



Soccer for Social Change . . . Leadership Beyond the Game

Spring 2014 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.

Upcoming events:

3/31 Register online for spring programs- contact Nicholas@starfinderfoundation.org for more information

4/6 Philadelphia Soccer 6 hosts youth clinic fundraiser benefitting Starfinder

4/12 Starfinder Cup

5/21 Future & Junior Leader programs end

6/6 Senior Leader programs end

6/11 Graduation celebration

7/1-12 Starfinder delegation at the Football for Hope Festival in Rio de Janeiro

7/13-19 Starfinder U16 boys team at the Gothia Cup in Sweden

Pickup soccer every Tuesday and Thursday at 12:30

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First Shot by Heidi T. Warren, Executive Director

Brazil! Sweden! Starfinder Kids Travel the Globe, Learn About Themselves

Starfinder youth have been given two extraordinary opportunities to travel the globe this summer – to the Football for Hope Festival 2014 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and to the Gothia Cup in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Fair Play in Brazil...

Starfinder is sending a delegation of six youth (3 boys and 3 girls), a Young Leader (see Nury's story on page 3), and two adults to the Football for Hope Festival 2014 in Brazil. Funded by FIFA, the festival runs in parallel to the World Cup. Team Starfinder is one of 32 delegations from 24 countries -- and the only one from the US.

This international youth festival will include cultural exchange activities, workshops, leadership development exercises and, of course, lots of soccer. The youth tournament will embrace the ideals of fair play soccer. No referees are present. Instead the players negotiate the rules and the plays with each other, across disparate cultures and languages.

Meet the World in Sweden...

A Starfinder team will compete in the Gothia Cup for the third time this summer. Sponsored by Swedish company SKF, the Gothia Cup is the world's largest international youth soccer tournament. To ensure that youth of all backgrounds can participate, SKF sponsors teams from every country in which it has operations, through a program called Meet the World. And indeed, the players come from all corners of the globe. Serious soccer competition is combined with cultural and educational programs that enable the groups to learn from each other and create new bonds of friendship and respect.



Soccer, our common language

Soccer is a global sport, a shared "language" that crosses every cultural and socio-economic divide. We already know that at Starfinder, where our youth live in every zip code in the city and hail from 43 different countries of origin. We don't need international travel to feel the global appeal of the game—it's tangible at Starfinder every day.

However, travelling abroad and meeting peers from around the world is a life-altering experience. Our kids will come back with a different sense of who they are and what they have to offer. They will see their home communities through a new lens.

We look forward to sharing their stories with you when they return!



Meet our Football for Hope Delegates!
tinyurl.com/SF-FFH-delegates

College Coaches Stop By

On Martin Luther King Day we hosted our third annual **College Showcase**. Coaches from 12 local schools came to observe our Senior Leaders play. The showcase is a crucial opportunity for our teens, many of whom do not belong to clubs or leagues, and will not have a chance to be seen by college coaches.



They also fielded questions about what they look for and how players can find a place on a team at a college level.

“Good players play well individually,” Jamie Gluck, Haverford women’s soccer coach, told our

teens. “Great players make other players better.”

“It was good both for coaches around the area looking for players, and for the kids,” said Jean Senat, a coach at Harcum College and Delaware Technical Community College. Jean stopped by to speak to the Senior Leaders about their goals and how they can attain them. “It helps with skill building, but it also helps the kids look forward to college.”

“Soccer is an opportunity, but at the end of the day, education is the main purpose.”

For the first time, we held a separate session specifically for our girls with coaches from Bryn Mawr, Neumann, and Haverford. Jeannette Hibbs, our Program Administration Director, said that it was particularly helpful that all three coaches played at different levels at different schools, and that all three coaches had followed different paths.

“These girls’ aspirations, within soccer or whatever they have a passion for, are attainable,” said Hibbs. “They just have to focus their energy on it. I hope that’s what they take away from this.”



“Soccer is an opportunity, but at the end of the day, education is the main purpose,” said Jean Senat. “That’s what I tried to convey. It’s a good thing they’re playing soccer, but if they’re not doing anything with it or taking advantage of it to go to school, it’s not for anything.”

Please Help Our Friend JJ...

JJ is an energetic 11-year-old who has participated in Starfinder and Feltonville Soccer Club programs for several years. JJ loves soccer, mostly for the camaraderie with teammates! But this year he had to take a break after being diagnosed with a brain tumor. Now JJ and his family need our support in this challenging time. If you wish to make a gift to JJ’s family to help them with medical and transportation costs, please send your contribution to Starfinder. Clearly indicate that that gift is for JJ, and we will pass it on to his family. Thank you from all of us here at Starfinder!



JJ and his family have dinner with the Feltonville Soccer Club

Don’t Miss the Starfinder Cup!



May 10, 2014 9AM-2PM
At our facility in Manayunk

Gather your soccer-playing friends and colleagues! Don’t miss the chance to enter a team in a new corporate soccer tournament benefitting Starfinder Foundation. Have fun and network with your peers while making a difference in the lives of Philadelphia’s underserved youth.

Registration for a corporate team is \$1,500 and is tax deductible. Each team plays a minimum of 3 games, and each team can have up to 15 players. The tournament will be followed by an after party.

For more information, contact Nick Chrisantho at Nicholas@starfinderfoundation.org or 215-435-1383. Visit our site at www.cup.starfinderfoundation.org.

