



IOWA YOUTH FISHING LEAGUE

Year-End Report

Building Programming

Achieving Goals

Creating opportunities

About Us

The Iowa Youth Fishing League was founded in December of 2019 to fill a great need for youth fishing opportunities that are common in states in the southern part of the country. Justin and Emily Lewis founded this organization with one goal in mind.

Our goal is to help anglers and families pursue their passion for fishing, tournament angling and promote conservation.



Their dream becomes our
pursuit.

2023 was yet another record-breaking year on and off the water for the Iowa Youth Fishing League. With the help of local and national sponsors, as well as our participants and Board of Directors, we were able to create amazing opportunities for the youth of Iowa through our nonprofit organization.

We watched our programming grow to impact over 100 Iowa youth anglers pursuing their passion for fishing and the outdoors. This year our anglers participated in educational events, several community events and local tournaments. Our anglers took to the national stage for the second season in a row. We watched dreams come true through dedication, passion, and hard work. These anglers found many successes and the value of overcoming challenges.

Summary

Our Mission

To support youth fishing among Iowans through educational programs, mentoring and competition, so that Iowa youth develop leadership skills and become stewards of our natural resources.



A Note from the Executive Directors

We cannot start this note without a heartfelt thank you and our deepest gratitude for another amazing season. This organization would not be possible without the amazing people inside the IYFL, our participants and our many supporters and sponsors. You help us bring our mission in a reality. When we founded this non-profit, we truly had no idea how amazing it would become.

We could not be prouder of all of the amazing accomplishments we had the privilege to witness in the 2023 season. None of this happened without hard work and dedication to a shared passion for the outdoors. This season we watched anglers compete in national championships and crush organization records. We witnessed dreams come true as two of our anglers will be fishing at the college level next fall. Our organization watched our anglers sweep the Bassmaster All-State Fishing Team again and their teammates punch their

tickets to the Bassmaster Junior and High School National Championship this summer. It will be a season we will never forget.

Thank you to our amazing families. Your dedication to supporting your anglers' passion does not go unnoticed. It is appreciated more than you will ever know. Thank you for sharing your children with us.

We are truly humbled and grateful for what the Iowa Youth Fishing League has become.

Justin & Emily Lewis



Class of 2023 Seniors at the Iowa B.A.S.S Nation Junior & High School State Championship

Landon M., Ben S., Matthew M., Kolby A., and Ways R.

A Year in Review

January

We kicked off the 2023 season. Two teams traveled to the Bassmaster Open at the Harris Chain of Lakes in Florida.

March

2023 Season kicked off with a casting clinic and swap meet, as well as our annual meeting. One team traveled to the MLF Open at Osage Beach in Missouri.

April

Matthew and Evan were named to the Bassmaster High School All-State Fishing Team. Two teams traveled to the Bassmaster Open at Lake Chickamauga in Tennessee.

May

The 2023 Tournament Trail kicked off at Lake Darling. Marshall and Reece placed third at the Iowa High School Bass Team Championship at Lake Macbride. The record five-fish limit of 17.01 pounds was caught by Kolby and Agustin at Lake Belva Deer. Ways and Will won the TBF/SAF State Championship and punched their ticket to the National Championship and World Finals.

June

Junior angler, Israel caught the largest five-fish limit for the junior division with 16.91 pounds at Black Hawk Lake. Three teams traveled to the MLF National Championship and World Finals.

July

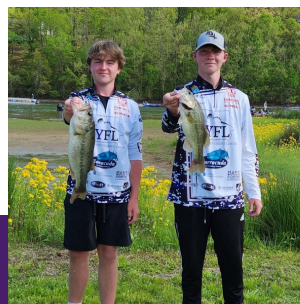
Tyson broke the IYFL record for big bass with 5.91 pounds at Rathbun. Scheels hosted an in-person educational event at the West Des Moines store.

August

We welcomed several new State Championship Partners. 11 teams traveled to the Iowa B.A.S.S Nation Junior and High School State Championship on the Mississippi River. Junior team, Lane & Grady placed first at the State Championship with 10.37 pounds. Lane had junior division big bass with a 4.02 pound largemouth. Carter and Alex placed first in the high school division at the State Championship with 9.76 pounds. High School angler Ways caught the high school division big bass with a 4.47 pound smallmouth bass.

September

Five anglers traveled to the Bassmaster High School Combine to showcase their skills and meet with colleges. Matthew signed his letter of intent to fish with Murray State College in Oklahoma. Kolby caught the largest bass in IYFL history with a 6.04 pound largemouth.



A Year in Review

October

The 2023 tournament trail sponsored by Barracuda Fish Cleaning Stations came to a close with our multispecies tournament at Clear Lake.



