

General

Business entity

BGC, Bloomfield-Garfield.org & 4RS.org

Established

BGC was established in 1975. The domain, 4RS.org opened in 2015.

Team members

Richard Swartz, CEO of the BGC, financial oversight, Pittsburgh

Mark Rauterkus, project manager, executive head coach, Pittsburgh

Kevin McCarthy, SKWIM USA, consultant, state of Washington

Alandra Greenlee, expected employee, open water swim coach, Pittsburgh

Dale Ross, expected employee, lifeguard trainer, and assistant coach, Pittsburgh

Staff of BGC's Swim & Water Polo & Pittsburgh Combined. In 2015, the aquatic staff included more than 40 part-time workers.

Katherine Longwell, expected employee, swim coach, pool operator, Chairman of Allegheny Mountain Masters Swimming, Pittsburgh

Mike Rogers, consultant, CEO, eLifeguard.com, Florida

Sally Li and Dean Sharples, consultants, Owners, AutoCoach.com.au, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Description of business

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) is a nonprofit, community development organization. The BGC exists to improve the quality of life for all in Garfield and surrounding neighborhoods through active community engagement. Community-based and board-driven, one of the BGC's main goals is to get as many people in the community as possible to participate in the efforts aimed at physical revitalization, an improved economy and strengthened social well-being. The BGC often offers financial duties with city-wide programs organized by Coach Rauterkus.

4RS.org, Four Rivers Stadium, proposes to expand Pittsburgh's sports-town legacy by building in-river sports venues for aquatic games. These venues, called lagoons, accommodate spectators and certified players in competitive games of water polo, SKWIM and canoe water polo.

Target Audience

The target audience for 4RS.org includes both adults and teens. In 2016, the aim of 4RS.org is to keep the kids swimming in the swim pools. Few under the age of 12 should be involved in 4RS.org events. Perhaps if a pool on a barge is created, then it would make great sense to have kids programming. Since teens and young adults behaviors and eventual health outcomes are influenced at the individual, peer, family, school, community, and societal levels, and because many sectors of society contribute to adolescent health, safety, and well-being, this intervention's effort includes adult programming. Most efforts for grant-funded intervention focus upon school-aged youth, however, the parents and guardians of the youth and other adults in the community are included in these aquatics programs for factors of financial sustainability, mentoring opportunities, leadership development, and other capacity building benefits.

Inter-generational programs in aquatics are more successful than other physical education and physical fitness venues. Older adults can compete with and among much younger players in settings in SKWIM, water polo, open water and canoe water polo. In a kayak, an older individual with technical paddle skills can easily compete with, if not school, a 16-year-old varsity athlete. In a gym or on a field, that competitive match-up is far less likely to yield fun results for anyone. Tremendous value unfolds in the community as youths and adults get to engage in various fitness and academic roles together, especially in terms of coaching, teaching, wellness, financial and humanitarian responsibilities.

The target audience for 4RS.org includes: Downtown residents, Downtown workers, city residents, county residents and tourists. A majority of the regular participants are expected to be local who can walk to

Point State Park. Others will bike, jog or use mass transit to get Downtown. Some may drive, especially suburban swimmers who are expected to come with a parent. Generally, people do not travel more than 10-miles for recreational workouts. However, athletes do travel farther distances to compete and for specialized coaching opportunities.

4RS.org is an expected attraction for a limited audience but the experience is with a highly-emotional impact. Swimming is often ranked as the most popular summer-time recreational activity. Dozens of beaches dotted the river banks of Pittsburgh in the past.

Some pedestrians might stop to linger to watch a game while on a walk to PNC Park. Tourist won't impulsively join, but a few are expected to come for specific tournaments.

Naturally, the target audience includes present-and-former swimmers: college, varsity, and club. Masters swimmers, lifeguards, triathletes, coaches, kayakers, surfers, paddlers, water polo players, rowers and others that embrace a lifestyle of fitness are in the target audience. Those who play football, hockey, lacross, basketball and Ultimate Frisbee are part of the target audience. Parents and kids worried about suffering from concussions and brain health are a prime audience segment too as those injuries are much more rare when in the water.

Both older kids and adults are part of the target audiences, with restrictions such as parental permissions.

Swimmers at the Citiparks pools are a target audience for 4RS.org. People are encouraged and expected to improve upon their swim strokes and game understanding and skills at the swim pools prior to an encounter at 4RS.org. Clinics will be held at the neighborhood pools.

A "deep water check" is needed to earn a digital badge, and that must occur before showing up to swim at the river's edge. The digital badge policy details the requirements. Lifeguards, coaches, and volunteers at Citiparks swim pools can offer the necessary digital badges to pool patrons.

