

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

### Spring 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.*

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### First Shot by Stephen Baumann, President

#### Think Globally, Act Locally

Made popular as an environmental slogan in the 70's, "Think Globally, Act Locally" has particular resonance with our programming here at Starfinder as so many of our young people are first or second generation Americans with origins across the globe. Soccer is the world's most popular sport and serves as a wonderful entry point for learning about the many connections we share with other cultures and peoples around the world.

The Passport to Excellence curriculum that we use with our Future and Junior Leaders includes lessons about eighteen countries from six continents with an emphasis on geography and cultural diversity. For each country, we also highlight a historical national figure that epitomizes one of our core values, such as teamwork, integrity, respect, or persistence. For the past eighteen months, all of our participants have been contributing to the creation of a mosaic mural that will be installed this September outside our building in Manayunk. The mural celebrates **Soccer for Social Change...Leadership Beyond the Game** (our motto) while beautifully presenting the national team badges of many of the world's soccer playing countries.

After a great trip in 2011, once again this summer seventeen of our Senior Leader boys will travel to Sweden to play in the **Gothia Cup**, the world's largest youth soccer tournament. Sponsored by SKF USA, the experience provides the opportunity for our boys to meet young people from all over the world and learn from each other as they compete in a sport they all love. When they return they share eagerly with their peers what they have learned and how the experience has broadened their understanding of different cultures.

Starfinder is one of five US members of the 91-member **streetfootballworld** network. Members are united in their belief that soccer has the unique power to change lives and bring people together behind a common goal. Projects and funding from streetfootballworld have enabled Starfinder to learn from and share best practices with like organizations working in Africa, Europe, South America, and Asia. Our young participants are inspired and motivated as they learn about other organizations like Starfinder that are working all over the world to improve health, education, and opportunity outcomes for boys and girls who face tremendous challenges.

In September 2012 Starfinder will participate in the United Nations International Day of Peace as part of activities associated with **Peace Day Philly 2012** (see p. 2). We are now working with our Senior Leaders to examine areas of conflict around the world. They will then come up with ways to share what they have learned with the greater Philadelphia community. Keep reading to learn how soccer at Starfinder provides a wonderful platform for our young people to think globally while they act locally in the Philadelphia community we all share.

*"Soccer is the world's most popular sport and serves as a wonderful entry point for learning about the many connections we share with other cultures and peoples around the world."*

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# Program News

## Peace Day Philly 2012

When you walk into Starfinder's Manayunk facility on any program day, you may be struck by the broad cultural diversity of our kids and their families. In fact, Starfinder participants have first or second generation origins from over 30 different countries. Even more impressive to us is how seamlessly the young people in our group come together, enjoying the similarities and differences in their cultural roots. We frequently engage our participants in activities that help them better understand how we live in one world despite having different backgrounds.



With this in mind, Starfinder will participate in the **United Nations International Day of Peace** on September 21, 2012. During the week of September 17th (and specifically on September 21st), over one hundred million people around the world will participate in this global day of cease-fire and non-violence. Here in Philadelphia we will take part in **Peace Day Philly 2012**, joining others who seek to raise awareness and observe the worldwide commitment to peace.

This spring and summer our Senior Leaders will determine ways in which the Starfinder community can mobilize participation in Peace Day Philly 2012. To contextualize the International Day of Peace for our youth, we will examine conflicts that are currently making headlines in four parts of the world: Myanmar/Burma, Israel and Palestine, Sudan and Colombia. The exhibits and educators at the **National Liberty Museum** will help us delve further into these topics. The Senior Leaders will then develop, design and implement a number of initiatives for the week of September 17th that engage at least 500 Starfinder participants and their families, friends and community as part of Peace Day Philly 2012.

For more information, check out [www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org) and [www.peacedayphilly.org](http://www.peacedayphilly.org) (this site will go live in late May).

## Video Storytelling Class

by Amy Rymer, Starfinder program instructor & owner of AR Creative

A camera has always been a great excuse for me to talk to people and learn about their thoughts and experiences. So I wanted to set up an experience for the Senior Leaders to talk to college athletes while having the comfort of a video camera and the pursuit of a story as the reasons to approach the athlete. All it takes is two lines, "I'm doing a video story about college athletes. Can I ask you some questions about your experiences?"

The Senior Leader boys have just finished the six-week video storytelling class where they created a 60-second video about a Villanova soccer player. They prepared the interview questions and envisioned the action shots they would need to record, which they drew onto a storyboard. Each group member chose a role for the shoot: videographer, interviewer, or director. When the Villanova players came to Starfinder, the Senior Leaders asked them questions like, "What do you wish you had known in high school that you know now?", "How do you balance college classes and playing soccer?", and "What would you have done differently in high school, on or off the field, based on what you know now in college?"



## Doc Cousounis Award Recipients Announced!

Congratulations to this winter's recipients of our Doc Cousounis Award: **Nabieu Sesay, Selena Mercado & Kyle McHugh** (pictured here, left to right)!



This award honors Starfinder participants who exemplify the ideals that Doc Cousounis promoted throughout his life. Nabieu, Selena and Kyle have consistently displayed Starfinder's core values of respect, teamwork, persistence, pride, integrity, and caring. In addition, Kyle and Nabieu have had perfect attendance since November 4, 2011. Congratulations to these outstanding young people!!!

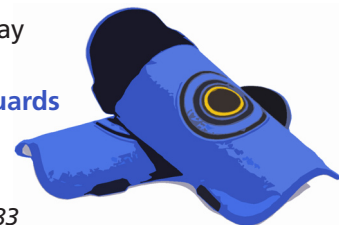
## Our Kids Need Shin Guards!

Please help our kids play soccer safely.