November

Our second annual Friends of the IYFL campaign found success to help fund programming and scholarships for youth anglers.



December

Scheels provided a donation to our organization as part of their Day of Giving.

Kolby signed his national letter of intent to fish with the University of Montevallo next fall.



Angler of the Year

This year marks the first year of splitting this great honor by division. In 2023, we welcomed Fleet Farm as the title sponsor of this award. We cannot thank them enough for their support of our mission! We are proud to award the Angler of the Year trophy as a top honor for our competitors. This award is not only honored by tournament wins, but for participation in our monthly educational events, community events and volunteer opportunities.

Fleet Farm[®]



*Congratulations, Lane and
Marshall!*

2023 Angler of the Year -- Junior Division

Lane L.

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Directors sends their congratulations to Lane as the 2023 Junior Angler of the Year. Lane is the first angler to win Angler of the Year back-to-back.

Lane's 2023 season saw great success. Lane and his fishing partner, Grady, kicked off their season by traveling to the Bassmaster Open at the Harris Chain of Lakes in Florida. This season, Lane brought home an impressive eight IYFL tournament wins with all other tournaments placing in the top five. He earned five division tourney big bass victories, as well. Lane and Grady were named the 2023 Iowa B.A.S.S. Nation Junior State Champions, punching their ticket to the Bassmaster Junior National Championship in the summer of 2024. Lane's 4.02 pound largemouth secured the junior division big bass at the state championship. Lane earned the nickname, "Mr. Clutch" by his fishing partner and boat captain this season for catching several big fish in the last moments before weigh-in in multiple tournaments, showing a determination to never quit. Lane and Grady are also the 2023 Junior Division Team of the Year for their impressive season.

What is equally noticeable about Lane's commitment to furthering the mission of the Iowa Youth Fishing League is his dedication to complete monthly education events, volunteer at community events, attend organizational events, and to complete volunteer hours in his free time. Lane's leadership was also appreciated in his role as the President of the Junior Division Club. His dedication to maintaining a positive mental attitude were evident to all. He is also the recipient of the 2023 Positive Mental Attitude Award after fishing several tournaments with a broken arm.

Congratulations
Lane!



2023 Angler of the Year -- High School Division

Marshall N.

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Directors sends their congratulations to Marshall as the 2023 High School Angler of the Year.

Marshall's 2023 season saw him expanding his tournament career outside of the IYFL to pursue additional fishing opportunities. Marshall began his season by fishing the High School Bassmaster Open at Lake Chickamauga. At the Iowa High School Bass Team Championship at Lake Macbride, Marshall and Reece placed third with 10.63 pounds. While attending the Major League Fishing/The Bass Federation/Student Angler Association State Championship, his team placed 11th. Marshall and Evan also placed fourth at the Iowa B.A.S.S. Nation High School State Championship. This season, Marshall secured two tournament wins, three top three finishes, four top five finishes, and two top twenty finishes in IYFL hosted tournaments. Marshall also weighed in a 4.41 pound tournament big bass at Lake Macbride. Marshall and Reece are the 2023 High School Team of the Year and the first team to earn that honor back to back.

Marshall's dedication to growing his knowledge and technical skills were evident to all who attending the IYFL Mock Combine in preparation for the Bassmaster High School Combine. Marshall showcased his skills and placed consistently in all categories and finished second overall. Marshall completed all educational events this season, as well as completing his volunteer hours inside of our organization and in his community. He served as the President of our high school club and showed great leadership in planning and purchasing prize packages for the 2023 tournament trail for all anglers.

Congratulations

Marshall!



2023 Award Winners

John B. Schoondyke Sportsmanship Award

Brayden S.

High School Team of the Year

Marshall N. & Reece L.

Junior Team of the Year

Lane L. & Grady P.

