



Soccer for Social Change . . . Leadership Beyond the Game

Summer 2013 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.

First Shot

Starfinder Maintains 100% Graduation Rate

By HEIDI WARREN, Executive Director

On June 12th, 2013, we celebrated the graduation of our 28 high school seniors—from our program as well as from their high schools. For the 6th year in a row, 100% of Starfinder's regularly-attending seniors completed high school. And all of them have either been accepted into or have plans to pursue college.

Thanks to generous sponsorship support (see below), for the first time this year Starfinder was able to provide

\$1,000 scholarships to two of its college-bound young leaders. Selena Mercado and Amadou Sow earned this award through their outstanding commitment to Starfinder and its values.

Although graduation marks the end of this group's status as Senior Leaders, it is by no means the end of their relationship with Starfinder. Thanks to our new alumni association, we look forward to staying in touch with our graduates for a long time to come.

Congratulations, Class of 2013! We are so proud of you!

Photos continued on page 2

[Go to the First Shot article on our News page for more photos and news coverage.](#)

Thank you Corporate Partners!!

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Top Left: Senior Leaders demonstrate nutrition lessons they learned by making healthy smoothies for guests. Top Right: Sallen Woewiyu, Jr., a 2012 graduate, eats with instructor, Abby Rudman, before the ceremony. Bottom: Parents, awardees, graduates, and guests flow into the ceremony space after eating dinner.

The Graduation Celebration was made possible by the generous support of our event sponsors:



Program News

Graduation Event Photos

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Top Left: Starfinder staff, Jeanette Hibbs, Nick Chrisanthos, and Heidi Warren, stand with scholarship winners, Selena Mercado and Amadou Sow. Bottom Left: Board member, Doc Miller, shows his support while enjoying the catered dinner. Top Right: Our 2013 Graduates!

Thank you, Vicky! Thank you, Citizens Bank!

Vicky Clark, a Citizens Bank employee, became a valuable member of our team for the past three months, thanks to the Citizens Bank Sabbatical Program.

From mid-May to mid-July, Starfinder enjoyed Vicky's invaluable support as a full-time volunteer. She jumped right into the Starfinder community in numerous ways.

For example, she helped prepare for our June graduation event in a big way—organizing the caterer, the decorations, and layout for the event.

"Graduation was fun," Vicky said. "What stands out is just how wonderful everything looked when we were done. Just to see the end result was really rewarding."

Vicky also taught financial literacy to the Senior Leaders, including lessons on professionalism and goal setting. "I really wasn't sure how to connect with them because I didn't know soccer," Vicky said. But when she talked to them about goal-setting with the example of buying a car there was lots

of participation. She told them, if you want to buy a car, you need a plan, to stick with it, implement it, and make good choices in handling finances. These things apply to anything you do in life.

She helped with summer camp registration, talked to parents, and got to see how excited the campers were.

Lastly, Vicky helped launch Starfinder's Alumni Association, which will enable graduates and past participants to stay in touch with Starfinder and connect them to new opportunities. Vicky plans to stay involved with Starfinder as a volunteer, especially with the Alumni Group.

After working with the Senior Leaders in the classroom, at the summer camps, and in developing the Alumni Association, she built strong relationships.

"Here I see how the love of this sport brings all different cultures and walks of life together. It's truly amazing."

We are so grateful to Vicky for all

"Here I see how the love of this sport brings all different cultures and walks of life together. It's truly amazing."



Senior Leaders with Vicky after class.

her help and to Citizens Bank for loaning her to us. We look forward to continuing both relationships!

More Program News...

Camp Teaches Kids *and* Coaches

Kiki and Sharif worked on their penguin touches, toe touches and circles. Noah and Tianni joined forces in the partner head juggling game. Mekhi, Shayla, and Hazel became experts at Capture the Cones.

Just another day in the Starfinder Summer Camps.

Our soccer and education summer camps are going strong. By the end of the summer nearly 300 youth, most of whom live in underserved communities throughout the City, will have had a chance to participate. In addition to soccer skills and team building games,

campers are learning about eating healthy and working together, all while having fun.

And it's not just the campers who are getting a great experience. Ten teens from our Senior Leaders program are working hard as camp coaches and learning a lot about what it takes to be a great leader.

