



## Soccer for Social Change . . . Leadership Beyond the Game

### Fall 2012 Newsletter

GOAL! Starfinder's soccer, educational and personal development programs inspire young people from underserved communities to achieve success both on and off the field. Starfinder promotes youth leadership, a love of learning, the benefits of teamwork and the rewards of commitment and responsibility.

Thank you Corporate Partners!!



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### First Shot by Stephen Baumann, President

#### Assessment: Knowing How You're Doing

One of the toughest challenges that every "for impact" organization faces (we refrain from using "non-profit" since no one needs profits more than we do) is identifying the time and resources to conduct meaningful program assessment and evaluation. At Starfinder we have worked feverishly to develop a culture where assessment and evaluation go hand-in-hand with program development and implementation. Finding the expertise and discipline to follow through on the design, implementation and analysis of assessment practice is difficult. Yet what we learn from the resulting products is critical to understanding our impact and for driving program improvement and innovation.

We are eager to share with you the following qualitative and quantitative assessments that provide insights into how we are impacting the kids with whom we work and how we are facilitating positive youth development. We are extremely proud of our work and the results that we are now able to share. Many thanks to all of our individual, foundation, and corporate supporters who contribute so much to make our important work possible. Please be in touch if you would like to ask questions or provide feedback about the following assessments (available online at: <http://tinyurl.com/starfinderimpact>):

"Advantage Rule: The Assimilation Experiences of Starfinder Immigrant Youth" (August 2012) by Karen Okigbo -- A monograph that describes how Starfinder impacts the culturally diverse youth in the Senior Leaders Program.

"Senior Leader Interns Summer Reflections" (August 2012) -- The written reflections of 18 Senior Leaders who participated as summer interns during the Starfinder summer program.

"Soccer Girls Rule: Two Year Evaluation Report" (July 2012) by Elizabeth McSpiritt, MD, MPH -- A report on the outcomes from Starfinder's two-year intervention with pre-adolescent girls at two Philadelphia elementary schools.

"Starfinder: Attitudinal Assessment - Preliminary Baseline, Phase II" (July 2012) by Aubrey Kent, PhD -- A summary of outcomes data focused on commitment, involvement, satisfaction, and the 5C's of Positive Youth Development (caring, confidence, connectedness, competence, and character) collected from Starfinder participants over the previous 18 months.

"Get Fit, Eat Right, Grow Strong: Starfinder Foundation's Fitness and Nutrition Program" (Spring 2012) by Elizabeth McSpiritt, MD, MPH -- The results from a pre-test of nutrition and physical activity knowledge of Starfinder elementary and middle school participants.

#### Russ & Wendy Palmer Announce \$100,000 Soccer Girls Rule Challenge!

Starfinder Board member Wendy Palmer and her husband Russ have issued a \$100,000 challenge in support of our Soccer Girls Rule program.

Soccer Girls Rule provides at-risk girls with top-notch soccer programs and strong mentoring relationships. We use the latest research to create curricula and physical activities to address the barriers that inhibit urban girls' interest and participation in sports and wellness activities.

When you donate to Soccer Girls Rule, the Palmers will double your gift up to \$100,000. (Your \$100 donation will have a total impact of \$200!)

Please consider a gift to Soccer Girls Rule and help us meet the Palmer Challenge! Contact Ellen Freda for more information: [ellen@starfinderfoundation.org](mailto:ellen@starfinderfoundation.org) or 215-620-4632.



# Program News

## Come Celebrate Our New Mosaic Mural!

Ribbon cutting: Friday, November 9th, 4pm (reception to follow)

On November 9th, 2012, Starfinder will proudly present the beautiful mosaic mural adorning the outside of our building at 4015 Main Street in Manayunk. This sparkling 230-foot-long ode to soccer around the world was a labor of love and creativity by hundreds of our youth over the past two years.

Acclaimed mosaic artist Baily Cypress tirelessly guided Starfinder through this ambitious project from design through fabrication to installation. Starting in the summer of 2010, she worked with our teens to conceive a design that would work on the long, narrow, shoulder-height ribbon of cement that extends the length of our building. Recognizing the international nature of the game, the multi-national mix of Starfinder's youth, and influenced in no small part by the World Cup that summer, the group decided to create medallions of the soccer federation logos from around the world.

Large panels highlight World Cup champions; smaller panels celebrate the home countries of many of our youth. Additional panels are dedicated to streetfootballworld, The Philadelphia Union, the Philadelphia Independence, and our special program for girls, Soccer Girls Rule. Starfinder's tag line ties it all together: **SOCCER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE.... LEADERSHIP BEYOND THE GAME.**

In addition to our youth, many volunteers contributed their time and work on the mural, including groups from KPMG, Janssen, and AIM Academy. Many thanks to all who made this project such a success.



## Gothia Cup 2012: Meet the World – In Sweden!

How many trips would it take for you to meet people from 78 countries, share a common goal with 37,200 youth, and play soccer against teams from Sweden, Norway, Zambia, and Germany? For most it would require more than a lifetime's worth of travel, but for a group of eighteen U18 Starfinder Senior Leaders the answer is: ONE!