Season Big Bag

Kolby A. & Agustin M.P - 17.10 pounds at Lake Belva Deer

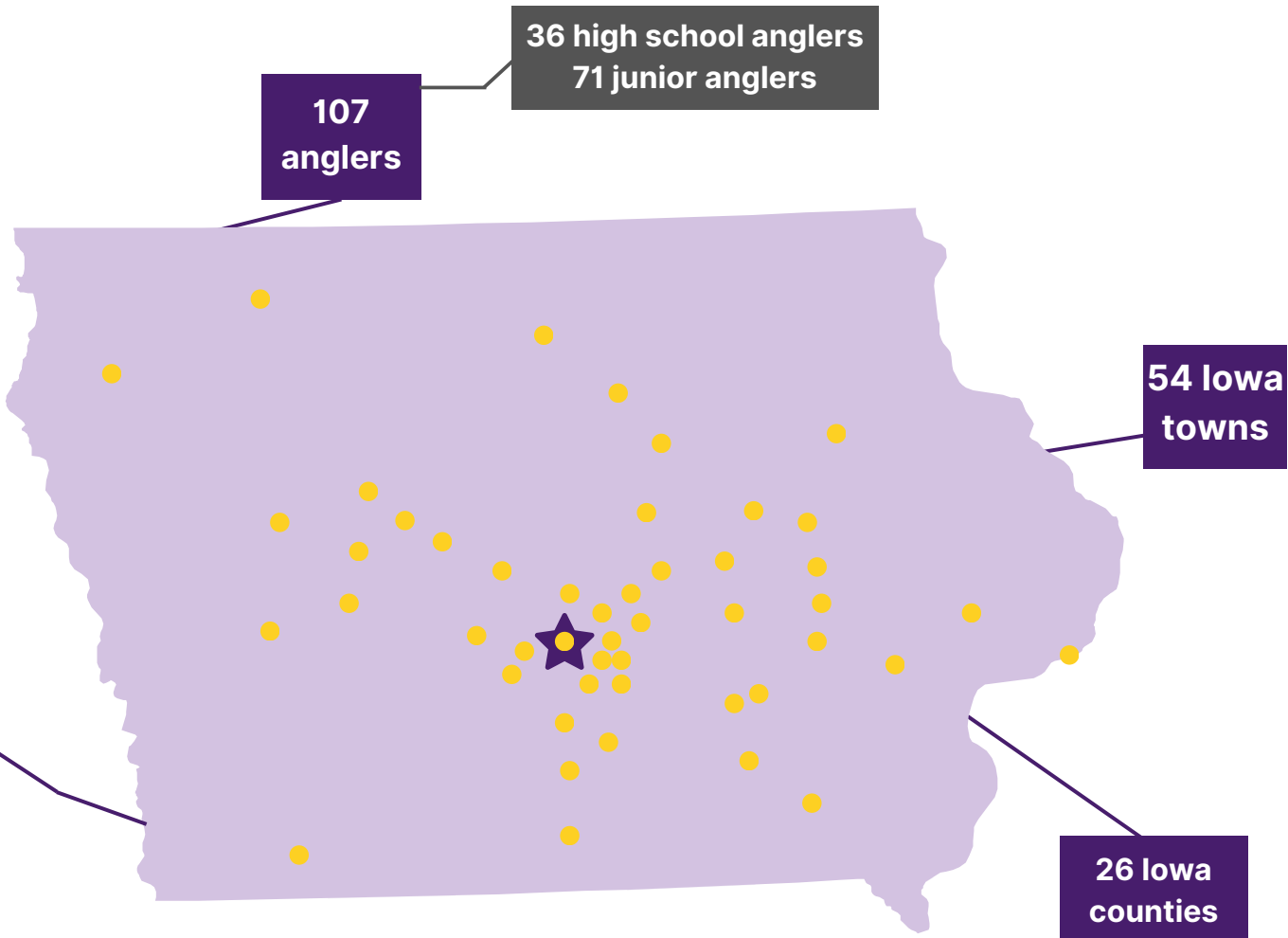
Season Big Bass

Kolby A., 6.04 pound Largemouth at Okoboji

Positive Mental Attitude Awards

Kaden D., Owen N., Lane L., Lucca L., & Sully M.





Giving Back

Anglers of the Iowa Youth Fishing League volunteered approximately 76.5 hours back to the fishing community and their local communities. Anglers volunteered at summer camps, nursing homes, Department of Natural Resource Projects, and local fishing events. Anglers also gave time inside of the Iowa Youth Fishing League to help with tournament operations and preparing for education, community, organization and conservation events throughout the 2023 season.



Building Programming

The 2023 season provided yet another year of providing high-quality and sustainable programming focused on fishing and conservation for Iowa youth.

Our education pathway had opportunities for more in-person events, as well as, an more in-depth learning experience in our virtual events. We partnered with Scheels in West Des Moines for an education event in their store where anglers talked about boat electronics and the retail industry. Our annual tackle box giveaway in partnership with The Ike Foundation distributed another 100 tackle boxes into Iowa communities.

Our two tournament pathways saw great success this season. We watched our season big bag record get crushed at Stop #2 at Lake Belva Deer on Mother's Day. Our season big bass record was broken, not once, but twice this season. Our teams set new goals and achieved new accomplishments locally at tournaments and on the national stage. We traveled to new bodies of water and held more two-day tournaments. Our program continued to grow past 100 fishing families and our family tailgates grew significantly. The IYFL was present in new communities and has reached 54 Iowa towns and over 50 school districts.

