FOR JOURNALISTS, EDITORS AND PRODUCERS

The only Olympic handball program in New York City schools, run by the best club in the country.



Handball Rising puts an Olympic team sport inside the school day of New York City public-school students and gives them a ladder from a PE class to Team USA. It is the school and youth program of New York City Team Handball Club, founded in 1973, 11-time U.S. national champions. With handball on the LA28 program and the U.S. fielding a team as host, the next American players are being found in city gyms, now.

FAST FACTS

1973
Club founded in New York, at the United Nations

11×
U.S. national champions, men and women

70+
countries represented by club players over 52 years

5,500+
young New Yorkers introduced to the sport

15+
Team USA players developed by club coaches

10+
years in NYC schools and after-school programs

28×
Northeast League titles, men and women

2×
IHF Super Globe participation (club world championship)

7×
host of international events, incl. Big Apple tournament

80%
of spending goes directly to programs

BOILERPLATE (FOR USE AS WRITTEN)

Short. Handball Rising brings Olympic handball into New York City public schools, coached by the national champions of New York City Team Handball Club, and gives kids a team, a place to belong and a pathway to Team USA.

Long. Handball Rising is the school and youth program of New York City Team Handball Club, "The World's Handball Club," founded in 1973 and 11-time U.S. national champions. Its coaches deliver an 11-week Olympic handball unit inside the PE schedule of elementary, middle and high schools, run a Monday morning group for students who need a team to belong to, and host the annual NYC Youth Cup. Students who show desire and talent progress to the Youth Academy, with scholarships so cost never closes the door. The program has introduced more than 5,500 young New Yorkers to the sport; its coaches have developed more than 15 Team USA players. Its goal: ten schools and 3,000 students a year, and 50,000 students by 2040.

STORY ANGLES

- **From refugee to champion.** Bini Mustafa arrived from Kosovo in 1999 knowing three people. He became an 8× national champion and now coaches kids who arrived the way he did.
- **The road to LA28 runs through a Harlem gym.** The U.S. fields a handball team as Olympic host; the club has developed 15+ Team USA players.
- **The Monday morning group.** 7:15 AM, before the bell, for the kids who struggle to show up. They start arriving early, for their team.
- **100 businesses, 3,000 kids.** A campaign asking a hundred New York businesses for $3,500 each, and one Sponsors' Night in a gym instead of a gala.

Available on request

- Interviews with Bini Mustafa, coaches, players and parents.
- Gym access during Academy practices.
- High-resolution photographs, with releases on file, and the program's data.

Names and style

- **Handball Rising** (two words, capital R) is the program. **New York City Team Handball Club**, or NYCTHC on second reference, is the organization.
- The sport is **handball**, also called European, Olympic or team handball. It is not American wall handball.
- Shkumbin "Bini" Mustafa: Managing Director & Head Coach, Handball Rising; President, NYCTHC.

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Handball Rising is a program of New York City Team Handball Club Inc., a 501(c)(3) public charity, EIN 27-0541418 · NYC FMS vendor VS00085913

LEADERSHIP

Born in Kosovo and Senegal. New Yorkers, in the gym every week.



Shkumbin “Bini” Mustafa

Managing Director & Head Coach · President, NYCTHC · from Kosovo

Arrived in the United States as a refugee from Kosovo in 1999. 8× U.S. National Champion, former Team USA athlete, and the builder of the most successful handball club in the country. Formerly a brand strategist at Siegelvision.



Birane Diouf

Youth Academy Director · from Senegal

IHF-certified coach and the club’s global ambassador for the sport, in the gym with kids every week of the year.

CHAMPIONS ON THE COACHING STAFF

- **Staffan Olsson** (Sweden): 2× World Champion, 4× European Champion, 3× Olympic silver medalist.
- **Jérôme Fernandez** (France): 2× Olympic Champion, 4× World Champion, 3× European Champion.
- **Andrea Lekić** (Serbia): 2013 IHF World Player of the Year, World Championship silver, EHF Champions League winner with Győr.

COACHES IN THE GYM EVERY WEEK

- **Chris Brase**, school program; board member of USA Team Handball.
- **Zhana Skubenich**, former professional in Ukraine; author of a book on coaching youth handball.
- **Joel Azumah**, former college volleyball coach at FIT, CCNY and Brooklyn College.
- **Yousef Elkhouly**, assistant coach, Youth Academy; came up through the club from age 14.

Every coach who enters a school is NYC DOE PETS cleared, SafeSport certified and background screened.

QUOTES CLEARED FOR USE

> “When I joined the club, the team embraced me almost immediately. They helped me find work, advised me on how to get to college, and gave me friendship and advice at every step. None of it would have happened without these people.”
>
> Togba Aboubacar, came alone from Guinea at 16; national champion, MVP, called up to Team USA

> “Our students count down the days to handball. The energy these coaches bring is something our schedule simply couldn’t generate on its own.”
>
> Patrick Burns, former Principal, MS 217, Queens

> “NYCTHC runs a tight, professional competition and is easy to work with. Students from seven schools compete fairly and inclusively.”
>
> Nicolas Martinez, Athletic Director, Lycée Français de New York, host of the NYC Youth Cup

The program, by the numbers

- An 11-week unit, one 90-minute session a week inside PE, classes of 65–90; two cycles reach 260–360 students per school a year.
- About $150 per student per year; $35,000 for a school at full strength. 20 students per school go to the NYC Youth Cup.
- Season One campaign: $350,000 by March 31, 2027, funding ten schools and 3,000 students for the 2027–28 school year.
- Youth Academy: ages 12–18, 24 weeks, $750 a year including jerseys and USA Team Handball membership, with scholarships.

Partners and credentials

- Member, partner, sub-contractor or vendor of NYCDOE, NYC Parks, USATH, Queens Community House, Grand Street Settlement, St. Nicks Alliance, SCAN-Harbor, Forum Club Handball and Good Sports.
- Schools and partners served include MS 217, MS 358, PS 117, PS 82, New York Edge, Harlem Children’s Zone, Ember Schools, the Lycée Français de New York and GISNY.
- Curriculum mapped to SHAPE America 2024; CASEL-aligned social-emotional learning practices.

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