



Fall 2014 Newsletter

Starfinder Summer Camps: Success!

Senior Leaders Serve Starfinder Youth

As our Senior Leaders come back to Starfinder for fall programs, ten return with memories of a dream summer job. Most of our teen coaches get their first jobs with Starfinder, staffing our summer programs and putting everything they've learned at Starfinder into practice. By serving in a position of leadership on the field, our teens learn responsibility, professional standards of behavior, and how to be a role model.



"The coaches know how to be silly, and the kids laughed their heads off," said Katharine Cunningham, our summer program coordinator. "They loved having all these young coaches that loved playing with them."

"My favorite part about summer camp was getting to teach and interact with the kids, getting to know them," said Yennie (pictured), who added that the kids' spirit

helped her achieve her own goals. "They influenced me to try out for my own high school team, which is something I regret not doing earlier."

Coaches thrived as they put their training at Starfinder into action on the field and learned lessons they will take to their next jobs and beyond.

"When you're energetic, the kids are energetic," said Makihra (age 16). "You have to be energetic to get the job done. You have to show appreciation and have fun."

"Our coaches will leave knowing that they can successfully be a leader, and a mature young adult," said Katharine.



Kids Work Hard, Get Their Voices Heard

Six communities of "rock star" kids had access to great soccer and enrichment programs this summer!

Starfinder partnered with Helping Hand Rescue Mission, Kensington Soccer Club, Education Works, Episcopal Community Services, and Germantown Soccer Club to run six community sites for 232 kids.



Campers came from all levels of soccer experience, but coaches made them feel recognized and appreciated for their hard work.

"Having the diversity of the kids reflected in the diversity of the coaches is huge in showing kids that the face of leadership can look any kind of way."

"Kids get their voice heard, they get acknowledged, they feel like they're important parts of the team," said Katharine Cunningham, Summer Program Coordinator. "It's just like in our fall programs—kids love Starfinder because they leave feeling good."

Katharine was also pleased at the diversity of both the campers and the coaches – teens from Starfinder's Senior Leaders program.



"Rarely in Philly do you see kids from all over the place playing with coaches who have different backgrounds from themselves and each other. Having the diversity of the kids reflected in the diversity of the coaches is huge in showing kids that the face of leadership can look any kind of way."

It was a great summer all around. According to Katharine, "Every camper was just a rock star."

Starfinder Travels The World!

Starfinder Teens Represent USA in Brazil

A Starfinder delegation spent ten amazing days serving as representatives of Starfinder, Philadelphia, and the USA at the Football for Hope Festival in Brazil. The Festival is an official event of the FIFA World Cup, and brings young people from all over the world together for cultural dialogue, knowledge exchange, a fair play tournament, and celebration of the life changing power of soccer. Visit our Facebook page for more photos and video: <http://tinyurl.com/starfinder-facebook>



Young Leaders including Starfinder's Nury Ortiz carry their countries' flags before the tournament's opening match.

In the spirit of fair play, the tournament is played without a referee, with all players agreeing on rules beforehand. Here, Starfinder's team has a pre-match discussion with France's Sport dans la Ville.



France vs. Germany! The high point of the trip for many of the delegates was the chance to go to a World Cup game.



In a flurry of color, music, and dancing, each of the delegations put on a presentation highlighting the culture of their home countries. Above, Team Zambia performs.

Senior Leaders in Sweden

We sent 16 of our teens to Gothenburg, Sweden for the Gothia Cup, the world's largest youth soccer tournament! Sponsored by SKF USA, our team (and three of our program coaches) got to go on the trip of a lifetime, see a new country and play soccer with kids from all over the world.



"You can't help but notice the unbelievable diversity there," said Katharine Cunningham, leader of the trip. "We were sitting next to a group of boys from India, and in front of a girls team from Cambodia, and behind a team from Sierra Leone. It's like being at the Olympics but for kids."

Team Starfinder loved the chance to play soccer with new groups of people. And they were impressed at how much they learned.

"I can see huge changes, not only in my body but also in character and personality," said Matt (age 16). "I learned to be physically and mentally educated and prepared for intense situations, and how to be a more open person, something I've struggled with in the past. Leading activities and taking initiative was just something I wouldn't have done before this trip."



Thank you, SKF, for making this trip of a lifetime possible!



Seniors Become Starfinder Alumni



On June 10th, we celebrated the high school graduation of 22 Senior Leaders. Most are now in college, while others are pursuing jobs or entering the military.

The celebration was as much about looking back as looking forward, and reminded us that high school graduation is just one step in the path towards a bright future; a path our teens have worked tirelessly to pursue.

As our teens went from "Senior Leaders" to "Starfinder Alumni," we took a moment to look back on their time with us and look forward to their future.

"When they were announcing everyone's names, I realized I've been with these guys for four years, and now we're all going separate ways," said David Madrid, who is now studying biology at Arcadia University and plans to become a doctor. "I didn't want [my time at Starfinder] to end, and it felt like yesterday was my first day. Now that I look back, I miss it, but I know I needed to make room for younger people."

Some of our students received extra help with their education this year: thanks to a generous donor, this is the second year that Starfinder has been able to provide \$1,000 scholarships to students, and we were able to increase the number of recipients from two to five.