Some games are co-ed. As participation grows, men and women games are generally held at different times or in different lagoons.

Swimmers who are not ready for the fitness required for open water swimming can still join in the action within a lagoon. In the lagoon games, players can substitute in-and-out, taking breaks as desired. Participants wear fins within the lagoon games to boost swim speed.

Project overview - Narrative – Info at 1,000 char

4RS.org builds 3 aquatic venues on edge of river for aquatic game play in confined lagoons. Easily dividers, affordable, for water polo, SKWIM & canoe water polo (in kayaks). Playing games is important. Stress teamwork, speed, squad tactics, rule-following, offense/defense, passing/shooting, skills and physicality. Game-play @ major park feels different than lap-swimming. Games are co-ed + inter-generational w mentoring. Game-play requires community coordination. Show up, be responsible. Commit. Play well with others! Aquatics improves health & physical activity w greater segment if lagoon + kayaking programs. Create water skills, fitness and then in water. Fall leagues 2 among college students, corporate workers, high-school students & citizens. SKWIM is a fun, safe, team game played with a disk that skims. SKWIM and water polo have similarities: physical activity. SKWIM is easier, fin enabled, fast. Water polo is deep-water and for Olympians.

Project overview - Narrative – Info

4RS.org aims to build aquatic venues on the edge of the rivers in downtown spaces for game play in confined lagoons. With some games and with some conditions and with some populations, swimmers and kayakers can get into the river's water and play. Depending upon the weather, a typical Pittsburgh summer might have 15 to 55 great days for swimming and/or kayaking in the river. Some days might be okay for kayaking and not for swimming. Obviously, flexibility is paramount. Two or three inexpensive lagoons that can be easily set up in an affordable manner. These lagoons can be constructed with the Beta Burgh grant and be a smashing success when the good times are able to roll.

Setting up a lagoon for water polo in open water is not that difficult. Same with SKWIM and canoe water polo. The equipment can be moved in and out of the water by a crew of player, volunteers and staff. Near-by storage is critical. An ideal outcome for 4RS.org includes three different lagoons. One for water polo. Another for SKWIM. The third for canoe water polo. Additional funding for kayak equipment is needed.

Game Play and Competitions

Playing games is an important, intrinsic element that can't be over-stated within this aquatic proposal and method. Game-play stresses teamwork, speed, squad tactics, rule-following, offense/defense, passing/shooting, skills and physicality. Game-play in a major river-side park is going to feel different than lap-swimming at the health club or shooting hoops at some neighborhood courts. A serenity paddle in a kayak to be one with nature is unlike a canoe water polo game.

Rather than an aerobic lap swim of 30-minutes for a cardio workout, play two 15-minutes periods of non-stop SKWIM. In kayaks, learn safety, paddle-strokes, Eskimo rolls, and then settle upon teams for a game of canoe water polo. Games of canoe water polo, SKWIM and water polo can be both co-ed and inter-generational. Mentoring opportunities are prevalent as older folks can interact with the youngsters in the water. Game-play requires more community coordination and higher levels of participation. Showing up and being responsible and committed to others is a valued job skill too. Playing well with others is a theme.

Aqua, water, rivers

Kayaking offers avenues of engagement for aquatics physical activity. Aquatics can improve public health and physical activity among a much greater segment of the population when kayaking is put into the programming mix. More will get engaged with water only if in a lifejacket.

Many people, especially people of color, didn't have swim lessons when they were younger. Up to 80-percent of the citizens in Pittsburgh, a town with three rivers, don't know how to swim and don't want to go in the water.

Convincing adults to begin an aquatic program can begin with a challenge to become proficient in a kayak. With kayaking, a more proactive approach to physical activity can occur. The desire is to create the water skills, fitness and comfort on the water so that kayaking can be an inter-generational outcome. Later, the non-swimming adults might choose to pursue swimming and water sports without a lifejacket.

Kayaking should become a reward program, a goal destination, a commercial element and a visible sponsorship tool. As citizens arrive on the rivers, their concerns and perspectives on swimming proficiency, water quality, river ecology, personal health, lifesaving skills and physical activity increase.

Kayaking

Kayaking plays a few roles in the expansion plans for aquatics.

First, since non-swimmers are a super-majority of the population of Pittsburgh, some aquatic programs are needed that can attract non-swimmers to the pools. Kayaking gets people on the water within the protective lifejackets.

Second, kayaking fits in Pittsburgh's seldom used pools. Most of the PPS swim pools are empty on most evenings and weekends whereas in other districts, the swim pools are in high demand for swimmers.

