

2023-2024 RSOP Annual Report

Executive Summary

The Recreational Sports Outdoor Program (RSOP) Department at the University of Minnesota Duluth provides recreational, fitness, sport and outdoor programming to the campus and Northern Minnesota community.

The RSOP department is a comprehensive collegiate recreation department that provides a wide breadth of experiences, programs, and opportunities for the UMD and Duluth communities. The department consists of many different program areas including Aquatics, Climbing, Fitness & Wellness, Intramural Sports, Paddle Surf & Kiting, Open Recreation, Outdoor Activities & Trips, a Rental Center, Sport Clubs, and Youth & Community programming.



To effectively provide the wide scope of programming, the RSOP department manages multiple spaces within the Sports and Health Center including the Recreation Center, Climbing Walls, Pool, Sport Field Complex, Mick McComber Gym, and the Richard Haney Multipurpose Rink. In addition, RSOP works collaboratively to manage other sport and activity spaces on campus including Malosky Stadium, Wells Ward Field House, the Romano gym, and Bagley Classroom, among other spaces. RSOP also manages multiple facilities and resources geared toward outdoor education and activity including portions of the Bagley Nature Area, the Bagley Campgrounds, the Surf Shack on Lake Superior, the Boat House on Park Point, and the Outpost on Thomson Reservoir. One specific 2024 highlight was the addition of a [Live Facility Use tracker](#) on our website so that students and RSOP members can see how busy the facilities are before they arrive at the facility!

The 2023-2024 academic year centered around many different achievements and highlights surrounding people. During the fall of 2023 the University of Minnesota began the PEAK initiative (Positioned for Excellence, Alignment and Knowledge) which is a systemwide strategic initiative that supports [MPact 2025](#) by transforming how we administer critical services across Finance, Human Resources. Through navigating this system wide change, RSOP restructured several staff positions and successfully hired new professionals into the roles. Additionally, RSOP added several [professional staff](#) to the department that will allow the department to continue to provide excellent programming, outreach and services to the UMD and greater Northern Minnesota communities.

In a continued effort to provide inclusive and accessible facilities, during the summer of 2023 the RSOP Recreation Center went through a major equipment reorganization within the facility to create more inclusive spaces that take advantage of the natural light and windows within the facility. This reorganization included increasing the amount of strength training equipment to meet evolving student needs including adding new dumbbells, reducing cardio equipment and adding new strength machines on the upper floor. This effort has made for a more efficient use of space and equipment, while creating a more welcoming environment for all our patrons regardless of their experience level!

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

Recreational Sports Outdoor Program fosters active, healthy lifestyles and connections to the natural world.

Vision

- We will use the unique natural and built resources to provide premier opportunities for students and the broader community to live healthier, balanced lives.
- We will provide outstanding programs, facilities, and staff that support physical fitness, healthy habits, respect for the natural world and balanced behaviors.
- We will maintain a respectful, inclusive, and vibrant living and learning environment where relationships with students, campus and community are valued.
- We will become a model of responsible/sustainable use of financial, human, physical, and natural resources.
- We will collaborate with departments across campus, as well as local, regional, and national organizations to promote participation in physical activity and outdoor experiences.
- We will provide professional development opportunities for student leaders and employees that are foundational skills for an educated, active citizenry.

Values

- *Wellness* - We encourage lifestyles that promote physical and emotional wellness within a community of well-being.
- *Student Development* - We provide opportunities where students interact with each other in a socially responsible manner and develop lifelong personal and professional competencies.
- *Learning* - Through teamwork, problem solving, and teaching we provide educational experiences that foster the development of lifelong skills and knowledge.
- *Discovery & Adventure* - We value the sense of adventure and discovery that are associated with activity and exploration.

