

GET OUTSIDE & RIDE





A YEAR OF CHANGE

FROM THE DIRECTOR: A YEAR OF CHANGE

Hello Friends,

2022 was the year the Georgia Cycling Association made a major change: splitting of our teams into two conferences. This change was essential given the growing popularity of youth mountain biking in the state of Georgia. As we look to the future, this change positions us to comfortably accommodate the anticipated growth in athlete participation over the next few years.

Under the new structure, our West Conference would race one weekend day while the East Conference raced on the other weekend day. For more information on our conference split, please read [page 9](#). I want to thank our volunteers, families, and coaches for their commitment to making this large organizational change a success.

We constantly stay in touch with the Georgia Cycling family to make sure we are delivering the best possible experience. We utilize [Net Promoter Score \(NPS\)](#) which is a customer experience metric that measures loyalty and satisfaction measurement. I am extremely proud of our scores across each of our audiences as they reflect the hard work and dedication of everyone associated with this organization. (If you are unfamiliar with NPS, I encourage you to Google it, then you'll see why I am proud of our numbers!)

- Parents NPS = 83
- Coaches NPS= 83
- Team Leadership NPS = 91

2022 was also a year of change for our sponsorship program. Our new "ownership" model netted the organization a nice bump in non-participant

revenue in 2022. For additional details, please check out [page 17](#). Looking ahead, we anticipate advertisers could tighten spending amid economic uncertainty. Therefore, it is essential that this organization continue to diversify its revenue streams to remain in good financial health.

As a result, in 2023, we will activate a more robust grant program. I look forward to sharing the results of those efforts in next year's Annual Report.

On [page 19](#), you will read about one man's incredible effort and sacrifice that lead to the single largest fundraiser in Georgia Cycling's history. Speaking of funding, our financial report is on [page 18](#). You will note that we ran a budget deficit in 2022. But thanks to strong fiscal responsibility in prior years, there was a healthy fund balance to bridge that gap. As a result, I'm proud to say we were able to maintain the same participant experience people have come to expect.

From our best-in-class event production ([page 12](#)) to our one-of-a-kind Coach Licensing program ([page 13](#)), this sport continues to be unlike anything else in Georgia. But being one-of-a-kind means we have unique needs, read [page 20](#) to learn more.

2023 is Season Ten; an amazing milestone. I sincerely thank you for your continued support as we celebrate our past and look toward a bright future.

Kenny Griffin
Executive Director



Drop me an email: kenny@georgiacycling.org



WHO WE ARE



CULTIVATING PASSION FOR THE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE OF CYCLING ACROSS GEORGIA



OUR VISION

Improve the lives of people across Georgia through the active and healthy lifestyle of cycling.



OUR MISSION

To inspire Georgians to get outside and ride a mountain bike through inclusive programs that champion the interests of everyone who rides or wants to ride a bicycle in our state.



LEADING WITH OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These are the ideals that sew together the fabric of who we are as an organization and who we are as people. It is our belief that these pillars will serve our student-athletes well both on the trail and off. Since we know that how we conduct ourselves every day determines our reputation, the level of success we achieve, and the positive impact we can make on people's health and wellbeing.



COMMUNICATION

Whether calling out to alert a fellow rider of your presence on a trail or participating as a member of a team, clear communication is important. It is also essential to be a good listener and receive communication from others; always respect feedback and new ideas.



WELLNESS

Wellness is the state of living a healthy lifestyle. Mountain biking is the perfect foundation for living an active life filled with physical, mental, and social well-being.



FORWARD MOMENTUM

Keep your eyes focused on where you want to go; it will serve you well on and off the trail. Visualize where you want to be. Propel yourself towards your goals and you will achieve them.



EVERYBODY RIDES

Georgia Cycling welcomes student-athletes from every walk of life and skill level. It is this diversity that makes us stronger. We embrace a competitive environment where we clap for every kid, not just those on our own team.



OWN IT

Take ownership of and responsibility for your actions and behavior. Do not be afraid to make a mistake. Making mistakes allows you to understand that mistakes are only lessons and learning opportunities.



