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Markus Gaebel · May 13

Inside Squash & Education Alliance: Where Squash Courts Meet Community

\$150M Investment for Facilities and \$30M Annually to Keep Dreams Alive



athletics and academics.

If you’ve ever chatted with a fellow squash enthusiast about the sport’s impact, you’ll know how squash can be **much more than just a game**. Few organisations embody this better than the **Squash and Education Alliance (SEA)** – a network of programmes that use squash as a springboard for educational and social upliftment. Formed as an umbrella for urban squash initiatives, SEA today spans **21 U.S. programs and 7 international partners**, all united by one goal: changing kids’ lives through a blend of

SEA’s International Partners include [Khelshala](#) in Chandigarh, India, [Egoli Squash](#), in Johannesburg, South Africa, [Squash Urbano Colombia](#) in Cartagena, Colombia, [Squash Dreamers](#) in Amman, Jordan, [Urban Squash Toronto](#) in Toronto, Canada, [SquashBond](#) in Ra’anana and Haifa, Israel and the [Nicol David Organisation \(NDO\)](#) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The tone among us squash lovers is often excited and proud when we talk about SEA, and it’s easy to see why.

SEA works with underprivileged youth, introducing them to the game of squash while providing robust academic tutoring, mentoring, travel experiences, and college preparation. It’s a *comprehensive* model – think squash practice followed by homework help, enrichment field trips, and one-on-one mentoring – all rolled into an after-school programme.

"In SEA's programs, you're just as likely to see a student perfecting their backhand on court as you are to find them studying in a classroom afterwards."

Tim Wyant, SEA Executive Director

The result is a nurturing environment where kids develop discipline, teamwork, and ambition both on and off the court. This holistic approach has become SEA's hallmark and is a key reason the alliance has grown to encompass dozens of cities.

The Tremendous Impact of the Squash & Education Alliance

Talking with squash buddies about SEA often leads to some jaw-dropping statistics that highlight its impact. Here are a few that we can't help but celebrate:

- **Over \$30 million raised each year:**

Collectively, SEA's member programs now receive an estimated \$30 and more million in donations annually. This incredible stream of support funds coaching, tutoring, and scholarships – ensuring that talented, hard-working kids get the resources they need. It's amazing to consider that the sport we love is fueling such a significant charitable effort every year.

- **\$150+ million initial investment for new facilities:**

Since 2003, more than \$150 million in philanthropy has been invested to build or acquire 17 squash-and-education facilities in underserved communities. Each facility typically includes multiple squash courts, classrooms, and study spaces, creating a home base where kids can train and learn. These centres aren't just squash courts – they're vibrant community hubs embedded in neighbourhoods. For example, the new SquashBridge centre in Bridgeport, CT will have classrooms and even an outdoor court, all positioned to serve local schools and community groups ([Revolutionizing Community Development: Construction on new \\$10 Million SEA Facility](#)).

- **Thousands of kids served every year:**

SEA's network now engages over 4,000 young people (in primary school through high school) year-round across its programs. That's 4,000+ kids from cities as diverse as New York, Chicago, and beyond, all getting long-term mentorship and opportunities through squash. Just imagine the collective energy of all those students hitting the books and the squash balls in tandem!

- **College dreams coming true:**

The academic results are stellar – 94% of SEA program graduates enroll in college. Many of these students are the first in their families to pursue higher education. This college enrollment rate far exceeds national averages for the communities served, proving that the combination of squash training and academic support is a winning formula. In fact, staying committed to SEA virtually guarantees a young person will graduate high school and move on to university ([Squash Is Courting Young Players While Also Helping Them in the Classroom | Sports Destination Management](#)). It's no surprise that SEA alumni have gone on to attend top colleges, and a handful have even competed professionally in squash - though producing pro players is a happy bonus, not the main goal!



These numbers only tell part of the story. Behind each statistic is a personal success – a student who improved their grades, learned to lead a team, or gained admission to a dream university. As squash fans, we find ourselves swapping these stories with pride, almost as if talking about a favourite player's big win.

Community Hubs Built on Squash Courts

One aspect of SEA's work that often gets us particularly excited is the way squash facilities double as community centres. Walk into any SEA-associated squash facility and you'll likely see much more than rackets and squash balls. Classrooms buzz with tutoring sessions, computers hum as students work on assignments, and meeting spaces host mentorship workshops or family events. The squash court might be the initial draw, but the facility becomes a safe haven and gathering place for the whole community.



A great example is the SquashBridge project in Connecticut.

"More than just a sports facility, the SquashBridge center will serve as a comprehensive community centre aimed at fostering growth and learning for people of all ages and backgrounds."

Tim Wyant, SEA Executive Director

Its design places it near local schools and integrates with neighbourhood organisations, meaning kids can pop over after class to practice squash and do homework, and local residents can use the space for events. This model is echoed in other SEA facilities from Boston to Chicago – each one tailored to its community, but all built on the idea that a squash court and a classroom together can anchor positive social change.

These facilities are often beacons of hope in their neighbourhoods. They send a message that investing in youth development is a community priority. It's common to hear local leaders and parents rave about the difference these centres make: not only do they offer a constructive outlet for kids, but they also beautify the area and boost community pride. For us in the squash community, it's incredibly heartening to see our sport at the heart of these urban transformations.

A Role Model in Sport and Education

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about SEA is how it has become a role model for using sport to drive educational and social mobility. In just a couple of decades, what started as a single urban squash program in Boston blossomed into a nationwide (and now international) movement. Other sports organisations have taken notice, looking to SEA as a blueprint for blending athletics with academics to engage underserved youth.



What makes SEA's model so effective? It could be the long-term commitment (students often join in elementary school and stay through to college admissions), or the intensive one-on-one mentoring layered atop team activities. It could be the allure of squash itself – a fast-paced individual sport that nevertheless creates a tight-knit team atmosphere and teaches resilience. Most likely, it's the combination of all these elements, sustained by a passionate community of supporters.

"With initiatives like SEA, squash proves it's more than just a game – it's a powerful tool for community development, education, and positive change"

Tim Wyant, SEA Executive Director

As squash aficionados, we can't help but feel a swell of admiration when talking about SEA. There's a friendly pride in our tone – *our sport* is doing genuine good out there in the world. The next time you hear someone ask, "What good can a sport really do for kids?", you might find yourself recounting the story of SEA: the \$30 million+ raised each year, the hundreds of students off to college, and the shiny new squash-and-study centres popping up in cities that didn't have them before. It's a testament to what a shared love of a sport and a commitment to education can achieve together.

In the Squash Facilities Network, we often exchange these updates with a sense of camaraderie and optimism. After all, when one part of the squash family scores a win – be it on the court or in the community – it's a victory for all of us. And SEA's work is a championship-worthy effort by any measure. Without any fanfare or direct appeals, their results speak volumes and leave us inspired.

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SEA has shown that a squash court can be a classroom, a second home, and a launchpad for success – and that might be the most exhilarating rally we've ever witnessed in the game.

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