- *Engagement* - We actively collaborate with each other and the larger community to identify and achieve common goals.
- *Inclusiveness* - We respect and embrace the diversity of individuals, perspectives, and ideas while promoting social justice. Everyone is important and valued.
- *Sustainability* - We balance current environmental, economic, and social needs with those of future generations.
- *Excellence/High Quality service* - We provide high quality service and programs developed with creativity and innovation.
- *Our People* - We value our professional and student staff for their quality service, creativity, passion, commitment to our mission, and care for all participants.
- *Safety/Risk Management* - Safety is at the core of all our programming opportunities.
- *Enjoyment* - being active, playing sports and exploring the outdoors is FUN! Enjoyment is at the heart of what we do.

Strategic Plan

Goals

RSOP Goal	Mapping to University Goals	Mapping to Student Life Goals
1) Deliver model co-curricular opportunities that encourage healthy habits and an enhanced quality of life through participation	1,4	1.1, 1.2, 3.1,
2) Provide progressive programs that build knowledge and habits which contribute to success in academic, personal, and professional life.	1,3,5	1.1, 1.2, 3.1
3) Cultivate a department that has a welcoming and inclusive climate for all by advancing equity, diversity, and social justice.	2	2.1, 2.2
4) Enrich the student experience with quality facilities, equipment, and knowledgeable personnel.	1,3,4	1.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1
5) Advance forward a culture of continuous improvement where innovation and growth are encouraged; service is delivered in a positive and accurate manner; with empathy and inclusiveness integrated into every aspect of customer interactions.	1,2,5	4.1,4.3, 6.1
6) Offer professional training and experiences for students going into outdoor, fitness, and recreation careers.	1	1.1, 1.2, 6.3
7) Steward resources in a responsible, sustainable manner as well as provide affordable services to students.	4,5	5.1, 5.2, 5.3
8) Deliver youth and community programming that supports the university mission of outreach and improves the wellness of the Northeastern Minnesota community	5	5.3

Objectives/Outcomes

Objective/Outcome	Mapping to Department Goal	Assessment Strategy
Promote wellness focus of RSOP through added emphasis within the facility and program offerings.	1	Promotional materials
Collaborate with other departments and programs across campus to promote holistic wellbeing programing.	1, 2	Listing of partners and programs
Use more video clips to educate students and promote program participation.	2	Listing of videos
Conduct inclusivity and accessibility scans of RSOP facilities to determine areas of improvement	2	Complete Scans
Implement diversity training for ALL student staff.	3	List of participation
Build relationships with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion toward a culture of interdepartmental reciprocity, leading toward enlivened diversity training through real action and participation.	3	Evidence of connections and actual participation
Expand on the success of Women on the Wall toward offering more programming and small group opportunities.	3	Listing of opportunities
Finalize storage systems plan to maximize use of space and efficiency of staff time.	4	Plan completed
Athletic training available for all students.	4	Availability of AT, at least 2 hours per week
Complete hiring of professional staff positions.	4	Positions filled
Develop virtual tours: Faculty version; student version.	4	Completed virtual tour videos
Create a 5-year budget for equipment purchasing, prioritizing large equipment and projects to advance our facilities.	4	Budget completed

Assess customer service desk spaces for effectiveness, consistency, and DEI lens.	5	Outside consultant complete a report
Improve RSOP staff exit interview, off-boarding process to capture areas of improvement upon reflection about the employment experience.	5	Complete an off-boarding plan
Provide resources for student staff to attend professional development opportunities (conferences, certifications,...).	6	Fund/process established
Expand student advisory board to encompass vision and decisions based on student involvement (scholarship selection, departmental projects,...).	6	Topics added to agenda
Provide leadership certificate program for students.	6	Established outline of required skills
Collaborate with other departments to promote access to funding for RSO's.	7	List of collaborations
Highlight off-campus facilities and programming using video clips/tours.	7	Completion of videos
Establish program specific budget process.	7	Budget template for each program area
Rebuild swim program (younger ages, family swim,...).	8	Participation near pre-pandemic levels
Expand in-house certification program to campus and community participants.	8	Professional staff gain proper certifications
Offer "staff training" for organizations that need help (as a revenue generation for RSOP).	8	Promotions to regional organizations