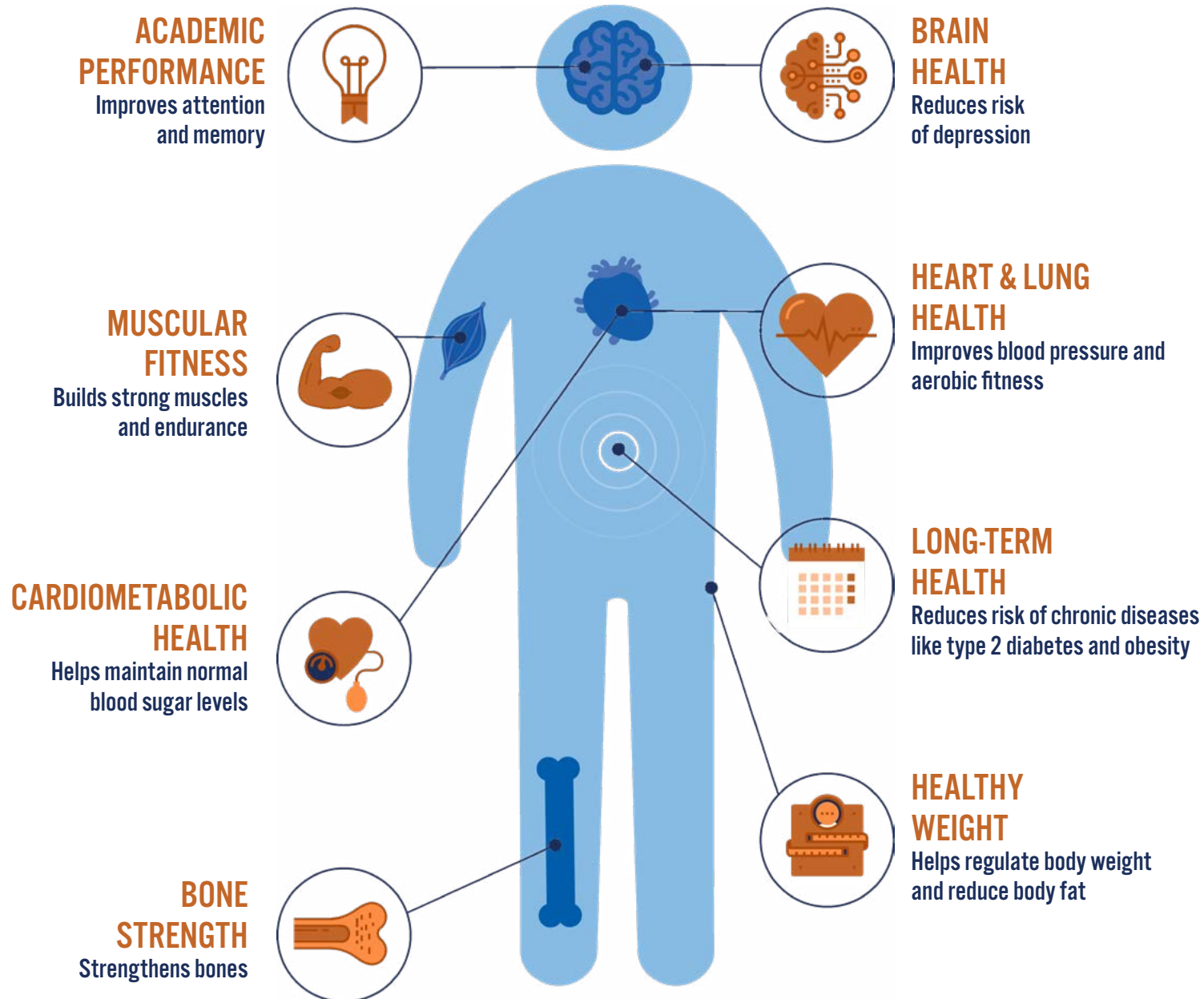
FINISH OVER PODIUM

While reaching for the medal stand should never be discouraged, it is important to recognize that success comes in many forms. Therefore, the emphasis should be on personal achievement and a commitment to finish what you started.

GET MOVING

HEALTH BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN

Physical activity is important to a child's overall health and wellbeing. When a child is moving the advantages range from improved physical fitness to enhanced cognitive function. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified eight health benefits of physical activity for children.



Source: CDC, Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition

WHY CYCLING

KIDS' BRAINS LIGHT UP IN REAL TIME WHILE RIDING A BIKE

Research from Stanford University shows that in addition to physical benefits, cycling provides cognitive advantages as well. Riding a bike activates executive function and improves things like spatial orientation, memory control, and navigation. This study was groundbreaking in the fact that it measured a child's brain activity *during* a bike ride. Previous studies only measured brain activity before and after a child rode a bike.



