

# THE PETER WESTBROOK FOUNDATION



ROAD  
TO THE  
OLYMPICS

2023 ANNUAL REPORT





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# Dear Friends,



As a **six-time Olympian**, Peter Westbrook became the **first Black Olympic fencing medalist** when he took bronze at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

We are months away from the 2024 Paris Olympics, where accomplished athletes from across the globe will come together to compete and celebrate the sport of fencing, one of the few sports that has been featured in every modern Olympics since 1896; bringing with it a long tradition of discipline, skill, and strategy. To master the artform takes years of dedication and persistence.

I started the Peter Westbrook Foundation (PWF) just seven years after winning a bronze medal in the 1984 Olympic Games and am elated that we have sent fencers to every Olympics since 2000. When young people attend their first PWF fencing class, I can't predict whether they will compete in the Olympics two decades later. I do know, however, that each and every one of our scholar-athletes has the potential to achieve greatness and succeed in anything they pursue.

Having served more than 4,000 youth in the 32 years since our founding, we are proudly living our mission to create Olympians...both in fencing and in life.

PWF fulfills many roles for so many people. We are fencing coaches, youth development mentors, advocates for a healthy sport-academic balance. We are pioneers for black excellence in the predominantly white

sport of fencing. We are champions for the well-rounded success of the kids and families who join our program. Beyond this, PWF is a multi-generational community of go-getters and inspirers, supporting one another and lifting each other up. On any given Saturday, you'll find Olympians, former world champions, and alumni alongside successful professionals, tutors, and parents, teaching, mentoring, and supporting a new generation of future Olympians. They selflessly give their time, their resources, and, most importantly, their hearts to this work.

In these pages, we feature our competitive athletes who will likely join the ranks of Olympians in Paris; highlight our young aspiring Olympians in life; honor our community members who make our program so special; and recognize our donors, whose generous support makes all of this possible!

**Peter Westbrook**

CEO AND FOUNDER



**At the Peter Westbrook Foundation, we harness the sport of fencing to positively influence the lives of underserved youth in the New York City area.**

We embody our belief that all youth—regardless of family income, background, race, faith, gender, or sexual orientation—should have access to quality programming in a safe environment with caring coaches, mentors, family, and community support. Over the past 32 years, we have built, grown, and sustained a community in which participants, current and past, learn to support their own growth and that of others. Though centered around an individual sport, our community is committed to a team approach, working together so everyone can succeed. Beyond the strip, we provide a range of opportunities and the necessary tools to help athletes successfully attain their educational, professional, and personal goals.



# What sets us apart

### World-class mentors

Our coaches volunteer their time each week to impart knowledge and provide mentorship to a new generation of fencers and scholars. They are Olympians, past and current nationally and world-ranked fencers, and successful professionals. We also have skilled tutors on hand to offer academic support for our youth.

### Access and inclusion

We provide opportunities for youth who have historically been underrepresented, especially in fencing but also in educational and enrichment programs. Income is the primary barrier to accessing quality youth programs, and 30 percent of our families earn less than \$50,000 per year.

### Holistic approach

Our approach addresses the whole child and permits us to tackle the barriers that impact our youth in various areas of life. We provide foundations for youth to advance their health, overall well-being, academic excellence, and social and emotional learning. We engage families and create a community where youth can thrive.

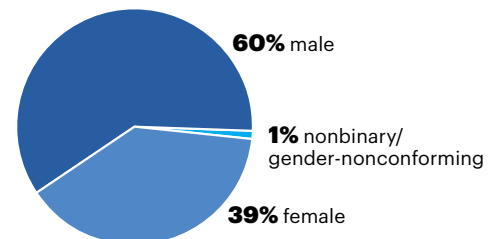
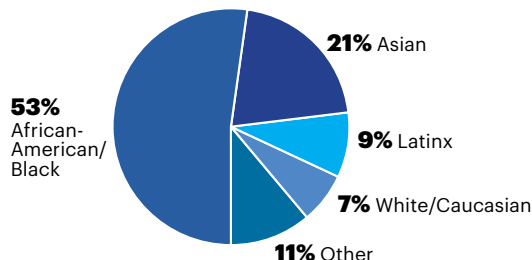
### Proven results

Our evidenced-based program creates Olympians: in fencing, academics, careers, and in life.

## WHO WE SUPPORT

Our students, many of whom come from underserved or underrepresented populations, exemplify the diversity of New York City and its surrounding areas and are being brought together through exposure to the extraordinary sport of fencing:

**30%**  
of students come from households with an annual income below \$50,000



# Our program

With a holistic approach at the helm, the PWF intertwines three pillars that foster excellence in fencing, academics, and life in youth as young as 8 years old to world-class fencers in their prime.

Our efforts help students develop physical skills, establish healthy lifestyles, achieve academic success, and build character and confidence. In the coming pages, we will explore these three pillars and introduce you to a few of the people who have both benefited from and given back to the PWF community.



**SATURDAY  
FENCING  
PROGRAM**



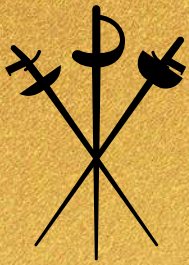
**ACADEMIC  
ENRICHMENT  
PROGRAM**



**COMPETITIVE  
ATHLETE  
PROGRAM**







# SATURDAY FENCING PROGRAM (SFP)

**Each Saturday morning from September to June, the strips of the PWF in Midtown Manhattan awaken with the clattering of weapons; the movement of feet both big and small; and words of wisdom, encouragement, and affection.**

The hallmark of the Peter Westbrook Foundation program, the **Saturday Fencing Program**, brings together coaches, alumni, parents, and volunteers to introduce students to fencing and help them practice and perfect their technique. Each session kicks off with a rigorous warmup before the athletes are grouped based on age, skill level, and preferred weapon. Beginners are taught fundamental fencing techniques, footwork, and bladework, while more experi-

enced fencers hone their skills to approach the sport at a competitive level. PWF provides all necessary gear and equipment during our classes.

While the goal is to teach young people the sport of fencing, the impact on the lives of our athletes goes much further. Through the lens of this historical sport, they learn discipline, gain confidence, develop healthy habits, acquire problem-solving skills, and connect with peers and mentors. Older and more seasoned fencers take on a leadership role and serve as additional mentors to the younger fencers. While only a few will go on to compete in the Olympics, the program is setting the foundation for each and every one to be an Olympian in life.

# 150

students from the New York City area enroll in PWF's Saturday Fencing Program each year.

# 26

current PWF student-athletes competed in local, regional, and/or national tournaments during the 2022-23 season.





