



2024



IOWA YOUTH FISHING LEAGUE

# Year-End Report

**Building Programming**

**Achieving Goals**

**Creating Opportunities**

# About Us

The Iowa Youth Fishing League was founded in December 2019 with a heartfelt mission—to create opportunities for young anglers that are abundant in southern states but were lacking in Iowa. Justin and Emily Lewis started this organization with one clear goal:

*To inspire and support anglers and their families as they pursue their passion for fishing, competitive tournament angling, and conservation. We take great pride in fostering a community where young fishermen can grow, learn, and make lasting memories on the water.*



**Their dream becomes our  
pursuit.**

# Summary

2024 was another record-breaking year—both on and off the water—for the Iowa Youth Fishing League. Thanks to the unwavering support of our local and national sponsors, dedicated participants, and our incredible Board of Directors, we continued to create life-changing opportunities for Iowa's young anglers through our nonprofit organization.

This year, our programming grew to reach over 120 youth anglers, providing them with the chance to pursue their passion for fishing and the outdoors. From educational workshops to community outreach events and local tournaments, our anglers immersed themselves in experiences that shaped their skills and character. For the third consecutive season, they proudly represented Iowa on the national stage, proving that dedication, passion, and hard work make dreams a reality. Along the way, they not only celebrated victories but also embraced the challenges that made them stronger.

Here's to another year of growth, achievement, and inspiring the next generation of anglers!



# 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 have to start with a huge thank you—our deepest gratitude—for another incredible season! The Iowa Youth Fishing League wouldn't be what it is without the amazing people who make it all happen—our passionate anglers, their families, and the generous supporters and sponsors who believe in our mission. You help turn our dreams into reality, and we're so grateful for each and every one of you.

When we started this nonprofit, we had no idea just how incredible this journey would be. Seeing the impact it has on young anglers, watching them grow in skill and confidence, and witnessing the friendships and memories being made—it's beyond anything we could have imagined. And it's all because of this amazing community!

We couldn't be prouder of everything our anglers accomplished during the 2024 season. It was truly an unforgettable year, filled with hard work, dedication, and a shared passion for the outdoors. We watched as our anglers took the national stage, shattered organization records, and pushed themselves to new heights. Every record in our history was broken—again! And perhaps most exciting of all, we saw dreams come true as three of our anglers committed to fishing at the collegiate level next fall.

This summer, we'll proudly cheer on our anglers as they compete in the Bassmaster High School National Championship—a testament to their dedication and talent. These moments remind us why we do what we do, and this season is one we will never forget.

To our incredible families—thank you. Your unwavering support, long hours on the road, and dedication to your anglers' dreams do not go unnoticed. We appreciate you more than words can express, and we're beyond grateful that you've shared your children with us.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Here's to another great season ahead!

*Justin & Emily Lewis*

**Class of 2025 Seniors at the Iowa B.A.S.S Nation Junior & High School State Championship**

*Carter M., Kaden D., Owen N., Evan P., and Tyson R.*



# A Year in Review

## January

We kicked off the 2024 season. Celebrated the 2023 season with our annual awards celebration and banquet at the Fred Maytag II Center.

## March

2024 Season kicked off with a casting clinic and swap meet, as well as our annual meeting.

Anglers traveled to the Bassmaster Classic in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

## April

Ways signed his commitment letter to join the Drury State Fishing Team. 3 junior teams and 10 high school teams competed at the TBF State Championship at Okoboji. Junior anglers, Grady and Collin punched their ticket to the National Championship.

## May

The 2024 Tournament Trail kicked off at Lake Darling.

Tyson and Darin won the Iowa High School Bass Team Championship at Lake Macbride. Marshall and Reece placed third.

High School anglers, Kaden and Owen placed 15th at the Bassmaster High School Open on Sam Rayburn in Texas.

## June

Junior anglers, Lane and Brayden crushed the current five fish limit record bringing in a 22.31 pound bag at Okoboji.

High school senior, Darin skipped walking the graduation stage to attend the Okoboji tournament, where he weighed in a 6.26 pound largemouth to crush the current largest bass record.

High School anglers Kaden and Owen finished 12th at the Saginaw Bay Bassmaster Open. Grant and Marshall placed 27th.

## July

Collin traveled to the TBF National Championship and World Finals at Lake Hartwell. They finished 2nd in the Northern Division. During the world finals, they placed 5th.