IN 2022, GEORGIA CYCLING ATHLETES ROAD A TOTAL OF **462,698** MILES

PRESENTING SPONSOR



YOUTH MTB PROGRAM

The Georgia Cycling Youth Mountain Bike Program presented by REI uses the healthy sport of mountain biking as a catalyst for youth development. This program is the foundation of everything we do at Georgia Cycling.

While the sport takes place on a bike, the program has a far-reaching impact that is felt in community engagement, personal growth, and connecting with other students. This program isn't just about developing athletic skills, it is about developing responsible young adults.

Our program is a five-month season that begins on July 1 and provides a unique opportunity to build self-confidence while developing healthy habits.

We welcome riders of all skill levels. Our specially trained coaches nurture individual goals and needs. There are no tryouts to join a Georgia Cycling team.

The program is activated through local youth mountain bike teams based in communities across Georgia. In 2022, there were **76 teams in the state**. These teams were formed by community members and are open to any student in Grades 6 - 12. A total of **1,114 student-athletes** registered for the program in 2022.

INTERSCHOLASTIC CYCLING

Students join a local Georgia Cycling team based on where they will go to high school. By aligning team participation with school assignment, we accomplish two things:

- Build long lasting ties to the community through a relationship with the local public and private schools.
- We keep competition fair by eliminating a team's ability to recruit riders from various parts of the state to form a super team.

LOCAL TEAM ACTIVITIES

Each team crafts their practice schedule based on the needs of their student-athletes. Practices take place on local trails. On average, teams spent **95 hours practicing mountain bike skills** during the 2022 season. This supervised and structured physical activity not only improves an individual's health but it creates bonds among students of different ages, backgrounds, and skills.



1114
STUDENT-ATHLETES



95
THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF PRACTICE HOURS/SEASON





PARENTS & COACHES RATED
RACE 2
AS THE BEST RACE DAY EXPERIENCE IN 2022

RACE SERIES

The Georgia Cycling Race Series presented by Northside Hospital is an opportunity for student-athletes to set competitive goals to achieve their personal best. The autumn race series is an optional add-on to the Georgia Cycling Youth MTB Program.

In 2022, **80% of our student-athletes** took part in the race series. While we hope that all our student-athletes will participate in the race series, we recognize that young athletes - especially those in middle school - have varying appetites for competition. That's why our race series is an opt-in format, where students can participate in a race on their timetable.

We strive to create an environment that celebrates accomplishments beyond the podium. We want to help young athletes push beyond the boundaries they perceive for themselves.

For experienced riders that thrive on competition, that could mean pushing themselves to be a top 5 finisher.

For riders just starting out, their personalized goal might be to cross the finish line for the first time.

CONFERENCE SPLIT

Race day competition in 2022 was divided into **two separate conferences: East Conference and West Conference**. The goal of the new format was to enhance the race day experience and reduce time commitment for athletes, parents, and coaches.

Previously, middle schoolers from all teams would race on one day, while high school students would race on the other. This required all teams to be present for the entire weekend. Under the conference split, middle school and high school student-athletes from half of

the teams compete on Saturday. On Sunday, the other half of teams take to the racecourse. This meant families, athletes, and coaches had a single day of competition.

The change also represented Georgia Cycling's proactive efforts to preserve event capacity for future growth. As participation grows, it is important to manage field size to keep the experience safe and enjoyable. End of season survey data showed the change was well received.

CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND

Kingston Downs in Rome, Georgia was the host venue for Championship Weekend. Saturday was titled "MTB Fest" and was designed to be a way for teams to join together in celebration of the 2022 season.

Sunday was the Peach State Championship, where qualifying riders took to the course for a final competition. After eight years under one format, this was a big change for our community. Feedback was positive and we are exploring adjustments to make 2023 even better.



Our races enable athletes and their families to explore Georgia's different ecosystems.

INVESTING IN SAFETY

Safety is of paramount importance on race day. Our goal is to have a minimum of 30 safety team members on-site to attend to the needs of all attendees.

COMMUNICATION

Our race courses are in rural locations which can make communication a bit challenging. Since clear communication is essential in the event of an emergency, Georgia Cycling deploys its own communication relay system. We leverage 94 ham band portable radios, a 50-watt ham repeater, 30-ft antenna, all operating on our own dedicated frequencies.

Georgia Cycling invests over **\$20,000** a year in event safety

FIRST AID

We have an experienced Emergency Medical team on site. This team is comprised of qualified EMTs, Paramedics, Registered Nurses, and Wilderness First Responders. Our team is in contact with local law enforcement and first responders to share event itinerary, race course maps, evacuation routes, and other pertinent information.