# SATURDAY FENCING PROGRAM (SFP)



**Priscilla X.** came to PWF in the fifth grade and graduated high school and PWF's Saturday Fencing Program this past spring as a **"confident, happy young woman."** Priscilla is now enrolled at the University of Michigan, where she plans to study public relations and continue to compete as a fencer with the Wolverines. Her experience competing regionally and nationally earned her a fencing scholarship as she transitioned to college. Reflecting on her PWF experience, Priscilla fondly remembers Coach Talks during each Saturday session, which she described as a **"safe space"** to be vulnerable, to connect, and in which she felt the support and love of the PWF community. Given her commitment and academic performance, Priscilla was selected as one of four PWF college scholarship winners for the Class of 2023.

**"I would not be the person I am today if it weren't for PWF. I never really understood what a non-biological 'family' was like until I went to PWF."**

—Priscilla X.



**Leah B.**, 15, has been fencing at PWF for six years. In 2022-23, she advanced to the Competitive Athlete Program. **"I went straight to epee. You can hit the whole body. It's a good challenge and is really stimulating,"** she said. With nine local and regional tournaments under her belt—including a gold medal—Leah is now officially classified at the national level, and she has found a drive to continue to progress in all aspects of her life. Leah hopes to fence in college, where she intends to study engineering or computer science. **"When you're fencing on the strip, it takes concentration and endurance,"** which she said helps her in school as well. Through competing, Leah says she's become more disciplined and focused, displaying an attitude that earned her the Positive Youth Award at the 2023 Year-End Celebration. **"Going somewhere every Saturday to work out and then fence, which is very mind-stimulating, has definitely made me more disciplined,"** she said. **"I go there to better myself...and PWF provides a positive environment to facilitate that."**

**"Now that I'm competing, I have a new appreciation for the coaches and the sport as a whole. I understand how much work it takes to be an Olympian or a national champion."**

—Leah B.





# ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAM (AEP)

After spending each Saturday morning with world-class athletes to improve their skills as fencers, many Peter Westbrook Foundation youth spend a few more hours working with top-notch educators to expand their minds and grow as scholars. Our **Academic Enrichment Program (AEP)**, open to grades 3 through 12, pairs young people with tutors—including licensed teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, educated professionals, and assistant principals of schools. Students in this pillar of the PWF program have access to academic support and receive individualized and small-group attention that addresses areas of struggle and provides opportunities to reinforce or enhance

areas of strength in language, literacy, social studies, and math. Among various workshops offered are PSAT, SAT, and SHSAT-prep courses to make sure students are equipped to apply to college and reach their goals. To build on the work of the AEP team, PWF hosts monthly essay contests with prizes for the top two essays in each age group—elementary, middle, and high school. Each essay submitted earns scholars entry in a lottery for prizes to encourage participation. At our End-of-Year Celebration, we also give out prizes for students who have completed the most essays and have shown the most improvement in their writing throughout the year.

## Individual and Small Group Tutoring

**Wisdom N.**, joined PWF just a year ago after a virtual fencing workshop during the pandemic sparked her interest in the sport. At 11, she is developing a love of fencing and also getting ahead in school thanks to tutoring from the AEP. **“Fencing [boosts] my self-esteem. It empowers me,”** Wisdom shared. **“Tutoring is a bonus. It really helps me with the things I’m struggling with**

**in school, especially math.”** Roely, former AEP tutor and a lead teacher at the Success Academy Charter School during the week, is one of the tutors Wisdom has worked with. **“It has been a very rewarding experience for us. I love working with the program and developing relationships with students like Wisdom, as I get to make a meaningful impact,”** she says. Roely provides academic support, while coaches and older students provide mentorship and a positive peer community. Wisdom’s

mother, Wanda, has observed the many meaningful connections her daughter has been making since they joined the PWF family and her boost in confidence both academically and on the strip. **“When she wins those bouts, you can see a smile from ear to ear, even through the mask. She loves what she is doing,”** Wanda said. **“I’m thankful for PWF...it’s financially accessible and comes with one-on-one tutoring that has helped a lot with her grades. We couldn’t have asked for more.”**



Wisdom with tutor Achraf Daboya.

### TUTORS

- Achraf Daboya
- Brandon Malhotra
- Brigette Brantley
- Keon Campbell
- Kevin Jackson
- Neried Acosta
- Samuel Afrifa





# ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAM (AEP)

## 2023 PWF \$3000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



**Elijah Ko**  
University of Buffalo



**Justin Roberts**  
St. John's University



**Nicholas Sockwell**  
Morehouse College



**Priscilla Xu**  
University of Michigan

## COLLEGES PWF GRADUATES HAVE ATTENDED

- Barnard College
- Binghamton University
- Boston College
- City University of New York
- Clarkson University
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Duke University
- Fashion Institute of Technology
- Florida State University\*
- Harvard University
- Howard University
- Hunter College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Lawrence University
- Long Island University
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Montclair State University
- Morehouse College\*
- New Jersey Institute of Technology
- New York City College of Technology
- New York University
- Northeastern University\*
- Northwestern University
- Ohio State University
- Penn State University
- Princeton University
- Rutgers University
- Sacred Heart College
- St. John's University
- State University of New York At Buffalo
- Stevens Institute of Technology
- Syracuse University\*
- Temple University
- University of Buffalo\*
- University of Detroit
- University of Michigan\*
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Pennsylvania
- Wayne State University
- Yale University

\* New this year

**"I always hear laughter, clapping, and sounds of joy and success coming from my son. When he has had a truly amazing session, he tells me what he and Keon worked through and how accomplished he felt!"**

—Saran Mignott-Cadet, mother of Sebastian, age 11, who works with tutor Keon Campbell