**Donate your used shin guards to Starfinder.**

All sizes are welcome!

Contact: Nick at 215-435-1383  
or [nicholas@starfinderfoundation.org](mailto:nicholas@starfinderfoundation.org)



Then the groups edited their video clips together in Windows Movie Maker, making decisions about who was their target audience, focusing the story using their initial storyboard plans, and choosing which responses from the player were most interesting and helped tell a clear, concise story.

In the beginning of the class, the Senior Leaders said they wanted to learn how to record and edit as well as find out what it would be like to play soccer in college. The project was a great way for our teens to learn about the life of a college athlete. It got them thinking about what they wanted to learn and, ultimately, about their own lives and aspirations.

The Senior Leaders who are going to the Gothia Cup tournament in Sweden this summer will be able to use these new skills in a larger video project that

will include asking people at the tournament about their views of conflict and peace. The video footage will be part of a documentary of their activities throughout the spring, summer, and fall to learn about peace and conflict around the world and plan outreach activities leading up to the International Day of Peace in September.



## Soccer Girls Rule (...yes they do!)

Our pilot program for middle school girls continues to thrive in our second year. We added a new partner site, Girard College, and attendance doubled from 24 regularly attending participants to 50. We received renewed funding from the Women's Sports Foundation's GoGirlGo! program to help us continue our targeted programming for urban girls.



Above: Girls at Girard College sharpening their soccer skills and having fun together during the regular afternoon sessions.

Below: The "Be One" tournament at Starfinder brought together all of the Soccer Girls Rule participants and their families for a day of spirited competition.



Below: Cooke Elementary School participants working on their journals.



## Summer Programs

Once again, Starfinder will provide six weeks of soccer and educational activities for underserved youth this summer. We will expand from four to six sites, serving 500 6-12 year olds (up from 350 last year). We are excited to continue our long-standing partnerships with Germantown Soccer Club, Feltonville Soccer Club and the Multicultural Center in Upper Darby. And this year we will add three new partner sites:

- We will extend our Soccer Girls Rule program with **Cooke Elementary** by providing a summer program (open to boys and girls) at nearby **Barrett Playground** in North Philadelphia.
- We will build on our growing relationship with **Helping Hand**

**Rescue Mission** and the homeless youth they serve with a summer program in Northern Liberties.

- And lastly, we will initiate a summer program supporting the new **Kensington Soccer Club**.

Our summer programs benefit more than our younger participants. They also provide our Senior Leaders with opportunities to gain valuable work experience and to serve as role models. Over the next few weeks our teens will be filling out applications and interviewing for the 30 coveted summer internship positions. Those selected will then go through rigorous training to prepare for teaching, coaching, and working with children. This is the first significant employment experience for most of our Senior Leader summer interns!



## More Program News...

### "Top Chef" Kevin Sbraga Visits Starfinder, Teaches Kids About Eating Healthy

One evening in February, Starfinder welcomed "Top Chef" winner and local restaurateur Kevin Sbraga to help celebrate the launch of our new program, **Get Fit, Eat Right, Grow Strong**. The program, funded by the Walmart Foundation and Janssen Biotech, Inc., highlights the importance of eating nutritious foods and maintaining an active lifestyle. Sbraga graciously accepted our invitation to talk to

our kids about good eating habits and demonstrated how to make a healthy version of sloppy joes, using turkey, adding carrots (because they "are naturally sweet and add a bit of texture), and cooking with canola oil instead of butter.

In the Get Fit program, students will learn about nutrition and prepare and eat healthy snacks. Thanks to the Walmart funding, Starfinder was also able to acquire several exercise machines (treadmills, elliptical machines, and stationary bicycles) for kids—and parents!—to use.



"Top Chef" Kevin Sbraga demonstrates how to make healthy sloppy joes.



The food is a hit with our kids!



Tim Smyer, Market Manager at Walmart, presents a check representing their support for Get Fit, Eat Right, Grow Strong to Starfinder's President, Stephen Baumann.

## Meet Our Staff



Left to right: Nick Chrisanthos, Program Implementation Director; Ellen Freda, Chief Development Officer; Stephen Jackson, Program Development Director; Amy Rymer, Administrative Assistant and Video Storytelling Class Instructor; Heidi Warren, Deputy Director; Jeanette Hibbs, Program Administration Director; and Stephen Baumann, President & CEO

## Thank you!!!

### Thank you, funders!

We are grateful to our most recent funders for their crucial support of our work:

- The **Women's Sports Foundation** renewed its funding of our girls programs for a second year through its GoGirlGo! program.
- The **U.S. Soccer Foundation** provided funding for our Senior Leaders program for high school students.
- **Internet Capital Group** (ICG) is supporting our Junior Leaders program for middle school youth.
- The Philadelphia Foundation's **Fund for Children** renewed funding for our Senior Leaders Program.
- We also received renewed funding from **Football for Hope**, a movement that uses the power of the game for positive social change, led by FIFA, the world football (soccer) governing body, and streetfootballworld.

## Our Girls Need Your Support!

Two years ago, Starfinder started a unique intervention just for girls called **Soccer Girls Rule**. Girls from two schools (Cooke Elementary and Girard College) have been participating in physical and educational activities and the results have been clear: increased respect for themselves and others, athletic endurance and confidence.

**We have to raise \$24,000** to help cover the cost of coaches and other expenses for these very special girls. Please help us as we work to empower, educate and give these young girls the chance to succeed. **Many thanks.**

### Make a secure donation online at:

[www.starfinderfoundation.org](http://www.starfinderfoundation.org)  
(Click the Donate button.)

OR

### Mail your contribution to:

Starfinder Foundation  
4015 Main Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19127

*All gifts are tax-deductable.*