COURSE MONITORING

We have two teams deployed on the course to provide real time updates in the event of a breakdown, accident, or other on-course incident.

- Sweepers are volunteers that ride behind each race category.
- Course Marshals are members of the Emergency Medical team stationed at an average of 10 checkpoints per race.

SECURITY

This year we added a security component to our events. We contracted with a third-party security company to be on-site during all events.

INVESTING IN QUALITY

For many of our student-athletes a Georgia Cycling race will be the only mountain bike race they will ever experience. Therefore, we strive to make our events best-in-class. We want our students to feel like they are at the Olympics of youth mountain biking!

Our operations team works on event management all year long. Prep work for the 2022 season began shortly after the 2021 season ended. On race day, it takes **47 Core Staff members** plus **75 volunteers** to make our events a success.

- Core Staff are individuals that dedicate their entire weekend to race production. They work in various roles across the event site from parking lots to First Aid.
- Volunteers are people who sign up to work a shift at the event. These roles vary in time commitment and cover everything from crossing guards to timing assistants.

SUCCESSFUL LAST-MINUTE SWITCH

The first race of the season was scheduled for Braselton, GA. With 3.5+ inches of rain in the forecast at Road Atlanta, the decision was made to head south. We shifted the race 95 miles south to Milledgeville, GA.

In less than 24 hours our team was on the ground prepping the site for competition. This last-minute change was possible thanks to an experienced team with long-standing relationships with venue managers.



“Every year, I watch as students develop traits like leadership, sportsmanship, and compassion for their fellow athletes. I feel that every child should have access to this program. I’m proud to volunteer for this cycling family!”

- Shane Oestricher, Operations Assistant

RACE DAY

COACHING



Volunteer coaches are the front line activation of the Youth MTB Program and the Race Series. Georgia Cycling stands out in the world of youth sports given our extensive Coach Licensing Program and our low athlete to coach ratio: **1.75 students for every coach**.

In 2022, we licensed **636 volunteers** to become youth mountain bike coaches.

COACH LICENSING

While other youth sports programs do not require background checks and training, Georgia Cycling prides itself on a comprehensive licensing program. There is no other program like it in youth sports. Each year we require all coaches to pass the following:

- Concussion Training
- Abuse Awareness & Mandatory Reporting
- Coaching Fundamentals

In addition, all coaches must undergo an annual background check.

THE HEART OF OUR TEAMS

Our volunteer coaches donate hundreds of hours each year to their teams. From recruiting and team rides to practice planning and race events, a team's coaching staff is there for it all.

Most coaches get involved because they have a child on the team. But many stayed involved after their child has graduated because they have developed deep connections with the families on their teams.

TRAINER CERTIFICATION

We want our volunteer coaches to feel confident and prepared when coaching student-athletes. That's why Georgia Cycling has a *Coach Supporter Team*. This group of seven highly experienced coaches provides guidance, support, and training to new and veteran coaches alike.

Every Georgia Cycling team has a dedicated Coach Supporter who has been trained on the latest methods for coaching and is available to answer questions, conduct trainings, and be a resource for our volunteer coaches.

COACHES SUMMIT

In March 2022, we hosted the Georgia Cycling Coaches Summit at the Academies of Discovery in Gainesville, GA.



This educational weekend brings together coaches from across Georgia to develop skills, share knowledge, and have some fun as a community. The conference promotes a holistic approach to coaching that ensures both new and experienced coaches can build their abilities. The Summit also offers time for coaches to collaborate together for peer-to-peer learning and sharing.

Training included classroom instruction, mountain bike skills trainings, and Advanced First Aid.



636
VOLUNTEER MTB
COACHES IN 2022



MEET DOLORES MONTERO

Dolores first hopped on a bike as a family activity. In the beginning, she had very little experience but eventually grew to love the sport and Georgia Cycling. She became a coach in 2017 and today she is one of our Coach Supporters - those are the people that help train our coaches!

OUTREACH



To achieve our mission, it is important that we proactively reach out and welcome all students into the Georgia Cycling family. Our program should reflect the communities we serve and we must seek to lower barriers of entry into this sport.

Our commitment to inclusivity and access is not just about promoting physical health, it's about changing lives. When a student becomes a member of a Georgia Cycling team, they join a family that supports and encourages them both on and off the bike. They gain confidence, form friendships, and develop valuable life skills that will stay with them for years to come.

By welcoming and embracing all students, we are building a community that is stronger, more resilient, and more compassionate.