Where Are They Now?: Nury Ortiz is Heading to Basic Training

Nury Ortiz has been with Starfinder nearly since it began. She graduated in 2012 and returned as a coach. Nury was one of two Starfinder participants who traveled to South Africa as part of the US delegation to the Football for Hope Festival, an official event of the 2010 World Cup.

Born in Colombia and raised in Philadelphia, the 20 year old is currently working three jobs while she waits to ship out with the National Guard in the fall of 2014.

When did you start playing soccer?

I started right after my brother started. I must have been seven or eight, and I went to Feltonville [Soccer Club]'s summer camp. My brothers play soccer. Our whole family plays soccer. So when I started, the whole family just molded everything around soccer. It was, get home then do your homework then soccer then bed.

What's the best thing that happened to you at Starfinder?

Definitely the trip to South Africa. That was the closest I was ever going to get to playing in the World Cup. I felt like, as a soccer player, I achieved my dream. A lot of people never get to see the World Cup if they don't have a lot of money.

It was good for me. I developed confidence, and I was forced to speak in front of cameras, and in front of people. I was very shy growing up, and little by little I came out of it. Now I know when to lead and when to follow, and I've benefitted from the discipline soccer requires.

"The girls that I'm coaching now, I just want them to know that all their goals are attainable, if they're willing to put in the energy and the effort. Soccer Girls Rule is trying to help these girls reach their next level."

What do you plan on doing in the future?

Right now, I'm working to save money for college and waiting to go into the National Guard. My dream is to be a medic. Right now I'm an artillery specialist. I could become a sniper, too. For school, I'm going to major in physical therapy with a minor in athletic training at Millersville and West Chester.

I'm excited about it. It's what I want to do. Once, my little brother broke his ankle, and because I had been playing soccer, I knew exactly what to do. That's when I knew I want to have a job where I get to help people. And being a coach at Starfinder, it's not like my other jobs, where I'm looking at the clock waiting to go home. It's fun. And now I want to find a job I really like.

How do you think the girls around you are experiencing soccer?

It's a Colombian thing to play soccer, but a lot of girls don't necessarily play. At one point, I was the only girl on the field at



Nury (right of center) stands with the girls she coaches in the Soccer Girls Rule program.

Feltonville. When I went to South Africa, I wanted to make a little Starfinder in Colombia for girls. You don't see that many girls there playing soccer. You don't see girls without their moms, because that's what you do if you're a girl. You grow up, you wash dishes, and you have kids.

The girls that I'm coaching now, I just want them to know that all their goals are attainable, if they're willing to put in the energy and the effort. Soccer Girls Rule [Starfinder's program for elementary and middle school girls] is trying to help these girls reach their next level.

What's one thing you wish you'd known in high school?

I wish I'd spoken as much back then as I do now. If you don't communicate what's going on, nothing's ever going to get fixed.

Working here has given me a lot of perspective. It helps to understand why I would do certain things when I was younger. And as a coach, you want to keep in mind that everything you say and how you say it will affect the kid.

Do you have any advice for kids currently at Starfinder?

Take advantage of it. I thought Starfinder was just a place to play soccer, but now I'm so thankful for it, after helping and seeing how hard the coaches work to put it together and improve it. I really hope the kids get something out of it.

I appreciate that I am who I am because of this place. It's a great thing to be a part of.

"I am who I am because of this place."

Our Gratitude

Words of Praise

We recently received a note from Darek Panol, the head soccer coach at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. See what people are saying about Starfinder alumni!

"Currently we have two players who have participated in your program. I have had a chance to talk to both of them about your program and I just wanted to tell you how impressed I am with the Starfinder program. I think your program does a great job of preparing young players for life by showing them how to attain their dreams.

Both students have had a very challenging first semester due to some unexpected family issues but both of them are really working hard to stay on track both academically and athletically. I think your program deserves some credit for that. So I just wanted to say thank you, and I wish your program continued success."

Thank you for these words of support!!



The Sixers recognized Starfinder's Nick Chrisanthos as a "Hero Among Us." The award goes to people in the greater Philadelphia area who have made exceptional contributions to improve the lives of children in the community. (Shown above, former NBA player World B. Free presenting the award to Nick at the Sixers' home game on February 24.)

THANK YOU Starfinder Community!



With your help, our fall appeal raised \$34,438 to help us pay coaches, buy equipment, and ensure that our youth get the high quality soccer, educational, and personal development programs they deserve. THANK YOU for supporting soccer for social change!!

Thank You Funders!

Starfinder is deeply grateful to the many funders who support our work. Recent gifts and grants include support from the **Hoxie Harrison Smith Foundation** for Soccer Girls Rule; **Janssen Biotech**, **Dermody Properties** and **Samuel S. Fels Fund** for general support; and the **McLean Contributionship** for an overhaul of our computer lab. Thank you to these and all our funders for making a difference in the lives of our youth!

Thank You Corporate Partners!



Make a difference in the lives of Philadelphia's underserved youth today. Make a gift to Starfinder.

Make a secure donation online:
www.starfinderfoundation.org
(Click the Donate button.)

OR

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

OR

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

All gifts are tax deductible. Questions? Please contact Clare Shepherd: clare@starfinderfoundation.org or 215-764-5410.