We can't wait to see what our graduates do next!



Scholarship recipients show off their awards

Get Ready For The Starfinder Cup!

March 7, 2015 at our facility in Manayunk



Brandywine Realty Trust's winning team poses with the 2014 Cup

Gather your soccer-playing friends and colleagues! Enter a team now in a corporate soccer tournament benefitting Starfinder Foundation. Have fun and network with your peers while making a difference to Philadelphia's underserved youth.



Tournament information:

- Registration for a corporate team is \$1,500 and is tax deductible (additional sponsorship opportunities are available)
- Each team plays a minimum of 3 games
- Teams are co-ed and play 5v5 (with a goal keeper)
- Up to 10 players on a roster
- At least 1 woman player per team on the field at all times
- Refreshments, after party, team photo, and more

For more information:

Contact Clare Shepherd at clare@starfinderfoundation.org or 215-764-5410. Visit our site at: cup.starfinderfoundation.org.

News

Where Are They Now?

Mykola Lyakhovolsky Is Working At Starfinder!

Before he graduated from the Senior Leader Program in 2013, Ukrainian- born Mykola Lyakhovolsky used to take three buses from his high school in Northeast Philadelphia to get to Starfinder. Mykola, now 19 and a sophomore at Penn State Abington, recently joined the Starfinder staff for a year of service with Coach Across America. We asked him to reflect on his time at Starfinder.

What are you up to now?

I'm a sophomore at Penn State Abington studying criminal justice. At school I'm a member of THON, an organization that raises money for childhood cancer, and Vice President of the Criminal Justice Association. I'm also a Coach Across America coach here at Starfinder. I'm recruiting students to join the Starfinder program, and when I go to schools and see kids excited about the program, I get really excited too.

What are some big things that changed after you graduated high school?

I realized I can't mess around at college. In high school I treated everything like a joke but now I have to take my college courses seriously. I also realized you get a lot more freedom at college, like you can leave in between classes, but you just have to manage time better.

Do you feel like the lessons you learned at Starfinder are helping you now?

My time at Starfinder really helped me to transition to college. I learned to be outgoing to meet new people and build relationships. I'm now Vice President of a club at college because I have the confidence to speak up instead of sit in the shadows.

Do you have any advice for kids currently at Starfinder?

Starfinder is offering more opportunities and you should take advantage of all of them. Some kids don't take it seriously enough. You never know your limits: be at your full potential whether it's getting extra tutoring or pushing yourself during soccer drills.



Mykola at his Starfinder desk

The Peter Ginsberg Memorial Fund



Peter with his sister at her wedding

This summer we were honored to receive gifts in memory of Peter Ginsburg.

Peter's mother Shelley White reached out to us while looking for a way to continue Peter's legacy of serving others.

"For the past few years I have been searching for the right organization for which to raise money to honor his memory; one that he would have championed. I am very excited to have learned of a city-wide organization, Starfinder Foundation," Shelley said in a letter to friends and family.

Shelley and her community contributed over \$2,600 to Starfinder via the Peter Ginsberg Memorial Fund to support our programs for teens. Our deepest thanks go out to Shelley and her loved ones for their generosity. We strive to instill in our young people the same values Peter demonstrated in his life.

To learn more about Peter or the Peter Ginsberg Memorial fund, visit:

www.starfinderfoundation.org/support-sf/peter-ginsberg.html

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Upcoming Events

11/3 Fall Senior Leaders Program begins

12/21 College Showcase

1/5 Winter Senior Leaders Program begins

1/19 Senior Leader Service Day

2/16 Meet the World Tournament

3/7 Starfinder Cup 2015

Pickup soccer every Tuesday and Thursday at 12

Starfinder On Display!



Starfinder Foundation's facilities were on display at Design Philadelphia this October! The Starfinder redesign was selected as a finalist for the Community Design Collaborative's 2014 Community Design Award.



Hello, Goodbye

As we say goodbye to familiar faces, we welcome new members of the Starfinder family.

This summer **Nick Chrisanthos** moved on to pursue new opportunities. Thank you, Nick, for your many years of service to our kids!

Katharine Cunningham, a long-time coach, has joined Starfinder full time as Program Director, Leadership Development & Assessment.

Samantha Swerdloff is Starfinder's most recent hire, as Senior Leader Program Coordinator & Facility Manager.

We were also joined this fall by three AmeriCorps volunteers for a year of service. **Casey Stewart**, a recent graduate of Bowdoin College and **Mykola Lyakhovolsky**, a Starfinder alum and Penn State Abington student joined our Senior Leaders team through Coach Across America. **Ciara Trainor**, City Year alum and Gaelic football player, is helping with development and communications.

In September, the Board of Directors welcomed **Mitch Stoller** as its newest member. Mitch is Executive Director of the American Association for Cancer Research Foundation and brings over 30 years of experience executive level leadership in the nonprofit sector.

Starfinder's Board also thanks out-going Directors **Stephen Baumann**, **Bruce Earle**, **Doc Miller**, **Hobie Porter**, and **Tony Williams** for their dedicated years of service.

Welcome aboard!



Thank You, Donors! (July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014)

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