LOWERING THE COST OF ENTRY

Mountain Biking can be a costly sport. The required investment for a bike and associated equipment can put the sport out of reach for some families. That's why we have two programs in place to help make youth mountain biking a reality for those who would otherwise be unable to participate.

LOANER BIKE PROGRAM

The biggest investment in getting started is the cost of a mountain bike. We never want the lack of access to a safe bike to stand in the way of a child's desire to ride.

The Georgia Cycling Loaner Bike Program powered by TREK, is a needs-based program that works to loan bikes for use at Georgia Cycling events such as practices and races. Our loaner bikes are inspected for safety prior to being given to any child.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Georgia Cycling Financial Assistance Program presented by Arcus Capital Partners is a needs-based financial assistance program that helps underwrite costs for both students and coaches.

Financial assistance may be used to help underwrite a student's registration fee into the Youth MTB Program and the Race Series.

We recognize that when a family's budget is tight it affects the entire family, not just the child. That's why we also provide financial assistance for our volunteer coaches to attend our educational summit or offset coach registration fees.

Representation is important because it develops personal connections. Georgia Cycling is committed to creating an environment where everyone can see themselves belonging in the sport. If a young middle or high school student doesn't see themselves represented in team leadership, it decreases the likelihood they will develop meaningful participation.

GIRLS RIDE

The intent of our "Girls Ride" initiative is to empower girls to envision themselves being successful in what is seen as a traditionally male-dominated sport. Our goal is to grow female MTB ridership in both students and coaches.

We know when young girls ride mountain bikes it allows them to build confidence, strength, and character with hopes of unlocking their full potential to become powerful leaders in life. Likewise, when a woman joins our organization as a volunteer coach, she becomes a role model and an example of what is possible.

Girls Ride events are held throughout the year.



Girls Ride



Bearings Composite Team



BEARINGS BIKE WORKS PARTNERSHIP

Bearings Bike Works is a 501(c)(3) that utilizes bikes to help youth develop the skills necessary to successfully transition into adulthood and the workforce. Georgia Cycling and Bearings Bike Works have partnered to create community programs that work to increase diversity in the mountain bike ridership of Atlanta.

Bearings supports a composite team that covers 10 schools across Southwest Atlanta. Bearings works to remove all barriers to participation. Their organization provides the bike, gear, transportation and race day support to any student that needs it.

SPONSORS



SPONSORSHIP

In 2022, Georgia Cycling moved to a new sponsorship model. In previous years, all sponsors were grouped together based on the size of their sponsorship contribution. This year, sponsors were given “naming rights” or ownership of individual pieces of inventory. This aligns with sponsorship models you see across other sports leagues and in the museum/attraction industry as well.

Reception from companies was extremely positive. Our sponsorship program was headlined by “Northside Hospital” as the Race Series Title Sponsor and “REI” as the Title Sponsor of our Youth MTB Program. Sponsorship revenue grew 34% year over year. Looking ahead to 2023, renewal interest is quite strong and new sponsors are reaching out to inquire about activation.

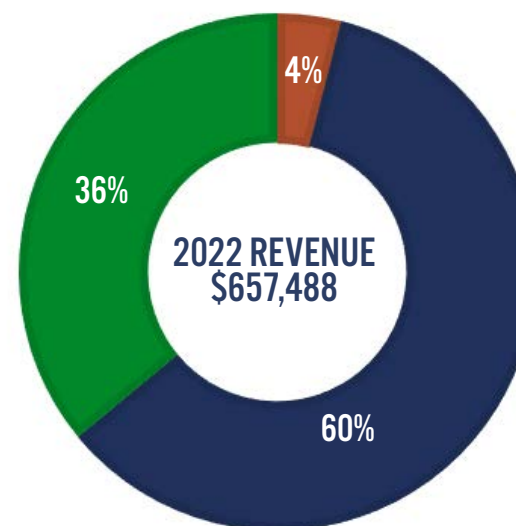


“Northside Hospital has a long relationship with the Georgia Cycling Association, and it’s been a privilege to see how its impact has expanded. Through partnerships that champion a culture of wellness we try to make a difference in Georgia’s communities. Georgia Cycling’s leaders, riders, and families are helping us do that.”