# 100%

of this year's high school seniors graduated and enrolled in college

# 49

students enrolled in AEP in 2022-23

# 87&65

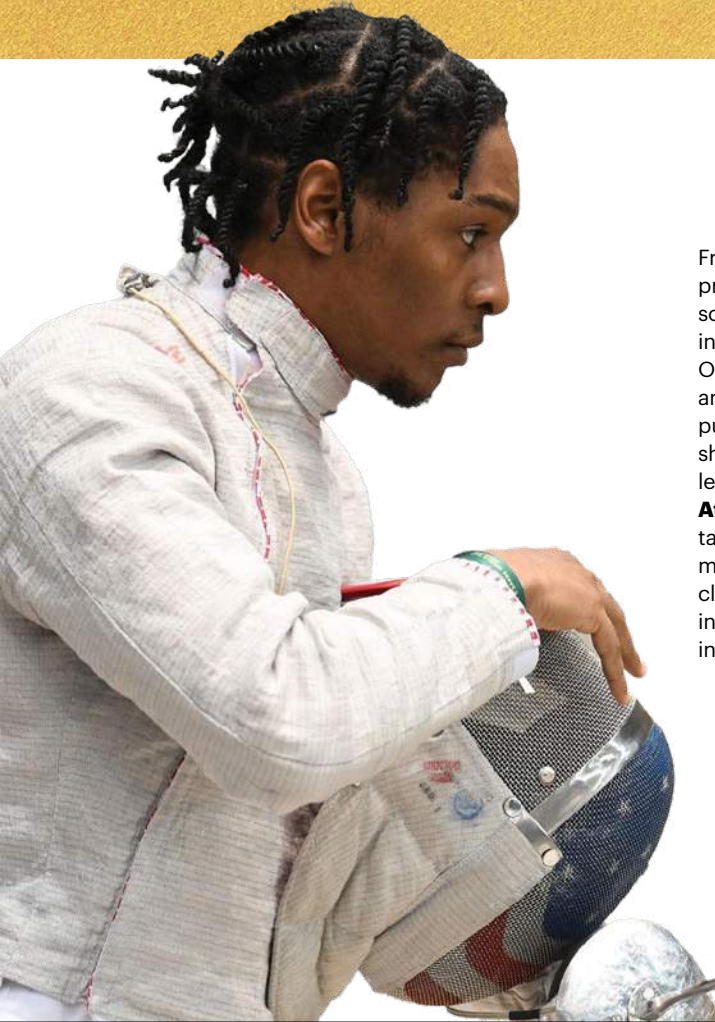
average point increase on mock tests by our SAT and PSAT Prep Students, respectively (greatest increase was 101 points)

# 1:3

educator-to-student ratio in AEP classes



# COMPETITIVE ATHLETE PROGRAM (CAP)

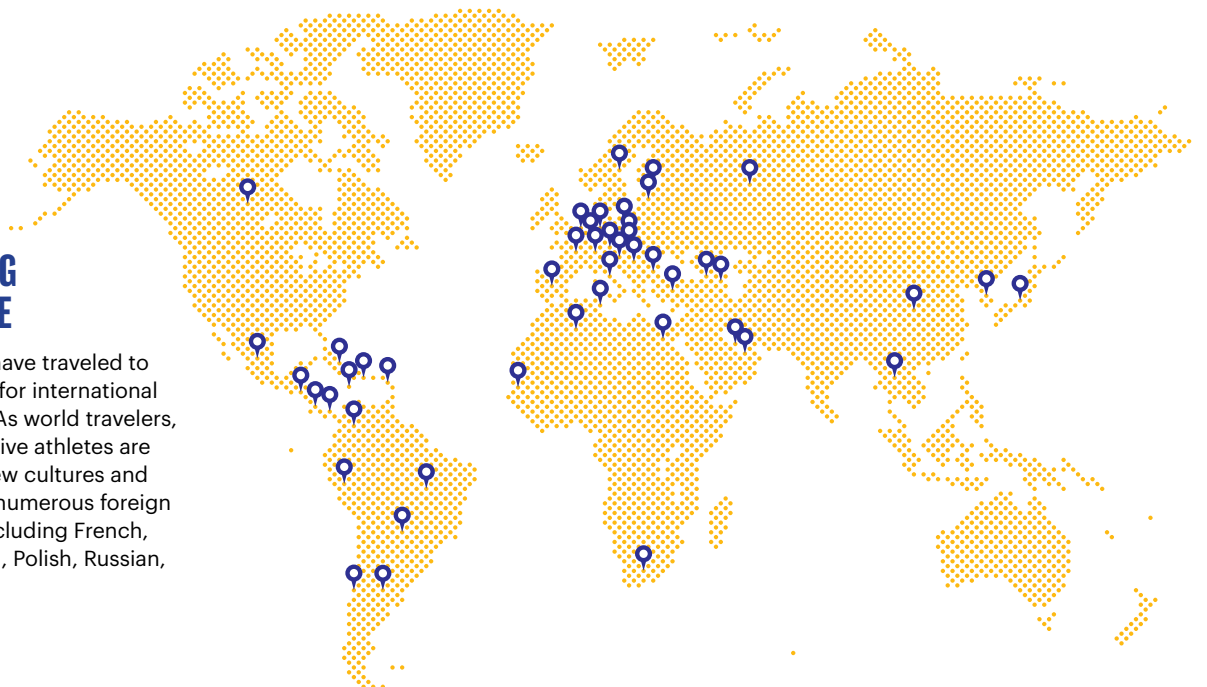


From the time they enter PWF's program as young children, scholar-athletes receive invaluable insights and instruction from Olympians and world champions, and as they gain experience and put in hard work, some fencers show promise to reach that same level themselves. Our **Competitive Athlete Program** selects promising talent ready to make a further commitment from the Saturday fencing classes to train for and compete in tournaments on the national and international level. Participants in

this pillar of the PWF program adopt a professional training regimen of four to six days per week, and many are awarded scholarships to defray the costs of equipment, fencing club memberships, coaching, and competition fees. From local tournaments to the world championships, fencers have a community that provides knowledge, experience, and support. Fencers are exposed to the highest level of competition and have the opportunity to travel the globe and gain exposure to new cultures, people, and languages.

## TRAVELING THE GLOBE

PWF fencers have traveled to **49 countries** for international competition. As world travelers, PWF competitive athletes are exposed to new cultures and have learned numerous foreign languages, including French, Italian, Korean, Polish, Russian, and Spanish.







# COMPETITIVE ATHLETE PROGRAM (CAP)



9 PWF ATHLETES  
ACHIEVED U.S.  
**TOP 16**  
SENIOR RANKINGS

Catherine "Kasia" Nixon  
Curtis McDowald  
Daryl Homer  
Gabe Armijo  
Isis Washington  
Josef Cohen  
Lauren Scruggs  
Noah Te Velde  
Yeisser Ramirez

**47**

PWF fencers competed in local, regional, national, and/or international tournaments, including 26 youth fencers from our Saturday Fencing Program.

**30**

fencers are sponsored by PWF, including 10 up-and-coming youth fencers. Sponsorship covers fencing lessons and competition travel.

## Medals Earned

### TOP 8 AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

#### World Cups

- GOLD** Lauren Scruggs • Senior Women's Foil, Team (Georgia)
- BRONZE** Daryl Homer • Senior Men's Sabre, Team (Poland)
- BRONZE** Lauren Scruggs • Senior Women's Foil, Team (Bulgaria)
- 5TH** Catherine "Kasia" Nixon, Isis Washington  
Senior Women's Epee, Team (China)
- 5TH** Daryl Homer • Senior Men's Sabre (Budapest)
- 8TH** Curtis McDowald • Senior Men's Epee, Team (Argentina)

#### Junior World Championships (Bulgaria)

- GOLD** Lauren Scruggs • Junior Women's Foil, Team
- SILVER** Lauren Scruggs • Junior Women's Foil

#### Pan-American Zonal Championships (Peru)

- GOLD** Catherine "Kasia" Nixon, Isis Washington  
Senior Women's Epee, Team
- GOLD** Catherine "Kasia" Nixon • Senior Women's Epee
- BRONZE** Lauren Scruggs • Senior Women's Foil

