the field. Go team!

Spring Into Action: Ninja Adventures with Oxnard PAL

Over Spring Break, Oxnard PAL and Oxnard Recreation & Community Services partnered with the Hueneme SHINE after-school program to host the California Adventure Camp's Ninja Coalition HQ and their mobile ninja adventure course.

With two afternoon sessions open to the community, over 320 youth accepted the challenge between April 14 and April 18. Guided and encouraged by Ninja Coalition HQ staff, Oxnard PAL members took on an 8 & 14-foot warped wall, a parkour ground obstacle, zip line, ring and rope courses, Swiss cheese walls, and other skill and confidence-building obstacles. Watching youth go from timid to bold and adventurous in under 45 minutes was incredible to witness.

Oxnard PAL youth consistently grew more comfortable with their body and ability, and every single one of them pushed themselves to improve on each try. Parents and families are eager for this unique and exciting opportunity to come back to the PAL Chapter.



NATIONAL PAL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ATHLETIC/ACTIVITIES LEAGUES, INC.

601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
South Building, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20004

Phone: 202-455-4005
Email: copsandkids@nationalpal.org
Website: nationalpal.org