Lane and Grady traveled to the Bassmaster Junior National Championship at Lake Chickamauga. They were in fourth place after day one and finished 31st after two days.

## August

Carter and Alex traveled to Lake Chickamauga for the Bassmaster High School National Championship. They placed 207th.

## September

Five anglers traveled to the Bassmaster High School Combine to showcase their skills and meet with colleges.

14 teams traveled to the Iowa B.A.S.S Nation Junior and High School State Championship.

Our High school teams placed first and second punching their tickets to the Bassmaster High School National Championship. Carter and Alex brought home first place. Grant and Evan placed second.



# A Year in Review

## October

The 2024 tournament trail sponsored by Barracuda Fish Cleaning Stations came to a close with annual alumni and Major League Fishing style tournament at Okoboji.

Junior anglers, Brayden and Lane broke the IYFL record for the catch-weight-release Major League Fishing tournament. They scored 36 bass for 87 pounds.



## November

We hosted our third 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.



# Angler of the Year

The Angler of the Year award stands as one of the most prestigious honors in our organization, recognizing not only competitive excellence but also dedication to growth, leadership, and community impact. This year, we were proud to have Fleet Farm as the official sponsor of the Angler of the Year race, and we cannot thank them enough for their generous support of our mission.

This award goes beyond tournament victories—it represents a well-rounded commitment to the sport. Honorees earn this distinction not only through their performance on the water but also through their active participation in monthly educational events, community outreach, and volunteer efforts. It is a testament to an angler's passion, perseverance, and dedication to making a difference.

We are honored to present this award and celebrate the incredible athletes who have earned their place among the best.

**Fleet  Farm®**

*Congratulations,  
Lane  
and  
Reece!*



# 2024 Award Winners

## Junior Angler of the Year

Lane L.

## High School Angler of the Year

Reece L.

## John B. Schoondyke Sportsmanship Award

Owen N.

## High School Team of the Year

Marshall N. & Reece L.

## Junior Team of the Year

Brayden S. & Lane L.

## Season Big Bag

Lane L. & Brayden S. - 22.31 pounds at Okoboji

## Season Big Bass

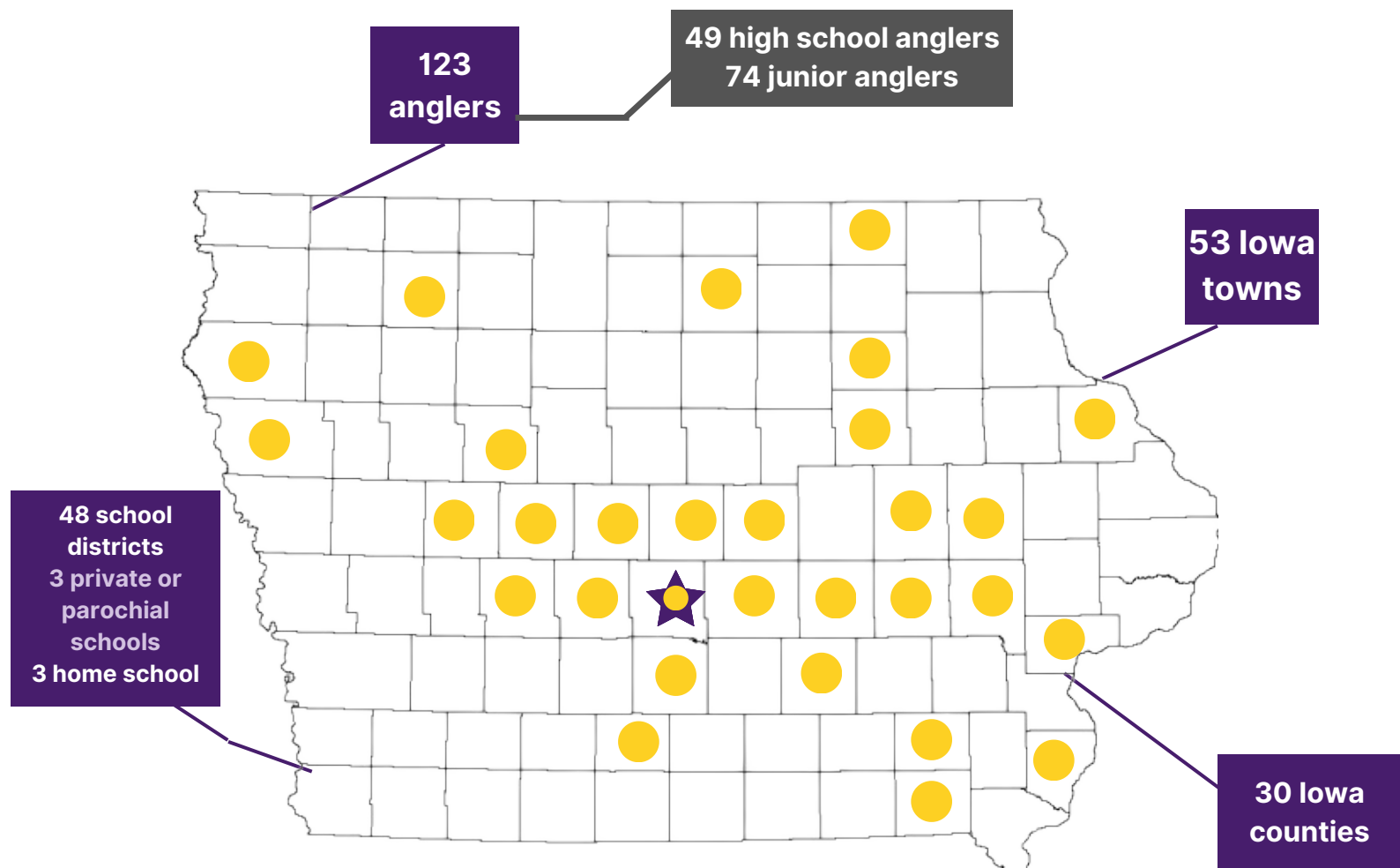
Darin D., 6.26 pound Largemouth at Okoboji