For the second consecutive year, SKF USA Inc. sponsored a team of Starfinder participants to meet the world at the Gothia Cup 2012 in Gothenburg, Sweden. In just seven short days, over 1,600 teams played 4,500 games!

With a team comprised of players hailing from multiple countries, Starfinder's diversity personified the melting pot that is the Gothia Cup. Through videography and photography, Team Starfinder documented their experience -- demonstrating how sport has the power to motivate and unite people by creating a safe environment that supports diversity, tolerance and cultural exchange. (View their video here: <http://starfinderfoundation.org/peacedayphilly.html>.)

Though our team did not enjoy the success in tournament play that they had hoped for, they departed as champions of a more significant game: LIFE!

## Goodbye Summer, Hello Fall... HELLO Starfinder!

Future Leader, Junior Leader and Soccer Girls Rule fall programs begin on October 1, 2012.

For more information, contact Nick Chrisanthos: 215-435-1383 or [nicholas@starfinderfoundation.org](mailto:nicholas@starfinderfoundation.org)

## Starfinder in Good Hands with Allstate

Allstate Insurance selected Starfinder as its exclusive charity for the 2012 MLS All-Star Game and on July 24, brought former US National Team goalie Tony Meola to Starfinder for a private soccer clinic with 45 of our Senior Leaders. In addition to the Hall of Famer's personal instruction, Tony offered inspiring words about the commitment, sacrifice and determination that are necessary to achieve your dreams.

After the clinic, Tony surprised our kids with tickets to the next day's All-Star Game between Chelsea and the MLS All-Stars.

Prior to the game, soccer fans were invited to participate in Allstate's



"Diving for Charity" activity benefitting Starfinder. For each person who took a turn in a simulated dive, Allstate pledged \$25 up to \$5,000. Lucky for us, the line never died down, and Allstate presented a \$5,000 check to Starfinder to support our youth development programs!



This memorable 24 hours was topped off as our kids cheered the "home team" MLS All Stars onto victory against the reigning Champions League cup holders 3-2.



## Where Are They Now?: Starfinder Graduate Dodji Freitas--Senior at Holy Family University

Tell us about your favorite thing from your time at Starfinder.

I was part of Starfinder from 2007 to 2009. My favorite memories from Starfinder were meeting people from different cultures, backgrounds and learning from them, and also attending different soccer workshops.

How did Starfinder prepare you for college?

I believe that Starfinder helped me mature as a player and also as an individual to be able to progress in class and also on the soccer field.

Talk about a leadership opportunity that you had in college that Starfinder helped prepare you for.

I am currently one of the captains of the Holy Family University men's soccer team. One thing we were taught at Starfinder is to work hard, be respectful, never take anything for granted and most importantly respect every person we come across.

Talk about the differences between your high school and college experiences.

College students pay for their classes whereas some high schools are free, so you wouldn't expect college students to cut class. College



students are expected to come to class having already studied the material, so that more information can be covered each semester than is possible in a typical high school setting. College students are typically self-motivated and more able to take responsibility for their own learning.

What words of advice would you give for the kids in the Starfinder program on getting prepared for college?

The first weeks of your first semester will be a whirlwind of activity. However, you have to be at your best to be as socially involved as possible because you will need lots of help in college. One other thing is being organized. The last thing you want to do during the first weeks in college is scramble to get organized. Make a system of organization and stick to it. Also build a strong relationship with your academic advisor.

If there is one thing you wish you knew in high school that you know now, what would it be?

Go to every class, take advantage of the extra help that teachers offer and also go to study halls.

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Dodji is a wonderful role model for all of Starfinder's young participants. We are very proud of what he has accomplished.

## Congratulations Doc Cousounis Award Winners!

This summer's Doc Cousounis Award recipients are **Christian Macena** (age 17) and **Diego Ramirez** (age 16).

These young people demonstrated a commitment to developing soccer through community service and consistently displayed Starfinder's core values. Learn more: <http://tinyurl.com/cousounis>.

## Announcing Two New Community Soccer Partnerships

We are pleased to announce new Community Soccer Partnerships with **Philadelphia Area Girls Soccer (PAGS)** and the **Southeast Pennsylvania Soccer Hall of Fame**.



Visit our website to learn more about these partnerships and how your group can become a Community Soccer Partner.



<http://starfinderfoundation.org/Partners.html>

## Remembrances of a Summer Job

The chill in the October air makes it difficult to remember what the warm summer sun felt like, but for 29 of Starfinder's Senior Leader summer interns a sense of responsibility blankets the cold. Almost two-thirds of the summer interns were first time employees motivated by a day's pay. However it didn't take long for them to appreciate a much deeper connection to their work. Hired to teach young kids how to play soccer, the Senior Leaders began with visions of fun and not much effort. Little did they know that fun is better associated with hard work when mastering the skill of developing youth.