For Cyd Marie, who is more comfortable in her native Spanish, coaching is forcing her to use English more and increasing her confidence with the language. "I'm learning that I have to try to talk and not be shy," Cyd

Marie said. "When I try to tell the kids something and I get stuck, I ask the other coaches who speak Spanish and they tell me how to say it in English."

Erick is learning about how to work with children from all different backgrounds and help them succeed on the field. "The biggest challenge is the variety of kids and their personalities and learning how to cope with each one individually," Erick said. "The best part is when you see change in the kids—when a kid doesn't want to play at the beginning, but at the end he's happy and really involved."



Erick Cerrada, right, and Daniel Ortiz, left, encourage teamwork during a hula hoop activity.

We did it. YOU DID IT!!

Thanks to you, our generous community, we raised \$10,276 for our summer camps, surpassing our \$10,000 goal. Big thanks to all who contributed. You've made a big difference in the lives of our kids!



Cyd Marie Romero gives instructions.

To Your Health!

Starfinder is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, a national organization founded by the American Heart Association and Clinton Foundation whose goal is to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity and to empower kids to develop lifelong, healthy habits. The Alliance empowers the people who influence kids by providing access to educational resources and science-based best practices.

This summer we are piloting a health and nutrition curriculum from

the Alliance, which we aim to use in our year-round programs. One aspect of the new curriculum is called EmpowerMe and emphasizes youth facilitating lessons for other youth.



Coach Jakeema Burton jumps like a star with kids during a muscle-building activity.

This is a great leadership opportunity for our Senior Leaders who work as camp coaches. They are teaching participants about limiting screen time with electronic devices, choosing healthy snacks and drinks, and quick games that help build muscle while playing.

This partnership has been a great resource to Starfinder, helping us hone our policies and practices and strengthen our health and physical education program. Even after the six-month engagement ends, we will continue to have access to Alliance curricula and teaching resources.



Other News

Thank You, Funders

Starfinder is pleased to announce a recent grant in support of our Senior Leaders Program from **The Fund for Children of The Philadelphia Foundation**. This program was also underwritten by the **Citizens Bank Foundation** and by

Wells Fargo.

Our Soccer Girls Rule Program has also received crucial funding recently from **The Charter Foundation**, the **Green Tree Community Health Foundation**, and the **Union Benevolent Association**.

And finally, we are grateful to the **Carita Foundation**, the **Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation**, the **Seybert Foundation**, and the **Louis Cassett Foundation** for their grants this spring and summer.

Bon Voyage, Amy! ...Welcome Aboard, Clare!

At the end of July we bid a sad adieu to Amy Rymer, our multi-talented Administrative Assistant, video expert, and program instructor. For the past 3 years Amy has been an invaluable member of the team, and we will miss her tremendously. But we are excited for her as she pursues

her passion for mediation and conflict resolution, which will take her to El Salvador for a year to facilitate workshops with Alternatives to Violence Project (avpusa.org).

Meanwhile, we are delighted to introduce Clare Shepherd, who joins Starfinder as our new Administrative

and Communications Associate. In addition to keeping our back office operations in ship shape, Clare will put her deep experience in nonprofit marketing and communications to immediate use. Welcome, Clare!

Imagining the Future of Starfinder's Facility

We have just completed an 8-month collaboration with the Community Design Collaborative to reimagine our facility. Thanks to their volunteer team of architects, designers, and engineers, Starfinder now has an impressive road map for improving our building's energy efficiency, program capacity, beauty and comfort. There's a lot of work to do before any of these ideas can become reality, but we are inspired by the possibilities!

And our participants got inspired, too. During the winter, fifteen Senior Leaders got to work with architects from the Architecture in Education program to create their own visions for

the building. The 8-week course taught them basic architectural concepts and gave them a chance to dream big. Their models were on display during our Graduation Celebration in June.



Top Left: Proposed elevation design by Collaborative team. Top Right: Senior Leaders draw plans before building the models. Bottom Right: Max Dossou lays the roof on the building in the architecture class.

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
(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 Heidi Warren: heidi@starfinderfoundation.org or 215-779-9426. **Thank you!**