## Positive Mental Attitude Awards

Owen N., Lane L., Lucca L, & Kallen D., Brayden S.







The anglers of the Iowa Youth Fishing League demonstrated exceptional dedication in 2024, giving back an incredible **108 hours** to their fishing communities and beyond. Their commitment to service showcases the heart of our organization—a passion for the outdoors, leadership, and a drive to make a difference.

These anglers volunteered their time at summer camps, local classrooms, Department of Natural Resources projects, and community fishing events, sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm to inspire others. Their impact extended even further within the Iowa Youth Fishing League, where they played a vital role in tournament operations and the planning of educational, community, organizational, and conservation events throughout the season.

Their efforts go far beyond competition. They are ambassadors for the sport, stewards of conservation, and leaders in their communities. We couldn't be prouder of the work they've done and the lasting impact they continue to make!

# Giving Back



## **Building Programming**

The 2024 season was another incredible year of delivering high-quality, sustainable programming focused on fishing and conservation for Iowa's youth.

Our education pathway continued to thrive, offering both in-person events and expanded virtual learning opportunities. High school angler Tyson played a key role in creating our virtual events as part of his volunteer hours, giving participants a deeper, more flexible learning experience. In April, anglers across our organization took part in The Great Global Cleanup, and through our annual tackle box giveaway with The Ike Foundation, we distributed another 100 tackle boxes into Iowa communities.

Our tournament pathways saw incredible success this season. The season big bag record was shattered at Okoboji in June, with junior anglers weighing in five fish for 22.31 pounds. The season big bass record was also broken at Okoboji with a 6.26-pound largemouth. Our anglers set ambitious goals, reached new milestones both locally and nationally, and competed on new bodies of water, including more two-day tournaments.

With over 120 fishing families, the IYFL community is stronger than ever. Our family tailgates grew, and we expanded into 30 counties and 48 school districts, making an impact in even more communities. It was a season of growth, success, and unforgettable moments, and we can't wait to see what's next!

## Achieving Goals

The 2024 season was a year of growth, achievement, and setting new goals for the future of the Iowa Youth Fishing League.

We placed a strong emphasis on elevating our virtual learning, giving anglers the opportunity to hone their skills, expand their knowledge, and share their passion for fishing. Throughout the year, they focused on techniques, bait selection, conservation efforts, and community service, reinforcing the values that make our organization special.