Here are some of the lessons our teens learned working for Starfinder this summer:

*"This job helped me understand that I'm almost ready for the real world, but still got a lot to learn."* Melvin

*"As time went on it became more of a responsibility because I felt like I owed the kids something."* Nabieu

*"It's not easy to keep the kids in control, so now I know how Starfinder coaches feel when we don't listen or fool around."* Mykola



*"Something I learned out of all of this is to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. I had to be prepared for anything to happen, and if something good happened then that's great and I'll continue to encourage it."* Joe

*"I learned to know exactly what I am working with and what I needed to do to reach my goal for the day..."* Doriann

*"It impacted me by giving me insight on the minds of younger kids and a better understanding of their needs...I miss being challenged by those kids to figure out different ways to get them involved and having fun at the same time."* Erick

*"...I didn't mind waking up early morning and taking three trains to get to the worksite as long as I was coaching the type of kids I worked with and doing it with my friends by my side. I can't wait until next year to do it again."* Mohommed

*"Seeing the participants enjoying themselves gave me a sense of satisfaction, but the best feeling came from someone being excited about performing a skill that I had successfully taught them."* Matt

What a great summer!

# More Program News...

## Starfinder and Peace Day Philly 2012

During the week of Sept. 17th, 2012, over 750 high school soccer players representing 43 schools pledged to promote peace.

Starfinder's Peace Day Philly 2012 project began last spring when the Senior Leaders spent four weeks learning about and discussing various conflicts throughout the world. They focused on the idea that personal, local and global peace is all interconnected. From the discussions the Senior Leaders realized that conflicts halfway around the world have a connection to conflicts in their own everyday lives. Moreover, they explored ways to take personal responsibility to create peace in their lives and their communities.



During the summer, the Senior Leaders planned activities for Peace Day Philly 2012 (the local initiative of the United Nations International Day

of Peace) on September 21st. The participating teens quickly learned that discussion is one thing; using their knowledge to effect change is much harder. As in most things, though, they rose to the challenge. They took their role in promoting peace seriously and recognized that the game of soccer has an incredible ability to unite people from all backgrounds.

In order to share what they had learned and bring awareness to the issues of peace, the Senior Leaders drafted a pledge to be read before each high school soccer game taking place during the week of September 17th. They invited high school teams throughout the region to participate. Ultimately over 40 teams made the pledge to promote peace. Together, the players, coaches and referees stood united as they pledged "to be role models through a gesture of sportsmanship—matching the global game of soccer with our local and personal responsibility in furthering peace, tolerance and diversity...." (Go to <http://tinyurl.com/PDP-pledge> for the complete pledge.)

Starfinder is proud of its teens for their leadership in this project and for our shared role of promoting peace in the community.



## Meet a Starfinder Partner: Adam Bruckner and The Helping Hand Rescue Mission

### Tell us about your organization.

The Helping Hand Rescue Mission at 610 North 6th Street serves the homeless and needy in Philadelphia. We have weekly meals, church services, and practical outreach to the community. Throughout the year our youth program offers after school programs, kids' church, a soccer academy, and trips. We serve 50-100 homeless individuals, 30-50 community members, and 40-100 youth.



### Tell us about your background.

I was a soccer rat growing up and the game brought me to Philly 10 years ago. I never planned on working with children, but our church group collided with some youth in the housing projects in North Philadelphia, and a wonderful ministry was born.

### How did you hear about Starfinder?

Through the soccer community in Philadelphia. Several people noted that it would be a good connection for our program.

### What got you interested in partnering with Starfinder?

Starfinder's goal to reach inner city kids lines up perfectly with our hopes for our youth. Their facility and organization make it a smooth partnership.

### What changes (if any) have you seen in your kids from their time working with Starfinder?

We have found that our children are all going to follow something. Unfortunately, in our neighborhood, it often is not a good path. Starfinder has been a consistent and positive presence in their lives. Starfinder gives our children something to look forward to every week, and it gives them the opportunity to simply be a kid away from the neighborhood. Starfinder has been a positive influence in reminding our children that there is a good path out there, but also that they have to choose that path throughout the week (with grades and behavior) to maintain good standing.

### Please share a story about a child who has been impacted by the partnership.

One of our young players was in Kindergarten last year. His foster mom is very protective and does not let him outside because of the neighborhood danger. Our trips to Starfinder opened up a chamber inside of him where suddenly he glowed and ran freely. It was as if the ice was melted around his heart and he suddenly was a new child. He loves the game now.

[www.helpinghandphilly.org](http://www.helpinghandphilly.org)

# Thank you!!!

Thanks to all of our friends and supporters for all that you do to help us deliver services that make a positive difference in the lives of Philadelphia's most underserved children and, most importantly, let them know someone cares.

There are three easy ways to give:

**1 Make a secure donation online at:**  
[www.starfinderfoundation.org](http://www.starfinderfoundation.org)  
(Click the Donate button.)

**2 Mail your contribution to:**  
Starfinder Foundation  
4015 Main Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19127

**3 Give through United Way:**  
Our Donor Choice # is 14963.



All gifts are tax deductible. Questions? Please contact Ellen Freda: [ellen@starfinderfoundation.org](mailto:ellen@starfinderfoundation.org) or 215-620-4632. **Thank you!**