#### World University Games (China)

- BRONZE** Catherine "Kasia" Nixon • Women's Epee

### TOP 8 AT NATIONAL COMPETITIONS

#### North American Cups (NACs)

- GOLD** Isis Washington • Senior Women's Epee (Minnesota)
- GOLD** Lauren Scruggs • Senior Women's Foil (Kentucky)
- SILVER** Yeisser Ramirez • Senior Men's Epee (Utah)
- BRONZE** Curtis McDowald • Senior Men's Epee (Utah)
- 5TH** Inkosi Brou • Cadet Men's Sabre (Texas)
- 6TH** Gabriel Armijo • Senior Men's Sabre (Kentucky)
- 8TH** Nazir Primus • Cadet Men's Sabre (Texas)

#### NCAA Championships (North Carolina)

- GOLD** Lauren Scruggs • Women's Foil

#### April Senior National Championships (Missouri)

- GOLD** PWF Men's Epee Team • Div1 Senior Men's Epee, Team  
Captains: Dwight Smith, Donovan Holtz
- SILVER** Josef Cohen • Div1 Senior Men's Sabre
- SILVER** Lauren Scruggs • Div1 Senior Women's Foil
- SILVER** Yeisser Ramirez • Div1 Senior Men's Epee
- 5TH** Curtis McDowald • Div1 Senior Men's Epee
- 5TH** Gabriel Armijo • Div1 Senior Men's Sabre

#### Summer Nationals & July Challenge (Arizona)

- GOLD** Catherine "Kasia" Nixon, Isis Washington  
Senior Div1 Women's Epee, Team
- SILVER** Adam Rodney • Senior Div1A Men's Epee
- SILVER** Catherine "Kasia" Nixon • Senior Div1 Women's Epee
- SILVER** Nazir Primus • Y14 Men's Sabre
- BRONZE** Khalil Thompson • Senior Div1 Men's Sabre
- BRONZE** Yeisser Ramirez • Senior Div1 Men's Epee



## ROAD TO THE OLYMPICS

# Looking Toward Paris 2024

The Peter Westbrook Foundation has sent at least one fencer to each Olympic Games since 2000, only 9 years after our founding. A total of 11 PWF athletes have filled 16 spots across the six Olympic Games between 2000-2020, with three athletes bringing team medals back to the USA. As we prepare for the 2024 Olympics in Paris, we're ecstatic about the possibility of adding more PWF Olympians to this list!





AUGUSTO BIZZI

Ranked 2nd in the United States and 14th in the world, **Daryl Homer** (Men's Sabre) enters the 2023-24 season determined to make Paris his fourth Olympic Games. After qualifying for the 2023 World Championships, an injury prevented Daryl from competing. Now, he's back at it, endeavoring to build on his impressive career, which includes an individual silver medal at the 2016 Olympics and four World Championship medals (1 silver and 3 bronze).


## A HISTORY OF PWF AT THE OLYMPICS

**2000** **SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA**  
**Akhnaten Spencer-EI**  
 MEN'S SABRE  
**Erinn Smart**  
 WOMEN'S FOIL  
**Keeth Smart**  
 MEN'S SABRE

**2004** **ATHENS, GREECE**  
**Erinn Smart**  
 WOMEN'S FOIL  
**Ivan Lee**  
 MEN'S SABRE  
**Kamara James**  
 WOMEN'S EPEE  
**Keeth Smart**  
 MEN'S SABRE

**2008** **BEIJING, CHINA**  
 **Erinn Smart**  
 WOMEN'S FOIL;  
**SILVER** WOMEN'S FOIL TEAM  
 **Keeth Smart**  
 MEN'S SABRE;  
**SILVER** MEN'S SABRE TEAM

**2012** **LONDON, ENGLAND**  
**Nzingha Prescod**  
 WOMEN'S FOIL

**2016** **RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL**  
 **Ibtihaj Muhammad**  
 WOMEN'S SABRE;  
**BRONZE** WOMEN'S SABRE TEAM  
**Nzingha Prescod**  
 WOMEN'S FOIL

**2020** **TOKYO, JAPAN**  
**Curtis McDowald**  
 MEN'S EPEE  
**Daryl Homer**  
 MEN'S SABRE  
**Khalil Thompson**  
 MEN'S SABRE  
**Yeisser Ramirez**  
 MEN'S EPEE



## PASSING THE TORCH

**Akhnaten Spencer-EI, or Coach Akhi,** already made PWF history as a member of the Foundation's first team of Olympians in 2000, and now he's looking to make history in a new role. In 2003, Akhi made a choice to transition to coaching. **"I lost that drive to compete, but I still wanted to stay in the sport,"** he said. **"The Foundation sent me to Budapest, Hungary, to learn from one of the best coaches in the world."** That transition has paid off. Akhi is a lead coach for our Saturday fencing classes and has coached several PWF Olympians, including 2016 Olympic bronze medalist Ibtihaj Muhammad and 2020 Olympians Daryl Homer and Khalil Thompson. He's been the head sabre and team assistant coach at Columbia University since 2013. In 2022, Akhi was named as the national coach for the US men's sabre team leading up to the 2024 Olympics, and his results are giving hope for Paris. This past spring, the US men's sabre team made history bringing home bronze from the World Championships. **"Once something great happens, it gives people the confidence to do the same or better, and I've seen that happen over the past year,"** Akhi said as he looks back on his own journey as a kid from Harlem and the path leading him to Sydney. **"It was surreal, even to this day...I was able to show people that you can do anything if you put your mind to it,"** he said. **"The reason I stay so involved with PWF is that I want other kids to experience the same thing. Not everyone is going to make an Olympic team, but I know that what fencing does for people is it gives them confidence."**



Daryl Homer  
and Coach Akhi

## JOIN OUR OLYMPIC TEAM!

Looking to build on our longstanding tradition of Olympic representation, we've established the Fund for Future Olympians to offset the costs of supporting our top contending athletes as they train and compete for a spot on the 2024 Olympic team. For more information about designating your donation for our top athletes, please contact our development office at [giving@peterwestbrook.org](mailto:giving@peterwestbrook.org).

# PWF Women Leading the Charge

The Peter Westbrook Foundation sent four athletes to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, matching our representation at the 2004 Athens Olympics and our biggest contribution to Team USA thus far. In Tokyo, four men brought experience, determination, and our PWF spirit to the strip! As we look forward to the next Olympics in Paris, our eyes remain on these athletes, while we have high hopes for three powerhouse women who are making waves in the world of fencing. It is the recent success of these PWF women that is making us wonder if our 2024 team could be the biggest PWF Olympic squad yet!