On the national stage, our anglers made their mark like never before. For the first time in IYFL history, we had anglers compete at the Bassmaster Junior and High School National Championships at Lake Chickamauga in Dayton, Tennessee. Juniors Lane and Grady finished 31st in late July, while high school anglers Alex and Carter placed 207th in early August. Another first for our organization was a junior division appearance at The Bass Federation National Championship and World Finals. Grady and Collin qualified by placing second at the state championship, but with both national events overlapping, Grady had to make a tough choice. Collin partnered with Holden, and together, they placed 2nd in the Northern Division at the National Championship and 5th in the World Finals. Our high school duo, Kaden and Owen, showcased their talent at the Bassmaster High School Opens, earning 15th place at Sam Rayburn and 12th at Saginaw Bay—proving they can compete with the best.

This year, we also strengthened our relationships with collegiate angling programs, opening new doors for our anglers to continue their fishing careers. We are incredibly proud to announce that Evan has signed with Carson-Newman University, Kaden with Erskine College, and Owen with Wabash Valley College. Several of our anglers also had the chance to connect with collegiate coaches at the Bassmaster High School Combine, helping to shape their future in competitive fishing.



## Creating Opportunities

The 2024 season was a testament to the power of partnerships and community support, allowing us to create new and exciting opportunities for our anglers and their families. We are incredibly grateful for our continued sponsors and supporters who help us maximize our programming and expand our reach. This year, we welcomed new partners, new supporters, and new communities, further strengthening the impact of the Iowa Youth Fishing League.

Our anglers rose to every challenge this season, proving they belong among the best. Several teams competed in Bassmaster and Major League Fishing National Opens, and five high school anglers attended the Bassmaster High School Combine to connect with collegiate programs. Three teams earned spots at National Championships, and at the 2024 Iowa B.A.S.S. Nation Junior and High School State Championship, we traveled with more teams than ever before. High school teams Carter & Alex and Evan & Grant proudly punched their tickets to the 2025 Bassmaster National Championship.

This season pushed our anglers to new heights, and they delivered in a big way. We hosted multiple two-day tournaments, adjusted schedules to fish new bodies of water, and faced tough weather conditions. Through it all, our anglers showed determination and skill, competing in a ten-tournament season that saw 1,040 fish weighed in at a total of 2,271.91 pounds. Seven of those tournaments recorded big bass weighing five pounds or more—a true testament to the level of competition.

Our strong partnerships made these milestones possible. Thanks to our tournament trail title sponsor, Barracuda Fish Cleaning Stations, we successfully hosted multiple two-day tournaments. Our continued partnership with Scheels-West Des Moines ensured our anglers had access to top-quality prizes and equipment. We also saw sustained support from our State Championship partners, helping provide swag bags for anglers, boaters, and volunteers, as well as family travel bags.

Thank you!



**Barracuda**

Fish Cleaning Stations

# Season Sponsors

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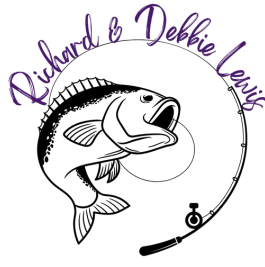
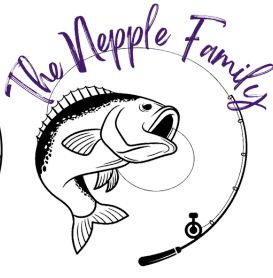
**Bruiser**  
BAITS

**FLAT OUT**  
**TUNGSTENS**



  
MARINE

# Friends of the IYFL



**SCHEELS**

## What is the Friends of the IYFL?

The Friends of the IYFL Fundraising Campaign takes place every November and December as part of the Season of Giving. This annual campaign directly supports angler programming, scholarships, and expanded opportunities for fishing and conservation within our communities. Every contribution makes a meaningful impact, helping us provide high-quality experiences for young anglers.

Donations are tax-deductible and recognized through social media, our website, and various events throughout the season.

*Thank you!*  
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

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

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

Our mission to provide opportunities for youth anglers across Iowa simply wouldn't be possible without our incredible volunteers. This organization thrives because of the dedication, generosity, and passion of those who give their time to make a difference.

To our boaters, thank you for sacrificing your weekends, sharing your expertise, and offering up your boats to mentor and guide our young anglers. Your commitment doesn't just help them fish—it inspires, teaches, and fuels their passion for the sport.

To our Board of Directors, thank you for keeping our mission at the forefront and paving the way for youth anglers to chase their dreams beyond our programs. Your leadership, vision, and dedication ensure that opportunities continue to grow, and your impact is truly immeasurable.

