

# non-profit IN FOCUS



## OFFICIAL LOVE PLAYS TO WIN BY SERVING COMMUNITY

Article contributed by Kristopher D. Loving, Sr., Founder & President of Official Love Community Organization

With the mission is to serve communities, families, and individuals through the support, recruitment, retention, and development of sports officials, Official Love Community Organization is an emerging, community-focused, membership organization located in Rochester, MN. Official Love promotes and advances social and emotional learning, health and wellness, and community engagement through the platform of sports officiating.

Official Love began in the near-western suburbs of Chicago in 2014 when the founder Kristopher Derwin Loving became a registered official with the Illinois High School Association (IHSA). Loving's friend and mentor, Darrin Sortor, is an experienced basketball and football sports official and he encouraged Loving to become a sports official. Loving was interested, but the costs associated with becoming a registered sports official was discouraging and hindered this new passion. With financial support from Sortor, Loving could begin his

Kristopher D. Loving officiating a high school football game.



officiating career, and he now had the equipment necessary along with a passionate mentor.

This act of kindness from Sortor turned Loving's newfound interest into a lifelong desire to impact the world through the sports officiating platform. Loving found that officiating fostered an environment of improving communication skills, character, integrity, honesty, and professionalism. Loving also realized the positive impact officiating had on his own life which drove him to devote himself to starting and leading this organization.

Today, Official Love strives to equip and prepare others to positively contribute to society through sports officiating. In less than a year, Official Love has built strong relationships with several community organizations. These connections include the Rochester Area Foundation, Rochester Amateur Sports Commission, Rochester Public Library, Rochester Area Family YMCA, Elite Playmakers, Bolder Options, Boys & Girls Club, and Champion Basketball. Through these partnerships, donors, and supporters, membership with Official Love will include provision of uniforms and equipment, vouchers for registration fees and dues, transportation assistance, training resources, and connection with a mentor. Membership is open to males and females at least 16 years of age.

The officiating profession provides diverse opportunities for teamwork, networking, and professional development. Official Love is committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion through the recruitment and support of members, board members, mentors, and volunteers. Prospective members can register at [www.official-love.org/membership](http://www.official-love.org/membership). Official Love also welcomes community members to support their vision and mission as volunteers for open board positions and mentor roles.

Communities, families, and individuals can be positively impacted by the limitless platform of sports officiating. Make the right call: Start, Stay, Succeed.

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**Value #7: The Value of Being a Good Community Citizen.**  
We give willingly to and are actively involved in the support of our communities, because they provide us our success.