COLLABORATIVE ADVANTAGE:

ENHANCING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY OF YOUTH SPORT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Background

In the United States, youth sport opportunities are delivered primarily through non-governmental associations, with non-profit organizations now representing an integral part of "grassroots" sport participation. These organizations are ideally positioned to promote youth and community health, but often struggle to build the organizational capacity required to achieve goals and objectives. Inter-organizational partnerships represent a useful strategy to alleviate this issue by stabilizing resource environments and maximizing service efficiencies, yet little research has examined how they are utilized by youth sport non-profits.

The purpose of this project was to examine the structure of a youth sport non-profit network, along with their connections to other community organizations. Results will help youth sport administrators strategically identify potential partners, make more efficient use of existing partnerships, and leverage their position within the community to build organizational capacity and promote youth and community health.

Methods

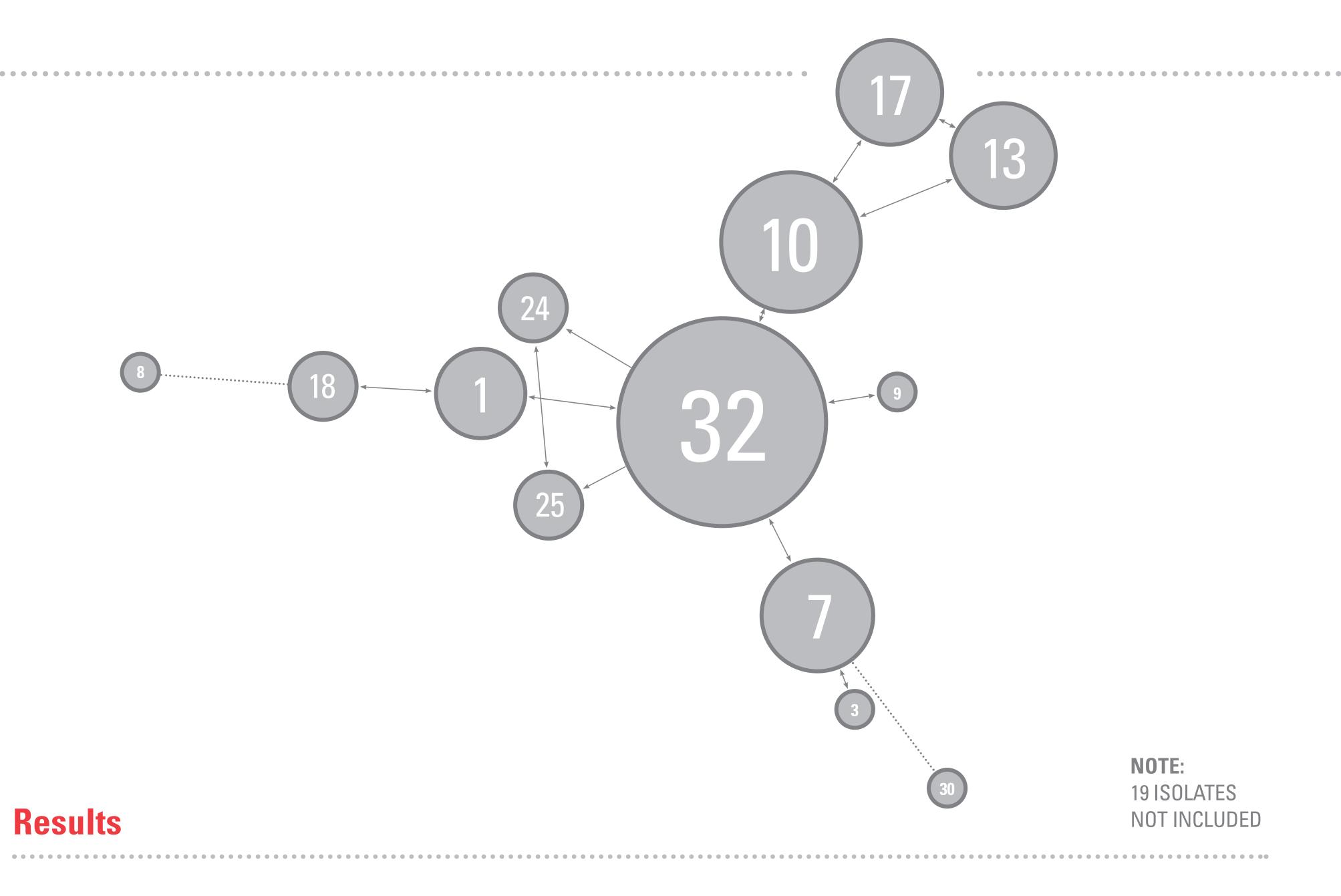
Data were collected from 32 of 36 youth sport non-profits registered in a large Southeastern U.S. city. Network data was collected through interviews with members of management, with questions relating to four dimensions of capacity:

1. Human Resource 2. Infrastructural 3. Financial 4. Strategic

Attribute data was collected through secondary sources. Measures of cohesiveness were utilized to analyze structural network features, and compositional measures of ego-networks were used to examine connections with organizations in other industry sectors.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

For more information contact Gareth J. Jones, Ph.D. Candidate NC State University | Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management gjjones@ncsu.edu



Youth Sport Non-Profit Network

AVERAGE DEGREE

DENSITY

2.51

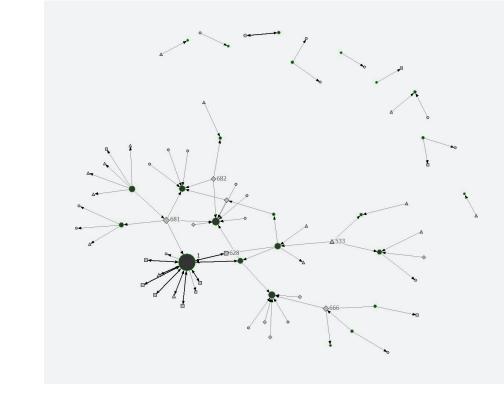
AVERAGE DISTANCE

The second of th

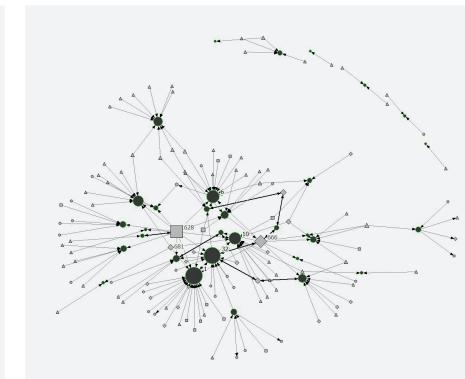
Discussion Results indicate the youth sport non-profit network is fragmented and characterized by a low level of cohesion. This may be attributable to the competition between organizations, limited network knowledge, and/or value discrepancies. The limited interaction between youth sport non-profits may be perpetuating power imbalances, and limiting the potential impact of programs.

Total Network

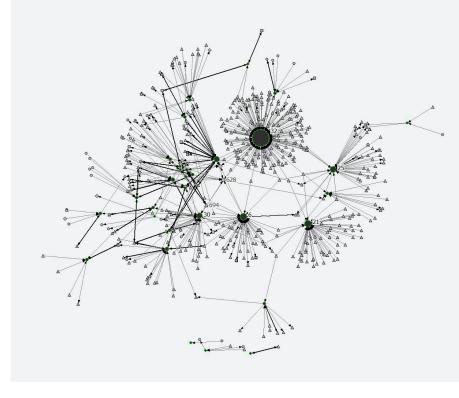
Youth sport non-profits were connected with 673 external organizations, consisting primarily of private businesses (73%). There were a total of 1,227 ties between organizations, 65% of which were related to financial resources. There was a significant correlation between organizational capacity and incoming financial ties (r=.880, p<.01), as well as incoming (r=.599, p<.01) and outgoing (r=.666, p<.01) infrastructural ties. Most ties were not reciprocated (75%), and characterized by a low frequency of interaction.