Assessments

RSOP utilizes multiple assessments throughout the year to better understand our how our programs, activities and services meet the needs of UMD and Duluth. RSOP performed end of year program assessments in each of our program areas to better understand participation patterns and identify areas for improvement as we continue to strive for excellence. Some of the assessment data, and an overview of major accomplishments, from the 2022-2023 academic year are provided below:

- Aquatics
 - Over 500 Unique Participants
 - 678 Swim Lesson Participants
 - Over 20 Programs Offered throughout the year
- Athletic Training
 - Provided Coverage for 48 Events
 - 635 Participants Seen
- Climbing
 - 120 Programs, Clinics, Trips and Activities Offered
 - 474 Participants
- Fitness
 - Group Fitness had 2,231 Participants
 - Rebooted Personal Training Program with 10 Participants
- Graphics and Marketing
 - Word of Mouth is Top Source of Marketing
 - 77% of UMD Calendar Views are for RSOP
- Intramural Sports
 - 14 Sport League Offerings
 - 2956 Participants
- KIDSROCK
 - 34 Different Youth Camp Offerings
 - 737 Participants
- Outdoor Activities
 - 97 Events Offered
 - 888 Participants
- Paddle/Surf/Kite
 - 100 Different Events Offered
 - 675 Participants
- Recreation Center
 - 5,181 Unique Individuals who Visited the Rec Center 173,200 Times
 - Updated Cardio Equipment and Layouts
 - Implemented Live Facility Usage Tracker
- Rental Center
 - 4,846 Items Rented
 - 356,138 Hours of Rentals
- Sea Kayaking

- o 29 Sea Kayak Programs
- o 170 Participants
- Sport Clubs
 - o 22 Sport Clubs
 - o 405 Participants
 - o 182 Sport Club Events
 - o Raised \$18,866.75 During Inaugural Sport Club Giving Day

Stories

While quantitative assessment is helpful in demonstrating the impact of RSOP on the University of Minnesota Duluth community from a participation lens, qualitative stories from participants help demonstrate the impact of the programs and services that RSOP provides. Here are some of the highlights from participants during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Paddle/Surf Kite

- *This was a lot of fun!*
- *A great experience with inspiring humans!*
- *So grateful for this opportunity - Randy is a fantastic instructor. I've learned so much and had So much fun!! The UMD Outdoor Program rocks!!! We are lucky to have this in Duluth.*

KIDSROCK

- *The camp staff was great. Kids always talk about how good the staff are after picking them up each night.*
- *I appreciate the unique experiences that my child has while attending the Venture camps. Some of these activities are unique to this area and I believe it is important for my children to experience these activities.*
- *Great job in improving camp this year. Fun and engaging staff made the difference for us to want to even do as many weeks next year as we can for Kidsrock summer camp. Thank you for taking feedback into consideration!*

Outdoor Activities

- *Your work is absolutely wonderful. The opportunities that you provide for us really help make UMD a wonderful community to be a part of. Thank you so much for making this resource available to everyone!*
- *I love the affordability of the programs. It makes it easier for students to participate.*
- *I love the events where I learned a skill (like spoon carving) and Plant Identification (bog walk). In terms of what I got out of my experience, The bog walk was a ton of fun and I think it was a highlight of my time at UMD. It was awesome being able to walk around an ecosystem I don't know too much about being led by my peers who know a lot more about it!!*
- *I really enjoyed the environment that was there. The leaders were chill, clearly enjoyed what they were doing, and were able to show me a new side of Duluth!*
- *It's exciting learning something new. Now I can tell the difference between the pure maple syrup and others. I will consider more RSOP activities in the near future. I love outdoor activities and I love to learn new things.*

- *You can tell that everyone at RSOP has a passion for the outdoors and sharing their love of it, making the events even more positive!*

Sea Kayak

- *The instructors were very patient and encouraging to me and other older women in my group. They recognized when we were pushing beyond our comfort zone or to our physical limits.*
- *The leaders were the best people to have lead this trip. They did an amazing job and I am so glad that I was able to meet them.*