Third, in summers months, Pittsburgh's rivers provides plenty of affordable kayaking opportunities once investments obtains the necessary equipment. Both white water and flat water locations are within an easy drive.

Fourth, a number of the city's outdoor swim pools can be deployed for kayaking in September, October and November.

Fifth, canoe water polo, can become an exciting, inter-generational game that appeals to various communities and age groups. Leagues among college students, corporate workers, high-school students and citizens can flourish.

Sixth, improving the skills, popularity and availability of kayaking equipment is necessary to further support open water swimmers and triathletes.

SKWIM, the game, its curriculum and its national nonprofit organization:

SKWIM® is a newer activity. SKWIM USA, a 501(c)(3), www.SKWIMUSA.org, was formed seven years ago by Kevin McCarthy in the state of Washington. He is a consultant in this proposal. A form of SKWIM has been played in Pittsburgh as part of the Summer Dreamers Swim & Water Polo Camp since 2013. SKWIM's Digital Badges were created in Pittsburgh with a grant from The Sprout Fund and in 2015.

SKWIM is a fun, safe, team game played with a soft-yellow disk that skims along the top of the water. Some have called the SKWIM disk, a water Frisbee.

SKWIM and water polo have many similarities: aquatic setting, physically activity, game between two teams, caps, offense, defense, passing, shooting, goalies, quickness, rule following, swimming awareness, fakes, tactics, skills, problem solving, co-ed, etc.

At Swim & Water Polo Camp, both games are played with similar enjoyment. With the expansive rivers, one lagoon can be for SKWIM and another for water polo. Only experienced water polo players are expected to play in the rivers at scheduled times, perhaps twice a week in the evenings.

SKWIM fills a number of needs in the traditional aquatic landscape of physical activity for a park setting. In almost every other sport in society today, (soccer, basketball, football, baseball, hockey, etc.) game play happens. Meanwhile in aquatics, the participants face a predominance of competitive swimming and racing, a different style of activity that is unlike game play. SKWIM fits the need of an aquatic game-play activity for the young as well as the less-able swimmer that would not last 60-seconds in a water polo practice. SKWIM is a more youthful, inter-generational, fin enabled, game while water polo is deep-water, hard-core and Olympian. Both are fun and exciting and together they greatly expand participation in aquatics physical activity and can counter-attack other, more dangerous, concussion causing recreational pursuits especially pee-wee football.

Playing SKWIM is an activity that every member of a lifeguard staff can do for maintaining in-water conditioning.

Competitive swimming and lap swimming could fit in a lagoon too, but in 2016, this mission put the races into the open-water setting, not in a back-and-forth venue. When a floating pool is built or a pool in a barge arrives, then competitive and lap swimming could flourish.

Current state of product or technology to be used for the project? Include conceptual, conducting market research, prototype development, beta testing, testing analysis.

4RS.org technology table:

Product: Rangs, Independent Pull Buoys from Tropical Penguin.

4RS.org works with inventor, Steve Friederang of Tropic Penguin, and efforts include a re-branding of the Rangs specific to open water swimming. Rangs help with buoyancy, won't cause drag and still allows for kicking with fins and even breaststroke. Rangs are at the testing analysis stage for open water. See video about Rangs: <https://youtu.be/aqr-2HUrcSU>

Product: AutoCoach Timing System

A current relationship between this firm in Australia and Coach Mark Rauterkus exists. Products (version 1.0) are available and in use in Pittsburgh. Marketing efforts included travel to Cleveland and Pittsburgh in September 2015 from owners. Presently, AutoCoach has few customers in North America. The product sells in Australia and elsewhere. It is used in swim pool settings. Version 2 is expected in the second quarter of 2016.

4RS.org takes the AutoCoach devices (stop watches, speakers, scoreboards, software) to the game setting. 4RS.org can assist in new software inventions and new features for the system. Current technology is world-class, wireless, audio enhanced, and a tremendous benefit for organizers. 4RS.org hopes to make AutoCoach timing system software for use at water polo games and SKWIM games. Talk began in 2015.

New Product: 4RS.org E-book

Conceptual stage. Beta testing expected in June, 2016.

New Product: 4RS.org web site and data base

Would launch in May. Operate in June. Organized in conjunction with TeamUnify for calendar system.

New Product: Digital Badges for 4RS.org

LRNG system is to open in spring 2016 as a Sprout Fund venture. LRNG takes the place of City of Learning in 2015. Existing digital badges from CLOH.org support the core mission. A few new badges are expected in May, 2016 to be more specific to open water accomplishments.