Achieving Goals

The 2023 season allowed our organization to reach and set new goals moving forward.

This season we put a large emphasis on providing more educational opportunities in-person, as well as increasing the rigor of our virtual learning. Our anglers had the opportunity to attend three in-person events to practice skills, gain new information, and showcase their skills. Throughout the year, anglers focused their learning on techniques, bait selection, giving back to our communities, and sharing their passion for fishing with others.

In June we hosted West Des Moines Community Schools' Summer Scholar program at Raccoon River for an afternoon of fishing. Our anglers collaborated with 30-40 kindergarten through eighth grade newcomers to teach them the basics of fishing from the docks. Many first fish were caught and it was as truly amazing experience for all.

The generosity of donors during the Friends of the IYFL campaign allowed for us to scholarship more anglers this season than ever before. We are grateful to continue expanding that campaign in future season.

This season, the Iowa Youth Fishing League worked to build stronger connections and relationships with collegiate angling programs. We are proud to announce that Kolby has signed his letter of intent to fish with the University of Motevallo and Matthew has signed to fish with Murray State College. Both anglers were able to meet several colleges and universities while attending the Bassmaster High School Combine.





Creating Opportunities

We are grateful for our many continued partnerships into the 2023 season to allow us to create new opportunities for our angling families and our community. Their continued support allowed our organization to maximize programming. We welcome new partners, new supporter and new communities.

For the third year in a row, several anglers were nominated for the honor of Bassmaster High School All-American. Matthew and Evan were named to the Bassmaster All-State Fishing Team. Several teams competed in Bassmaster and Major League Fishing National Opens. Tyson attended the WileyX Fishing Camp. Five high school anglers attended the Bassmaster High School Combine.

Our continued partnership with our title sponsor of our tournament trail Barracuda Fish Cleaning Stations allowed for more two-day tournaments and new bodies of water fished in 2023. Our partnership with Scheels created new opportunities for our anglers and families to learn about electronics and the retail side of fishing. Bass Pro Shops - Altoona provided new opportunities for our club leadership to create prize packages for the 2023 tournament trail. We witnessed continued growth with our State Championship Partners again this season to create swag bags for our anglers, boaters, and volunteers, as well as, family travel bags.

Thank you!

IOWA YOUTH FISHING LEAGUE YEAR-END REPORT 2023

Season Sponsors

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Friends of the IYFL



What is the Friends of the IYFL?

The Friends of the IYFL Fundraising Campaign is hosted every November and December as part of the Season of Giving. Our organization hosts this campaign to raise funds to go directly to angler programming, scholarships, and to create additional opportunities for our communities for fishing and conservation. Contributions are tax deductible and represented on a banner at events throughout the season.



Sample banner from the 2023 season

State Championship Partners

Each year anglers from B.A.S.S. affiliated clubs from across the state of Iowa travel to Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin to compete in the Iowa B.A.S.S. Nation Junior and High School State Championship. This tournament is held on Pools nine, ten, and eleven of the Mississippi River. Some anglers travel more than five hours to compete in this event.

This year expanded our state partnerships to create swag bags for our anglers, volunteers, boaters, and families attending the event. These bags had a value of at least \$100 each.

These local companies either donated in-kind product or gift card donations to purchase gear or provided cash donations to make purchases.

We could not be more grateful for their new and continued support of our angler's passion to fish competitively.



Thank you!
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

We could not do this without the dedication of our amazing volunteers.

We are beyond grateful for your support of the Iowa Youth Fishing League.

Our mission of providing opportunities for youth anglers in Iowa would not be possible with our volunteers. Our organization runs largely on volunteer support.

To our boaters, thank you for taking time out of your weekends, offering up your time and coaching abilities, and your boats for our youth anglers. Your dedication to our program has increased participants' ability to pursue their passion.

To our Board of Directors, thank you for the keeping the mission in the forefront and paving the way for youth anglers in Iowa to pursue their passions beyond our programs. Your vision keeps ideas fresh and the opportunities limitless. Your time is greatly appreciated.

2024 Goals:

Access: Implement multiple pathway options and scholarship opportunities to provide equitable access to Iowa Youth.

Environmental: Foster an environment to create learning opportunities for our anglers to become stewards of our natural resources.

Partnership: Seek out companies and individuals to provide scholarships and opportunities for our youth anglers.

Beyond: Create lasting partnerships with collegiate fishing programs and community organizations to provide more opportunities for participants.

SPONSORSHIP TIERS



Our Mission: To support youth fishing among Iowans through educational programs, mentoring and competition, so that Iowa youth develop leadership skills and become stewards of our natural resources.



- Contributor
- Supporter
- Partner
- Leader
- Champion



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IOWA YOUTH FISHING LEAGUE