Group Fitness

- *"[The student staff member] is incredibly welcoming, knowledgeable, and encouraging"*
- *"[The student staff member] is a fabulous instructor and incredibly motivating. She is very knowledgeable and explains the exercises clearly."*
- *"I used to not be able to keep up with my boyfriend on hikes when we would do hills or stairs but now I can. I think the sprint circuits are helping." - Participant that attends Spin.*

Personal Training

- *"[The student staff member] is so spot on with my training goals. She is exceptionally talented given how young she is. She is an absolute treasure!"*
- *"[The student staff member] has been really helpful with improving my form in a many of the exercises. I've done a lot of them previously but never had the level detailed feedback that I am receiving now. They have also been really good at motivating me to push a little harder or finish out a set strong."*
- *"[The student staff member] was easy to talk too, didn't judge me on my abilities, was mindful about my cardiac problems when working on my regimen, checked in on how I was feeling during workouts."*

Budget

The Recreational Sports Outdoor Program department is part of the Division of Student Life at UMD and is a Student Services Fee (SSF) funded unit. During the 2023-2024 Academic year 56% of RSOP's operational budget was funded by the UMD Student Services Fee, while the remaining 44% was self-generated through RSOP memberships, programs and external sales. The 44% of self-generated dollars was an increase of 11% when compared to the 2022-2023 academic year. You can learn more about the Student Services Fee and the process for its allocation [here](#).

Each year RSOP prepares a written proposal, along with a proposed Operating and Capital budget request for the Student Services fee committee to review and recommend a new SSF allocation for the following fiscal year. This proposal and accompanying budget requests outline what the RSOP department is, who we serve, our impacts on UMD students and ultimately the details tied to our annual budget. These Student Services Fee documents are the best place to learn about RSOP's budget, which can be found publicly on the [Student Services Fees website](#).

We encourage you to review the SSF proposal and provided budget requests as an integral part of our Annual Report.

2023-2024 Additional Budget Information

The Recreational Sports Outdoor Program Student Services Fee Budget proposals are created through a joint effort between the RSOP director and the RSOP Student Advisory Council. This Student Advisory Council is made up of student leaders, each representing a different program area within RSOP. The areas represented include Aquatics, Climbing, Competitive Sports, Fitness, Information and Registration, Marketing, Outdoor Activities, Paddle/Surf/Kite, Recreation Center, Rental Center, Sea Kayaking, and Youth Programs. These student leaders learn how the RSOP budget is funded with Student Service Fee dollars, and how those dollars are spent to better understand how the SSF funding supports the RSOP mission. This council then provides the RSOP Director with a recommendation on where to set the allocation request for Student Service Fee dollars.

The 2023-2024 year represented an increase in self-generated revenue from prior years. During fiscal year (FY) 2024 RSOP generated \$623,218.60 of external sales revenue, compared to \$484,704.84 in fiscal year 2023 representing a 29% increase in external sales revenue generation. This increase in revenue was associated with higher participation rates in many of our programs, as well as increasing programmatic costs for registration focused on non-student programming. To remain fiscally responsible, RSOP is striving to keep the fees for UMD students as low as possible while still providing excellent programs, services and engagement opportunities.

One budgetary challenge in fiscal year 2024 was the increase in student wage cost. Student minimum wage increased during fiscal year 2023 from \$10.15 per hour to \$15.00 per hour. With that wage change, fiscal year 2024 was the first full year with the higher wage costs, which is reflected in the total amount of student wage that RSOP paid back to student employees. In FY24 RSOP paid student workers \$678,063.95 which represented a 138% increase in student wage when compared to FY23 at \$492,103.39. RSOP has worked to identify areas where student wage costs can be mitigated including better utilization of the federal work study awards, examining staffing schedules for efficiency and canceling programs with low enrollment to avoid excess student wage.

Another budget related success from the 2023-2024 academic year was leveraging the UMD Foundation and creating a development plan to support student success and participation within RSOP. During the 2023 fall semester the Sport Club program hosted their first ever Sport Club Giving Day and raised \$18,866.75 within 24 hours! The strategic use of philanthropic dollars to support student access and activities will continue to be an important budget strategy to address rising costs and maintain access for students.