New Service: Community Water Polo practices at Citiparks Pools

Ongoing analysis throughout the summer of 2015 and can continue in 2016.

New Service: Water Testing and Open Publishing of Results

Work is needed to communicate water testing results onto the mainstream news and websites in seamless ways.

New Product: Newsletter supplement for the BGC's Bulletin

The monthly newsletter that goes to more than 5,000 residents can include a supplement for efforts with aquatics in July 2016. Web site presence with the BGC and others is expected as well, especially with AmericanWaterPolo.org, and SKWIM.com.

New Product: An app for smart phones

A simple web app for this venture is expected. An free app from TeamUnify, On Deck, handles most of the player, parent and coach communications. The new app can extend updates to weather and water conditions and include news on the digital badges.

Schedule

Detailed planning and implementation schedule. Anticipated launch date, length of implementation, length of data gathering, wrap up period. Must be four weeks or longer and by December 31, 2016.

4RS.org schedule can begin as soon as funding has been announced.

Pre-season training can begin at various pools with coaching, practices and organizational meetings for open water swimmers. Most of those sessions in the pool will not occur Downtown, but weekly swimming at the Thelma Lovette YMCA on Centre Avenue in the Hill District can happen.

Kayaking happens once a week in the winters at an indoor swim pool in a public school.

Product and equipment needs must be researched and acquired after the funds are released. Most of that happens in May. Materials are ordered. Inventory arrives. Storage solutions are built. Security is confirmed. Goals, balls, fins, and other equipment is shuttled to and from venues throughout the summer with the coaches, staff and volunteers. At the end of the season, supplies are returned to storage, often in the basement of the BGC.

A schedule for creation and releasing the digital badges needs to be addressed in April and May. In late May and early June the staff and leaders need to be trained and functional as to the systems, attendance, policies and details. Training and help with Citiparks Lifeguards can happen before and as the pools open. Ebooks and web sites need to be released the cover basic insights. Ongoing updates are expected.

The July supplement for the BGC Newsletter needs to be written in May and June. Then the public can read the news in early July at the Regatta.

In June, after the Citiparks Pools open, coaching sessions can occur at the Sue Murray Pool on the lower Northside a few times a week. June is generally less than ideal for river swimming, but conditions will be watched. At start-up, a pre-season base in the pool is encouraged.

In July and August are the times to make the most of available good weather and river conditions. Monday evenings are swims at Moraine in the north. Fridays are swims with PTC at Washington's Landing. Other times can be scheduled to avoid conflicts. From three to ten sessions are expected every week on various days at various times and in various locations, but mostly held at Point State Park if that is permitted.

Expert and guest coaches arrive to Pittsburgh to help coach the coaches and hold media events in July. Local coaches have plenty of experiences, but the wisdom of national leaders in aquatics is welcomed and expected.

Throughout the summer challenges and leagues are assembled. Specialized one-time events are held for newbie participants and then on-going sessions are explained.

In September, swimming can still happen in the rivers. College teams are expected to come join in the fun.

In October and November, river action is only in kayaks. A fall league is expected and Downtown teams can play against East End and Oakland teams. A corporate league for kayak and canoe water polo is possible with the help of Hossana House in Wilkinsburg. They are going to host a corporate deck hockey league and these efforts can be expanded to canoe water polo too.

Reflections, summary documents and final suggestions for future plans are crafted in the fall and released in completed form in December. The documents are put out to the public with Creative Commons Licenses so others can re-use, modify and sustain the ideas.

Holding a crowd-source campaign takes five or more weeks and if that decision comes, much of the efforts in PR and outreach can focus on the Kickstarter or Indiegogo buzz.

Describe how the project will impact the Downtown community. How will you measure the impact? Downtown workers, residents, visitors, specifically? Will it affect other populations or communities outside your primary community?

4RS.org can impact the Downtown community in positive ways.

Downtown workers will be able to take a break from their office work and visit the lagoons to watch a game or help officiate a game the mid-day game of canoe water polo. Or, get in the game themselves.

Visitors will come to Pittsburgh for the special events, clinics, workshops and tournaments. We'll compete and attract participants just as they come for professional sports games.

The fitness gains and impact is huge. As are economic realities. Jumping in the river is free. With these plans and efforts, we make it more fun, more safe, more friendly, more humanitarian, more rewarding to be so close to Downtown.

This proposal can have far reaching impacts on other populations outside the primary community. The methods can become a model with measurable outcomes to promote health, wellness, and academic success for teens, young adults and active citizens. We are diving in and going deep as we are looking for more refined, better implemented, extensively documented, closely measured and easily replicated recreation. We want our passions to compete and play together to spread among generations and to the school-aged children at the local pools and rec centers. The framework and methods deployed locally become a model for physical education and

physical activity that get presented nationally for others to replicate.