From the bottom of our hearts—thank you. Your support means everything to our anglers, our families, and the future of the IYFL.

# State Championship Partners

Each year, anglers from B.A.S.S.-affiliated clubs across Iowa make the journey to Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, to compete in the Iowa B.A.S.S. Nation Junior and High School State Championship. Held on Pools 9, 10, and 11 of the Mississippi River, this tournament is a highlight of the season, with some anglers traveling more than five hours to compete.

We are incredibly grateful for the continued commitment of our state partners, who help make this event even more special. Thanks to their generosity, we were able to provide swag bags valued at \$75 or more to anglers, volunteers, boaters, and families attending the event. These bags were made possible through in-kind product donations, gift cards, and financial contributions from local businesses that believe in supporting young anglers.

We cannot thank these companies enough for their new and continued support. Their generosity plays a vital role in fueling our anglers' passion for competitive fishing, and we are truly appreciative of their commitment to the future of our sport.

# Thank YOU



## STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

PARTNERS



BOB'S DISCOUNT FURNITURE  
Charitable Foundation, Inc.



LANE'S  
TACKLE SUPPLY



# 2025 Goals:

## Access:

Implement multiple pathway options to provide equitable access to Iowa Youth.

## Environmental:

Create a learning environment that empowers anglers to be stewards of our natural resources.

## Partnership:

Partner with companies and individuals to provide scholarships and opportunities for youth anglers.

## Beyond:

Build lasting partnerships with collegiate fishing programs and community organizations to expand opportunities for participants.

## SPONSORSHIP TIERS



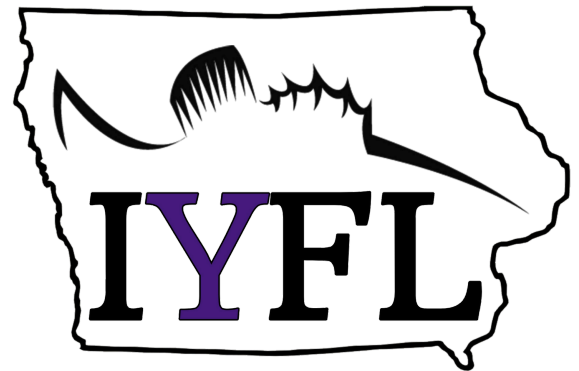
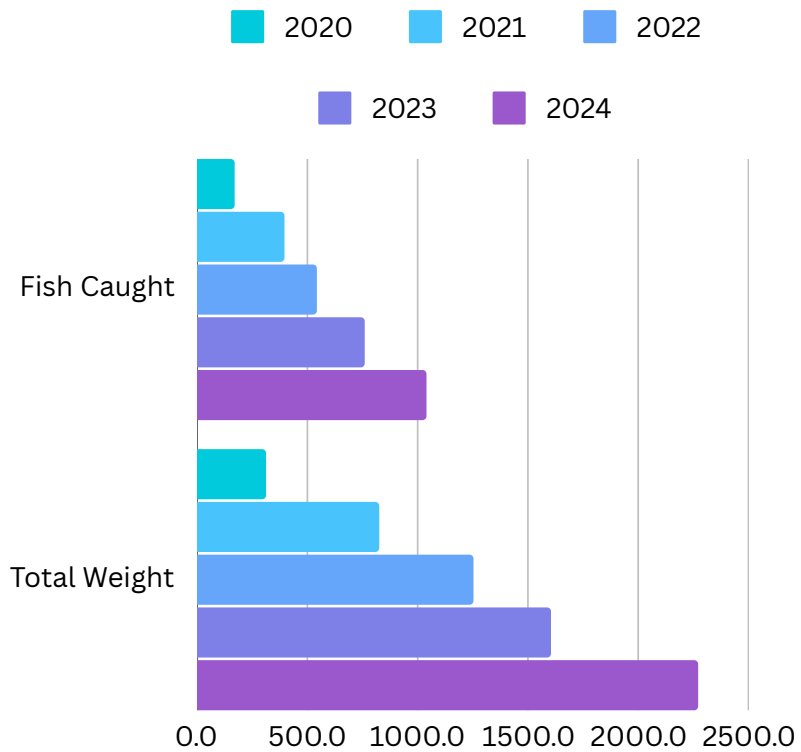
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515-468-2025

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