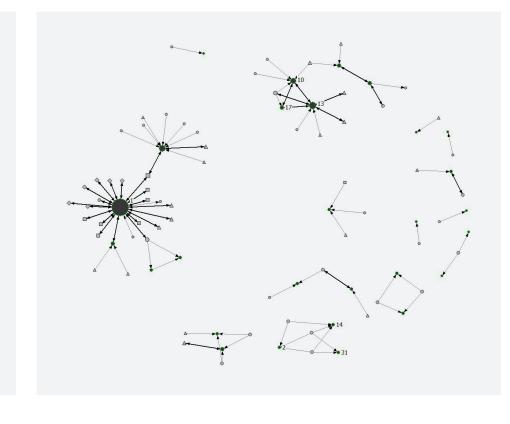
HUMAN RESOURCE



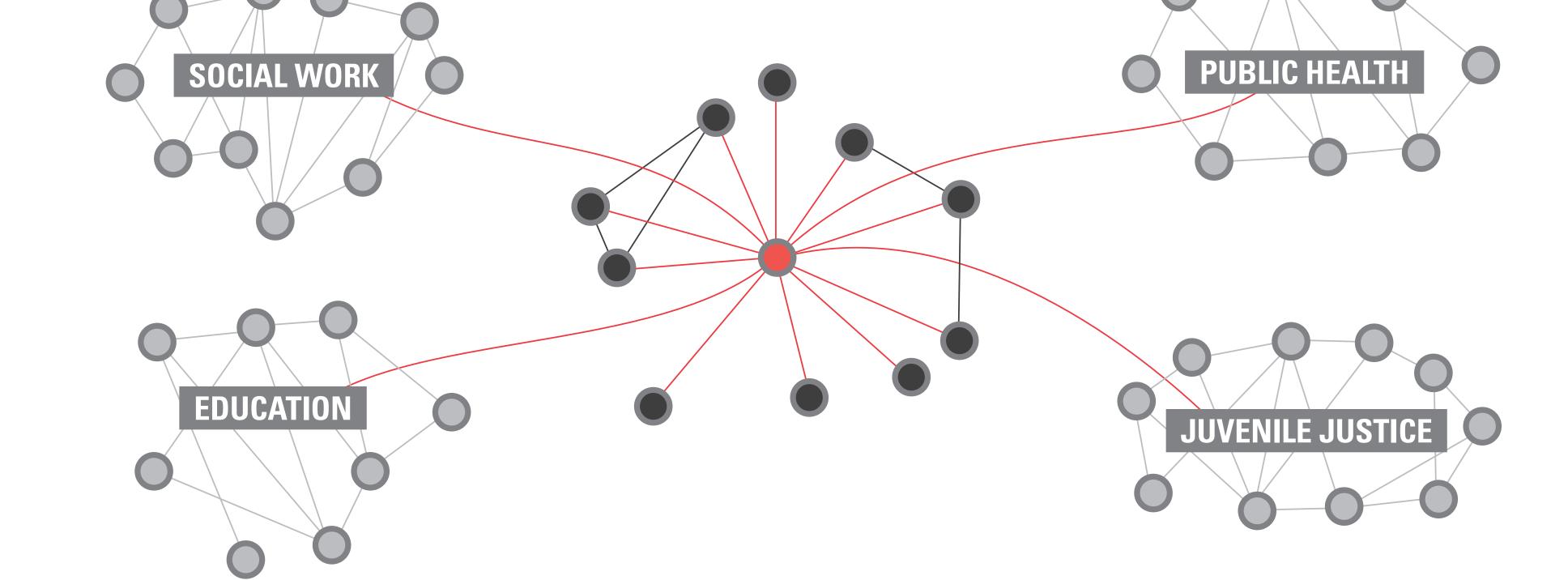
INFRASTRUCTURAL



FINANCIAL



STRATEGIC



Conclusion

The introduction of a third-party "brokerage" organization would significantly improve network connectivity and efficiency. In particular, institutions of higher education are in a prime position to occupy this role, and could provide the knowledge, resources, and values needed to enhance organizational capacity.