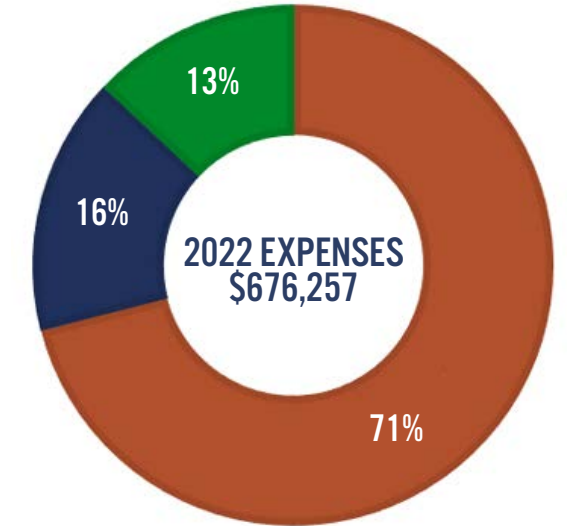


- Lee Echols
Northside Hospital
Vice President,
Marketing and
Communications

BY THE NUMBERS



Programs Revenue = 60% (\$390,324)
Donations & Sponsorships = 36% (\$238,491)
Merchandise & Other = 4% (\$28,673)



Programs = 71% (\$476,775)
General Administration = 16% (\$108,242)
Fundraising = 13% (\$91,240)

OTHER STATS OF INTEREST

School-based Teams = 41 (+8 YOY)
Composite Teams = 35
Registered Riders Race #1 = 776
Registered Riders Race #2 = 832
Registered Riders Race #3 = 810
Registered Riders Race #4 = 843
Level 1: Assistant Coaches = 469
Level 2: Coaches = 64
Level 3: Master Coaches = 103

WHY DOES THIS MATTER? Additional training and education leads to a better experience for both the coach and the athlete. More training leads to a more confident coach. The greater the confidence a coach has in their approach, the more apt they are to engage riders at a more meaningful level.

2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dan Brooks	Marty Speight
Kenny Griffin	Darius Farrokhi
Mike Johnson	Neil Ortkiese
Dan Thornton	Eddie O’Dea
Chad Hayes	Scott Vanik



This year we had a huge fundraiser thanks to the dedication and tenacity of Eddie O'Dea.

O'Dea serves on our Board of Directors and is a Co-Founder of the Georgia Cycling Association. In August, O'Dea set out to ride the newly completed Eastern Divide Trail from Newfoundland, Canada to Key West, Florida.

78 days later, O'Dea was in the record books as the first rider to finish the trail. Along the way, Eddie encountered some obstacles, met some new friends, and generated 246 donations from across the globe.

The entire Georgia Cycling family thanks Eddie for the largest fundraiser in Georgia Cycling history!

For more information: georgiacycling.org/eddie

Tackling the Trail generated \$43,928.15

Like other youth sports, Georgia Cycling teams utilize public facilities for practices. But unlike other youth sports, our practice facility inventory presents unique challenges. Since public trails are open to everyone during a team's practice, coaches must monitor trail capacity for safety reasons. Overcrowded bike trails creates a hazard for new riders and an unenjoyable experience for all. **Almost 20% of teams are very concerned about outgrowing their practice location within three years.**

Meanwhile, some communities may not have suitable bike trails. This lack of inventory stifles opportunity. If a potential team has to travel 40 miles to find a place to practice, the team will never form.

Trail development is a costly and time consuming process. But it is an essential ingredient for growing a high quality youth mountain bike program. This is why we have created partnerships to develop new bike trails across Georgia. Together, our organizations not only advocate for new trails but see them through to completion.

NEW PROJECTS IN 2022: Fightingtown Nature Park, Blue Ridge Southside Park, Atlanta - Kingston Downs, Rome GA



SUCCESS!!!
After 78 days, Eddie arrives at the Southernmost Point in the continental United States.

Eddie spoke at MTB Fest, sharing his experience and answering questions. He also showed off his bike and how it held every belonging he had.

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

SOUTHEASTERN TRUST FOR PARKS & LAND

MTB ATLANTA

Trail Trust

BEARINGS BIKE WORKS

Photos Courtesy: MTB ATLANTA



PLEASE SUPPORT GEORGIA CYCLING

Let's increase opportunities for Georgia's youth to get outside and ride.

You can support the work being done to help kids connect with peers and achieve something greater than they could have pictured for themselves. Georgia Cycling isn't in the athletic business, we are in the youth development business.

Your contributions are vital to our success. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of young people throughout Georgia, one pedal stroke at a time.

For more information on how you can help, please visit georgiacycling.org/support.



GET OUTSIDE AND RIDE

GEORGIA CYCLING ASSOCIATION





GEORGIA

CYCLING ASSOCIATION

931 East Main Street - Suite A - Blue Ridge, GA 30513
georgiacycling.org