

Trenton Youth Wrestling:
Beyond the Mat

Contact

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At Pollen Productions, we believe that stories should inspire audiences by exploring challenges, highlighting excellence, and capturing the human spirit. “Beyond the Mat” is more than just a documentary—it is a testament to the transformative power of opportunity and perseverance.

This film delves into the heart of Trenton Youth Wrestling, a program that has helped over 1,000 youth, teaching them lessons far beyond the wrestling mat. By following the journeys of its student-athletes, alumni, and founders, we aim to highlight the profound impact that mentorship, discipline, and community support have on individuals and society.

As the CEO of Pollen Productions, I am excited to bring this story to life alongside our skilled team. Through compelling visuals, powerful testimonials, and a focus on themes of growth and resilience, I hope that “Beyond the Mat” will resonate with audiences everywhere.

Thank you for reviewing this treatment. We hope you’ll join us in championing this inspiring story.

Sincerely,



Luke Owen
CEO, Pollen Productions LLC

Logline

A feature-length documentary exploring the transformative power of Trenton Youth Wrestling and Learning Center (TY-WLC) through the stories of its key figures, from its founding to its ongoing impact.

Synopsis

The documentary follows key characters involved in Trenton Youth Wrestling and Learning Center, showcasing how the program empowers youth to succeed in sports and life.

As the documentary unfolds, viewers witness how the program has shaped each character, both in wrestling and in their day-to-day lives. Through moments of triumph and adversity, the film explores the power of community, mentorship, and perseverance.

History

The Trenton Youth Wrestling and Learning Center, founded in 2017, has served over 1,000 youth, focusing on citizenship, competitive greatness, and scholar-athleticism.

Recently, the center has launched a capital campaign to build a permanent facility, aiming to expand its impact on the Trenton community.

Story Arc

Act I

Act I introduces each of the 6 characters in the film. This act will show how each character became involved with TYWLC, who they are, and each character's unique motivations.

Act II

Act II delves deeper into the personal lives of each character as they prepare for the challenges they face, including tournaments, responsibilities, and personal growth.

Act II features footage of tournaments, interviews, and day-in-the-life segments.

Act III

Act III follows each character as they persevere in the face of their respective challenges. As the wrestling season comes to a close the film reflects on how far each character has come and asks where they will go next.

Approach

Narrative Style

The documentary employs non-linear storytelling interweaving past and present, highlighting human striving, community giving, personal growth, and successful outcomes.

Cinematography

The film employs a verité style for documentary elements, with natural lighting and handheld camera movement. It prioritizes a polished, cinematic style for sit-down interviews.

Music & Sound

The film features an original score and sound design, creating a sense of realism and captivating its audience.

Editing Style

The documentary employs dynamic pacing, with faster cuts for high-energy scenes and slower cuts for emotionally impactful scenes. This technique allows the film to capture the ecstasy and gravitas of the characters and their experiences.

Transitions between past and present storylines are triggered through sit-down interview content to facilitate a smooth narrative flow.

Characters



Mark R.
McLaughlin, MD

A Board-Certified neurosurgeon practicing in the greater Princeton area who has been a youth wrestling coach for over two decades. Mark helped create the Princeton Wrestling Club and co-founded Trenton Youth Wrestling and Learning Center.



Ray Bethea

A Trenton-born-and-raised wrestler whose success training under Mark in the Princeton Wrestling Club allowed him the opportunity to attend an Ivy League institution. Ray is now the Director of Operations at TYWLC.



Najay Sinclair

Born in Jamaica, Najay moved to Trenton at a young age, where he became involved in TYWLC. By leveraging the resources the program provided him, Najay has become a scholar in college, where he is presently pursuing a degree in international business.

Princessstorm
Woody

A current high school athlete, Princess has seen great success in and beyond the TYWLC program. Princess aspires to continue wrestling in college and potentially even the Olympics, hoping to eventually become a surgeon herself, following in the footsteps of Mark.

Characters



Current Student 1
(TBA)



Current Student 2
(TBA)

Location

Practice Locations

Feature each of the locations where practices are held to show the grassroots level of the program.

Tournament Locations

Capturing the competitive spirit and excitement of the matches.

Alumni High School Tournament

Highlighting the progression and impact on former participants.

New Center Location

Showcasing the upcoming permanent facility to emphasize the growth and future vision of the organization.

Dr. Mark R. McLaughlin's Medical Practice

Featuring a "day in the life" segment to connect his professional life with his contributions to the center.

Trenton Youth Wrestling Operations Office

Highlighting a "day in the life" segment for Ray Bethea, including his administrative and coaching roles.



The Team

Luke Owen

Director, DP

Luke Owen has developed experience as both a director and cinematographer through the numerous projects he has worked on, including documentary and commercial projects for Pollen Productions, a video production company he founded in 2023.



Malachi Abbott

Director, Editor

Malachi Abbott has a proven track record for film writing and directing, with several awards for his work. Malachi has years of professional editing experience and has previously consulted on documentary film projects.



Tanner McGrath

Executive Producer

Tanner McGrath has worked on several notable TV shows and films, securing his role in the industry. His experience as a producer has led him to his role on this project.



Ella Metheny

Marketing & PR Manager

Ella's background and degree in marketing cements her place as marketing & PR manager for this film. By leveraging both conventional and novel film marketing tactics, she has increased its visibility and grown its audience. Ella also manages the film's social media channels.



Budget

Project Cost	
Pre-Production	Completed
Production	\$50,000
Post-Production	\$35,000
Total	\$85,000

Distribution

Distribution Strategy

This film will premier at film festivals prior to a theatrical release followed by a streaming platform release.