## Lauren Scruggs

**“PWF plays a huge role in inspiring me to continue the legacy of black women foilists going to the Olympics and competing on a very high level. On the international level, there really aren’t that many black people. It’s been nice to have people who not only look like me but also want to see me excel and win.”**

Queens-native **Lauren Scruggs** (foil) grew up with stepfather Sean McClain, a former national champion in two weapons and current PWF coach, who started coaching her when she was 7. The early promise she showed really took shape, however, when she joined PWF as a sophomore in high school. With the support of the PWF family and the guidance of fencers she had looked up to since childhood, Lauren’s career took off. At just 20, Lauren has already won eight medals (5 gold, 1 silver, and 2 bronze) at Cadet and Junior World Championships. Now balancing competing internationally and for Harvard University, Lauren added the 2023 NCAA Women’s Foil Championship title to her growing list of accomplishments, as well as qualifying to compete for Team USA at the 2023 Senior



AUGUSTO BIZZI

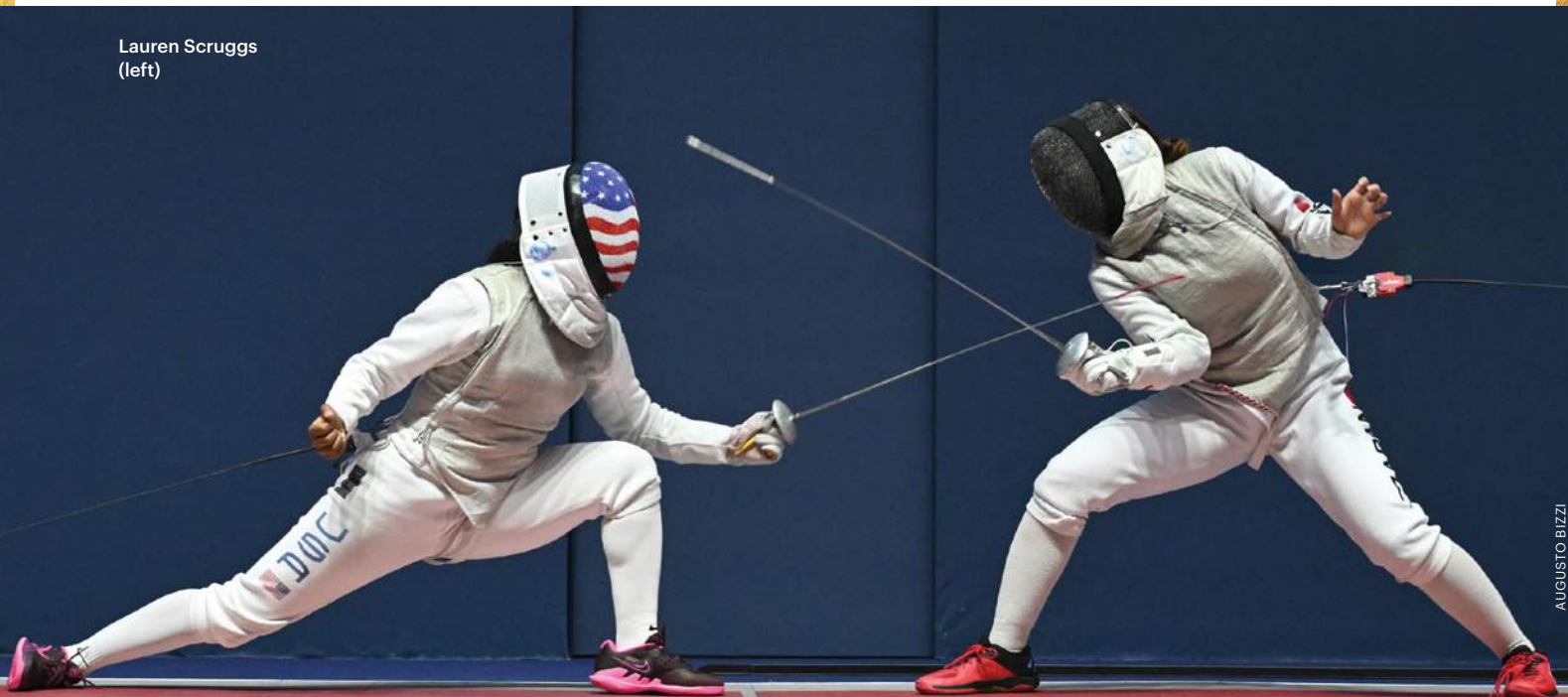
### Weapon: Foil

ENTERING THE OLYMPIC-QUALIFYING SEASON:

**#3** in the U.S.

World Championships. Entering the Olympic-qualifying season, Lauren is ranked 3rd in the US. **“Anything can happen in an Olympic season...it’s very competitive,”** she said. **“I try not to put too much stress on myself.”** While some collegiate athletes take a gap year to focus on an Olympic berth, Lauren plans to continue balancing fencing and academics to maintain consistency as she strives to earn a spot on the 2024 team.

Lauren Scruggs  
(left)



AUGUSTO BIZZI



## Isis Washington

**“PWF is my family. It’s my home. I don’t know where I would be without a lot of them. I always try to go out [of] my way for the people in the Foundation because I know that’s what they would do for me.”**

Originally from Parsippany, NJ, **Isis Washington** (epee) followed her older sister to PWF’s Saturday fencing classes when she was 12, not knowing it would change her life. At first, fencing was just another activity, one of several sports Isis played in high school. After a summer camp with U.S. Fencing Hall of Fame legend Paul Pesthy, she returned to the Saturday program at 15. **“They saw me fence in class, and they were like ‘what did you do?’”** she recalled. Isis immediately became a PWF competitive athlete. **“The exposure you get from fencing is wild. Your mind changes so much,”**

she said. By the end of high school, Isis was competing overseas. In the decade since, her accomplishments have included Senior World Cup Team Medalist, Pan-American Zonal Team Champion, and Division I North American Cup Champion. From 2019 to 2022, Isis was consistently ranked 5th, moving up as an alternate to compete in the 2022 World Championships in Egypt and serving as an alternate in the Tokyo Olympics. In September 2021, Isis moved to Bordeaux, France, both to gain life experience and to train with renowned epee coach Jean-Francois DiMartino. Now having made the 2023 World Team, Isis entered this Olympic-qualifying season ranked 2nd in US women’s epee. **“I want to make an Olympic team...[and I’ll] try to be the strongest I can be,”** Isis said. **“I would love to bring a medal back to the Foundation. I know what seeing a medal means for kids who want to fence at a high level.”**



AUGUSTO BIZZI

**Weapon: Epee**

ENTERING THE OLYMPIC-QUALIFYING SEASON:

**#2** in the U.S.

## Kasia Nixon

**“I have this global perspective, and I care a lot about people and culture. I don’t feel uncomfortable in a new environment. Fencing has allowed me that perspective [through] travel. PWF is a really great community where we all truly care about each other—clearly as fencers but also as people.”**