The increases in the local aquatic programs insure a wider reach to more students in more settings in more weeks throughout the year. This moves the past BGC efforts with Pittsburgh Pubic Schools "Summer Dreamers" to "Year-Round Achievers" at the pools and at the rivers.

Downtown can cultivate physical fitness activities that draw high-levels of participation in inter-generational settings. Let's go Downtown and play. There are folks here who are swimming, paddling, playing games and respecting one another. We can use the waters to transcend some rather large divides. It is going to be a little messy and a lot of work, but fun and rewarding.

The digital badges are the best way to measure the impact, its reach and the depth of the experiences. We'll be able to monitor the number of people who get digital badges with the system. The process often starts with the bestowing of the "Get Your Feet Wet" digital badge. As we get dozens, hundreds and perhaps thousands learning about and getting the digital badges, we'll know what's what.

The digital badges mark specific, measurable, evaluative, outcome-based, open-source, enrichment opportunities. Goal-setting is reinforced in levels 1 to 6. Swimming has the deep water swimmer badge, pre-lifeguard badge, and water polo knowledge badge that any school can embrace. The SKWIM digital badges, levels 1 to 5, align to SKWIM's curriculum. Social behaviors come with badges of teamwork, sportsmanship, tech literacy and four meta badges called heart, head, hands, and health. Fitness has the digital badges for step counting, exercise routines, yoga, race-event participation, body scan, concentration and mindful eating. Volunteers, boosters, staff, donors and other VIPs are included within the process by connections to more than 15 digital badges that recognize adults. The cluster of digital badges for adults begins with a simple involvement called, "Get Your Feet Wet." This series of digital badges marks milestones for engaged humanitarians for better health. Hopefully, the skills, knowledge and dispositions that each digital badge represents becomes contagious. See: http://CLOH.wikia.com/wiki/Digital_Badges

Pittsburgh needs ways use sports to hook people into getting help and offer helping to others. The aquatic efforts and the digital badges are game-changers and first steps to working with others in other struggles: academic, economic, social-justice, etc.

Is the project sustainable for long term implementation? How will it be maintained?

4RS.org is seasonal and sustainable in that the rivers are here to stay. ***

Playing water polo and SKWIM can be made into year-round activities by moving to the public pools at the schools. This also allows for more mentoring, motivation and community-based school engagement. Adults can help themselves with their own training, and lend a hand with programs at the pools with the school-aged kids too.

Preferred location to activate as part of your proposal? Public or private property? Explain why this location is preferred.

4RS.org can build the in-river pools with floating goals at the rivers edge in Point State Park. Other locations would work too.

Budget for 4RS.org

Total Cost: \$10,000

Insurance	\$2,500.00
BGC Overhead	\$600.00 * includes permit fees

Equipment	Q	\$ per unit	Total
SKWIM goals	2	1000	2000
Water Polo goals	2	1400	2800
Disks & Balls	25	69	1725
Shipping			380
Summary			\$10,005

Not included: Staffing, Part-time workers, hardware, boats, marina fees, storage, security, additional timing system, wifi, postage.

Insurance, Permits & Permission

4RS.org will procure general liability insurance from the BGC insurance agency, or some sport-specific agency for the duration of time that the project is active. The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and others, if applicable, are to be named as additional insured to the policy. Global insurance costs estimates are included in the budget. User fees that cover individual insurance coverage are to be paid by the participants.

Insurance problems can be solved. People swim and play sports in water all around the world. Sports officials and sports business exist that assist with the hosting of events and providing insurance coverage. Of course, specific policies need to be established and followed. Members of USA Swimming, USA Triathlon, Masters Swimming and American Water Polo have benefits so that practices and meets are covered when supervised by qualified, certified coaches and officials. Details need to be further researched, gathered and published within an open format.

The easiest insurance coverage solution is to only allow sanctioned participants and coaches. Members only. Costs involved. Fees are collected. A cost is involved. American Water Polo has been a great source for insurance for the BGC to cover the needs with PPS and Swim & Water Polo for 200 kids. With American Water Polo, coaches are covered for no charge. Individual coverage for the year is less than \$25. A sponsorship and reduced rate is expected for a new venture that promotes water polo.

Activities in publicly-owned public spaces that required Special Event Permits through the City of Pittsburgh are expected and assistance from the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership in the application process is welcomed. All rules will be followed. Activities in privately-owned public spaces would occur after permission was obtained.