



The Starfinder Foundation Celebrates its Youth Amid Praise from Mayor Nutter

Starfinder youth received awards for their dedication and achievements.

PRESS RELEASE

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Philadelphia, PA (June 1, 2009) - On April 29th, the Starfinder Foundation proudly presented twenty of its participants with awards for their dedication to the Starfinder program -its principles and its participants- and the community. With Mayor Nutter in supportive attendance, these young people were honored at Starfinder's Third Annual Soccer Ball gala for their exemplary participation in the program. "I really wanted to come by and say how proud we are," commented the mayor of the program and the children.

At the Soccer Ball, an annual fundraising event, kids from all over the Philadelphia region were recognized for enthusiastically dedicating their time and effort to developing character and improving their leadership abilities through Starfinder's soccer and academic programs. The award recipients, who ranged from six to eighteen years old, came from all of Starfinder's programs - Future Leaders, Junior Leaders, Youth Leaders, and the after-school program. Each one showed an extraordinary commitment to developing his/her own skills and encouraging peers to do the same. Of the 800 participants this year, each stood out as a positive example of Starfinder's founding principles and as one of the program's highest achievers.

Eighteen of the participants-- Kadir Burton, Breon West, Katelyn Gilinger, Julian Williams, Savanna Caulley, Daniel Moreno, Zakaria Abdellazize, Roodeenah Remy, Brandon Silva, Victor Sanchez, Katherine Vazquez, Jessica Rodriguez, Kevin Fiol, Devin Felix, Donovan Felix, Yamilet Paulino, Joan Ales, and Victoria Gonzalez-- received the Brian H. Early Commitment Award, which is named after a founding board member who played a key role setting Starfinder on the road to success. The award memorializes him by honoring those participants who show a commitment to the Starfinder program, academics, and personal growth.



Zach Mamrol received the Doc Cousounis Memorial Award of Achievement in recognition of his community service in promoting soccer in the Roxborough area, a mission Doc Cousounis was dedicated to.

The JEVS Most Improved Award was also presented to Ahmed Tholley, who improved significantly on the SATs and who demonstrated the traits of a leader and role-model.

Participants from Allentown were honored at the gala, but since they were unable to attend, they were presented with their awards at a separate event held in the Allentown area.



As Mayor Nutter stated, "children... really are the future of our city, our state, and of course our nation." He added, "There's nothing that gives me greater pleasure than being a small participant in a great program like this that serves young people and helps all of us make for a brighter future for cities like Philadelphia."

Over the past seven years, Starfinder has made the support, encouragement and education of young people, regardless of their socio-economic status, its mission. Through soccer programs, Starfinder provides a unique learning environment for its youth to develop strong moral character and a positive attitude and to achieve academic excellence. For more information, please visit www.starfinderfoundation.org

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