**Catherine “Kasia” Nixon** (epee) joined PWF three years ago after moving from her native Los Angeles, where she started fencing at 7. When she arrived, she’d already been on a national team in 2018. She was studying at Princeton and had known some PWF fencers from nearly a decade of competing. **“I was looking for a family vibe, and they told me how much love and support they get from the Foundation. It has been everything they said and more,”**

she said. That support carried Kasia through when she didn’t make the 2020 Olympic team after taking a year off from school with that goal. This time around, she’s started a master’s program at NYU in Russian and Slavic Studies, an interest piqued by her international exposure through fencing. As she balances school and competition, Kasia has found great success in both. She made the 2023 national team once again and finished 3rd in the 2023 World University Games, building on a career as a Senior World Cup Team Medalist, Junior and Cadet World Championship Medalist, and Pan-American Zonal Team Champion. She entered this Olympic-qualifying season ranked 3rd in the US. **“When I took a year off, my whole self-worth was wrapped up in fencing. I’m also a student...and maybe a future diplomat,”** she said. **“I like being challenged. I’m going to take it in full stride and run with it.”**



AUGUSTO BIZZI

**Weapon: Epee**

ENTERING THE OLYMPIC-QUALIFYING SEASON:

**#3** in the U.S.

# The PWF Community

The heart of the Peter Westbrook Foundation is its people. Together, we are a community committed to ensuring the success of each and every child who comes through our doors. At every step along the way, as they advance through their fencing career, their education, professional endeavors, and beyond, we are there. The beauty of PWF is that at its core, a community of athletes, scholars, professionals, coaches, parents, and family members are cheering for one another—on and off the strip.



## Sean McClain

COACH

**“I’ve known Peter forever,”** said 2023 USA Fencing Hall of Fame inductee Sean McClain. **“Peter was a real legend.”** Decades later, Sean has made a new name for himself as a successful coach with that very legend’s Foundation. Sean fenced at Stanford and won national titles in two weapons—epee and foil. He fenced on multiple national teams and served as an alternate on two Olympic teams before sharing his passion with others through coaching. **“I found myself caring more about how my students were doing than how I was doing,”** said Sean, who retired from competing in 2004. Among his students are several PWF fencers, including two-time Olympian Nzingha Prescod and his stepdaughter, Lauren Scruggs, who is eyeing the upcoming Olympics. **“It’s been really empowering for Lauren to be part of this team of people who look like her. She’s grown up in ways that I don’t know she would have without PWF,”** Sean said. **“The Foundation has changed a lot of lives. Peter’s done a great job of motivating kids, and he’s had a great impact on Lauren.”**



## Gregg Palmer

PARENT

Every athlete entering PWF fencing class on Saturday knows to check in with “Uncle Gregg.” Gregg Palmer describes himself as a **“diehard for fencing,”** but that wasn’t always true. His daughter joined PWF in 2010. **“I had no inclination of what fencing was,”** Gregg recalled. **“Once Kristen started competing, I was hooked.”** Kristen went on to fence at the national level and then at MIT, where she just graduated. His son James also attended the Foundation and won a PWF college scholarship upon graduating in 2021. Gregg kept coming back to take attendance. **“I want to give back to the organization that helped my kids and made my daughter more than fulfill her potential as an athlete,”** he said. **“To see her master both her academics and this sport blew me out of the water.”** Gregg’s commitment to maintaining order at the program and his dedication to the athletes earned him the honor of Parent of the Year at the 2023 Year-End Celebration. **“The kids know me, and if there’s a problem, they can come to me. I take pleasure in looking out for them.”**



## Ben Bratton

ALUMNUS

In 1990, Ben Bratton’s mother met Peter Westbrook just as he was starting the PWF program. Ben was only 5. The fall after his 10th birthday, he was able to enroll. **“My life changed,”** Ben recalled. Fast forward 27 years and Ben is Head Coach for Fencing at NYU, Peter’s alma mater. In his first year, he was named USFCA Division III Coach of the Year. Ben draws on an impressive career as an epee fencer, competing for eight national teams and making history as the first African-American and U.S. team to win gold at a World Championships (2012). **“I don’t think it’s a coincidence that I feel a drive to stay in fencing and give back and influence the sport. That all started with PWF,”** he said. Ben also serves on the USA Fencing Board of Directors. **“I’m really grateful for everything PWF has done for me,”** he reflected. **“My connection to the Foundation is endless. The people I met through PWF are lifelong friends. We are talking nonstop, and the majority of conversations are about the Foundation, fencing, and ways to help the kids. Once you’re in the club, you’re part of it forever.”**





# Our Team

At PWF, our staff and coaches provide a supportive and uplifting environment for a future generation of fencers eager to excel on and off the strip. Among them are Olympians, World Champions, National Team Members, and lifelong Foundation fencers who continue their contributions to the sport and give back to the PWF community that paved the way for their success. Likewise, educators with impeccable credentials and no previous ties to fencing guide our students to excel in school and maintain a healthy athletic and academic balance. Together, generations of PWF supporters dedicated to fencing and the spirit of the Peter Westbrook Foundation build on their experience to teach, mentor, and inspire our young fencers, many of whom come full circle as champions in fencing, in their careers, and as coach-mentors themselves.

## SATURDAY FENCING PROGRAM

### Coaches

Adam Rodney  
 Akhi Spencer-El  
 Bob Cottingham  
 Curtis McDowald  
 Daryl Homer  
 Donovan Holtz  
 Dwight Smith  
 Erinn Smart  
 Essane Diedro  
 Gabe Armijo  
 Iman Blow  
 Isis Washington  
 Josef Cohen  
 Kasia Nixon  
 Khalil Thompson  
 Khristopher White  
 Lauren Scruggs

Liam Cotter  
 Lowey Diedro  
 Noah te Velde  
 Nzingha Prescod  
 Omari Smoak  
 Peter Westbrook  
 Rotchild Magloire  
 Shomari Moore  
 Yehia Ellis  
 Yeisser Ramirez  
 Zaheer Booth

### Assistant Coaches

Chejsa Seck  
 Lake Sheffield

## COMPETITIVE ATHLETE COACHES

Akhi Spencer-El  
 Alexey Cheremsky  
 Dwight Smith  
 Guillermo Madrigal  
 Sean McClain

## STAFF

**Founder & CEO:**  
 Peter Westbrook

**Manager:**  
 Kari Coley

**Academic Enrichment Coordinator:**  
 Margaël St Juste

**Accountant:**  
 Suzanne Descanville







# Financial Statement

## FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Contributions and grants	\$340,250	\$210,000	\$550,250
Program fees and other income	\$13,575	-	\$13,575
Total Support and Revenues before releases	\$353,825	\$210,000	\$563,825
Net assets released from restrictions	\$471,598	(\$471,598)	-
Total Support and Revenues	\$825,423	(\$261,598)	\$563,825
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Saturday Fencing Program	\$122,493	-	\$122,493
Competitive Athlete Program	\$340,609	-	\$340,609
Academic Enrichment Program	\$263,328	-	\$263,328
Fundraising expenses	\$147,198	-	\$147,198
Management and general	\$99,513	-	\$99,513
Total expenses	\$973,141	-	\$973,141
Change in Net Assets from Operating Activities	(\$147,718)	(\$261,598)	(\$409,316)
<b>NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Net appreciation (depreciation) in fair value of investments	(\$43,855)	(\$2,093,985)	(\$2,137,840)
Change in Net Assets from Nonoperating Activities	(\$43,855)	(\$2,093,985)	(\$2,137,840)
Change in Net Assets	(\$191,573)	(\$2,355,583)	(\$2,547,156)
Net assets at beginning of year	\$1,005,285	\$15,332,729	\$16,338,014
Net assets at end of year	\$813,712	\$12,977,146	\$13,790,858



## The Heisman Trophy Trust

The name Heisman brings to mind the annual trophy for the most outstanding player in college football; someone who embodies diligence, perseverance, and hard work. **“You don’t only have to be the best player in the nation, you also have to be a standout citizen,”** said **Roderick Jenkins**, Program Director at the New York Community Trust (NYCT). **“That’s what PWF is creating.”** NYCT has managed the Heisman Trophy Trust’s charitable efforts since 2017. Over the past 20 years, Heisman has given more than \$20 million to New York nonprofits that use sports to engage youth from underserved communities. The Heisman Trust has been partnering with PWF since 2011 avidly supporting the academic enrichment pillar of our program. **“I made the original visits to PWF. Peter was so devoted and enthusiastic about opening up fencing to inner-city kids that it was contagious,”** recalled **Sanford Wurmfeld**, longtime Heisman Trustee. **“We were delighted that he partnered it with an academic tutoring program. It was terrific to see how engaged the tutors were, how many kids attended, and how involved the families were.”** Heisman has continued to be a vital partner with PWF for more than a decade. **“Teamwork, sportsmanship, excellence, integrity—these are all values of the Heisman Trophy Trust. Peter brings these to every single aspect of his life,”** Roderick said. **“He’s a champion for this sport and for these kids. He’s turned so many lives around, and that’s the reason we said we have to fund this [program].”**

## PWF SPONSORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

### GOLD (\$100,000+)

**Daria L. Wallach**  
The Dow Family Charitable Fund

### SILVER (\$15,000-\$99,999)

**Altman Foundation**  
**Bloomberg Philanthropies**  
**Heisman Trophy Youth Development Fund**  
**New York Life Foundation**  
**Ronald P. & Susan E. Lynch Foundation**  
**Windmill Distributing Company, L.P.**

### BRONZE (\$1,000-\$14,999)

**Andrew Hedden**  
**Aristide A. Brou**  
**Bank of America**  
**Barham Family Foundation**  
**Carol A. Fiederlein**  
**David Altshuler**  
**David Berry**  
**Dr. Robert C. & Tina Sohn Foundation**  
**Erinn Smart**  
**Eve Blatt**  
**Gordon Rutledge**  
**Guggenheim Investments**  
**Herby Raynaud**  
**Holt Farley**  
**Hugo Barreca**  
**J. Michael Tomczak**  
**Jeffrey Savit**  
**Joel Bergstein**  
**John E. Berson**  
**John Simmons**  
**Karen & Milton Gaylord**  
**Keeth Smart**  
**Lisa Orbe-Austin**  
**Marc Furgang**  
**Marc Pavese**  
**Microsoft Corporation**  
**Nathan & Lena Seiler Family Foundation**  
**Neil Rifkind**  
**New Roads Foundation**  
**Oracle Corporation**  
**Paul Doell**  
**Peter Westbrook**  
**Rick Thigpen**  
**Sabre88, LLC**  
**Sanja Komljenovic**  
**Seth Schwartz**  
**The Laura B. Vogler Foundation, Inc**  
**The Mill Foundation**  
**The Perkin Fund**  
**The Reginald F. Lewis Foundation, Inc.**  
**Trinity Fruit**  
**Victoria Bone Charitable Fund**  
**Victoria Loconsolo Foundation, Inc.**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Arthur Ashe, Posthumous**  
’75 Wimbledon Champion

**Rod Brayman**  
CEO, Windmill Distributing Company

**Robert Cottingham**  
Founder & CEO, Sabre88  
Chairman of the Board, PWF  
’88 & ’92 Olympian

**Robert Dow**  
Retired Managing Partner, Lord Abbett & Co.  
’72 Olympian

**Kristina Perkin-Davison**  
Co-Founder & Partner, iEurope Capital

**David O’Brien**  
Retired Executive Partner, Ernst & Young

**Herby Raynaud**  
Engineering Manager – Applications, Yieldmo  
Secretary, PWF  
’99, ’01 & ’02 World Championship Teams

**Bill Schreyer, Posthumous**  
Chairman Emeritus, Merrill Lynch

**Erinn Smart**  
Director Of Strategic Partnerships,  
Dotdash Meredith  
’00 & ’04 Olympian, ’08 Olympic Silver Medalist

**Keeth Smart**  
Regional General Manager,  
Chelsea Piers Fitness  
’00 & ’04 Olympian, ’08 Olympic Silver Medalist

**Peter Westbrook**  
Founder & CEO, PWF  
’76, ’80, ’88, ’92 & ’96 Olympian, ’84 Olympic  
Bronze Medalist

## BOARD OF ADVISORS

**Donald Anthony**  
Past President, USA Fencing & VP, Fédération  
Internationale d’Escrime (FIE)  
’89 & ’95 World Championship Teams

**John Brademas, Posthumous**  
President Emeritus, New York University

**Dr. Calvin O. Butts, III, D.Min., Posthumous**  
Pastor, The Abyssinian Baptist Church  
President Emeritus, SUNY Old Westbury

**Neil Diamond**  
Global Entertainer, Archangel Productions

**William J. Hybl**  
President Emeritus, United States  
Olympic Committee

**Dr. Harvey W. Schiller**  
Chairman, Global Options



# Building foundations for future generations of PWF excellence

In the 32 years since its founding, PWF has built a community committed to empowering future generations with the knowledge, skills, resources, confidence, and support they need to succeed. To continue this tradition, we have built the **Peter Westbrook Foundation Endowment Fund**. Established with the help of a \$100,000 gift from Oprah's Angel Network in 2000, the fund has continued to grow through the generosity of numerous donors. Today, the Endowment Fund totals more than \$13.5 million. With an annual payout of 3.5%, the Fund provided \$485,937 in 2022-23, covering approximately half of the operating expenses for the program season. With a goal of \$20 million in the coming years, a stronger endowment will secure the future of PWF programming for young people who have been historically underrepresented in the sport of fencing.

## WANT TO HELP BUILD FOUNDATIONS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS?

Contact us at **212-459-4538** or **giving@peterwestbrook.org** to learn more about contributing to the **Endowment Fund** or including the Peter Westbrook Foundation in your estate planning.

## Robert Dow

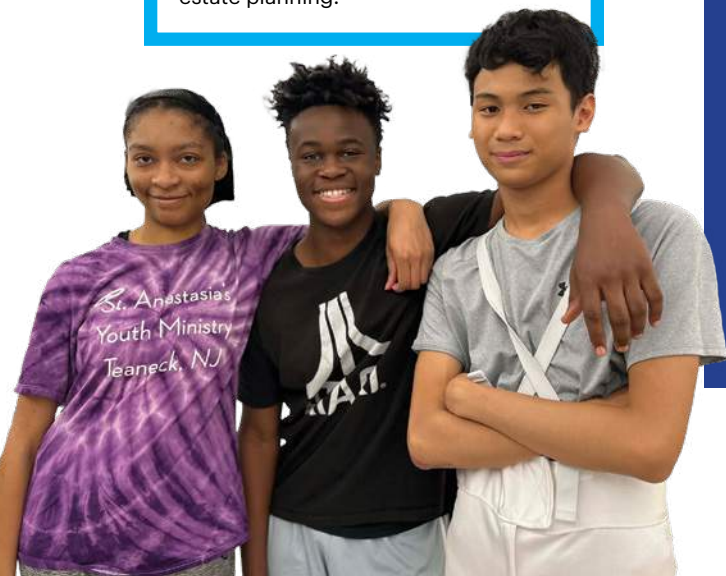
For 25 years, **Robert Dow** has been a godsend for PWF, contributing his financial savvy to ensure the legacy, community, and spirit of PWF live on well into the future. Bob's father, Warren Dow, competed in the historic 1936 Olympics in Berlin and again alongside Bob's mother, Helena Mroczkowska Dow, in the 1948 Olympics in London. Bob's stepfather, Nathaniel Lubell, competed in the 1948, 1952, and 1956 Olympics. Bob himself went on to compete in the 1972 Olympics in Munich on the men's sabre team, just four years before Peter Westbrook started his storied Olympic run spanning six games. **"I've known Peter since he was in high school,"** Bob recalled of his fellow New Jersey native. **"We competed against each other and with each other. We won a lot of national team championships together."**

From fencing, Bob went on to a successful career in finance, retiring as Senior Managing Partner at the investment management company Lord Abbett. That career gave Bob a financial capacity far beyond what he and his wife, Christina Seix had known as children. **"I came from modest means. My wife came from less than I did. I had support along the way, and we became very successful,"** Bob said. **"As long as you're comfortable and secure, what are you going to do with your money? A lot of the things we've supported are all about**



**kids and education. We look for ways we can aid children or people of lesser means who can move ahead and be successful in life but just need a little boost."**

When he reconnected with Peter at the Fencers Club in the late '90s, Bob found one such opportunity. He started making donations and organizing fundraisers in support of the emerging Foundation. Soon, Bob joined the Board and established an endowment to ensure the impact of PWF lives on. With an initial gift of \$1 million, Bob has since mobilized his connections to raise more than \$8 million to ensure PWF continues to support youth. One of his many complementary gifts was to create a scholarship fund for PWF students to attend his alma mater, the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). **"Peter's results speak for themselves. He's done a fantastic job at working with kids and getting them to a point in life where they wouldn't have gotten without it. And he produces Olympians on top of it."**





# Help Us Reach Our Goals in 2024!

For 32 years, the Peter Westbrook Foundation has excelled, grown, and evolved, harnessing the sport of fencing to transform the lives of athletes, students, and families. This work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. We invite our current sponsors and new supporters alike to invest in PWF's commitment to qualifying Olympians for Paris and creating Olympians in life!

## 2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

We celebrate the success of our PWF fencers, scholars, and community members in their various endeavors in 2023. We could not be prouder that:



**4 PWF athletes qualified for the 2023 Senior World Championships**, making up more than 15% of Team USA.



**100%** of our high school seniors **graduated and enrolled in college.**



**4 PWF African-American fencers took on coaching roles** in new communities and institutions, influencing new generations of fencers.

## 2024 GOALS

In 2024, PWF has set the following goals to live the mission of excellence and ensure the success of young people supported by PWF:

1

Building on the work of our **Saturday fencing classes**, we strive to qualify **5 PWF fencers for the 2024 Junior Olympics** in Charlotte, NC.

2

With the support of our **AEP tutoring sessions**, we strive to ensure **100% of our high school seniors graduate and enroll in college.**

3

Continuing the tradition of excellence exemplified in our competitive results, we strive to **send 4 PWF fencers to the 2024 Olympics** in Paris, France.





AUGUSTO BIZZI



# Ways to Give

## Individual Donations

The generosity of individuals and corporate and foundation investors has been a lifeline for the Peter Westbrook Foundation for more than 30 years. Without this support, thousands of youth would not have benefited from the positive impact PWF has made, both athletically and academically. Making a one-time donation to a particular fund or offering ongoing support through annual contributions will help sustain PWF. **Your contribution today, no matter the size, will help us continue the great work of the Foundation in transforming the lives of children, families, and communities.** Donations can be dedicated to the area(s) in which the Foundation determines they will have the most impact or earmarked specifically for one of the three pillars of our program—fencing training, academic enrichment, competitive athlete support—or the Fund for Future Olympians. The latter will help defray the cost of priming a record number of PWF athletes for the 2024 Olympics in Paris!

## Endowment Fund

PWF aims to **raise our endowment to \$20 million** in the coming years. At this level, the Foundation will be able to significantly enhance our existing programming, while establishing a new headquarters for our program. By contributing to our Endowment Fund, you are investing in the future of PWF and securing the legacy that has already changed the lives of thousands of young people since 1991.

## Planned Giving

Through planned giving, your contributions can be designated to ensure the future of PWF while benefiting your personal financial portfolio. You can **donate securities, fund a charitable trust, or make a bequest as part of a will, codicil, living trust, or trust amendment.** You can also contribute a new or existing life insurance policy and in some circumstances claim an income tax deduction equal to either a) the cash value or the cost basis of an existing policy, whichever is less, or b) the annual premiums of a new policy.

**WANT TO JOIN THE PWF TEAM AND HELP CREATE OLYMPIANS...**

...in fencing and in life?

Visit [www.peterwestbrook.org/donate](http://www.peterwestbrook.org/donate) or contact us at [giving@peterwestbrook.org](mailto:giving@peterwestbrook.org) to make a gift or learn more.

The Peter Westbrook Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, and donations are tax-deductible.





## THE PETER WESTBROOK FOUNDATION

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[www.peterwestbrook.org](http://www.peterwestbrook.org)

