



Soccer for Social Change . . . Leadership Beyond the Game

Winter 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

We Love Our Building, But...

By **STEPHEN BAUMANN**
President

It's hard to believe that we just celebrated the 5th anniversary of the purchase of our magnificent facility here in Manayunk. The building has held up well with thousands of hours of usage, tens of thousands of users, and thankfully only a handful of soccer balls lost forever among the lights and insulation. Our programs have grown, and the young people who come to our programs from all over the region have made our facility their second home. Much of the impact we achieve is related directly to the positive experiences they have on a daily basis as they interact with supportive peers and adults in our unique environment. Imagine what we might accomplish in an even more dynamic space!

Since January and for the next 5 months, we are working with the **Community Design Collaborative (CDC)** to imagine how improvements and enhancements to our physical environment can make our facility even more special. The CDC is a community

design center that provides pro bono design services to nonprofit organizations in greater Philadelphia. The design team from CDC is spectacular and is now meeting with a Starfinder task force composed of staff, board directors, program volunteers, donors, Starfinder youth, and Starfinder parents. The discussions have been informative, energetic, and often both off the wall and out of the box. What else would you expect from a Starfinder team?

Concurrently, for the next eight weeks, fifteen Senior Leaders will engage with three design professionals from the **Architecture in Education** program of the Philadelphia Center for Architecture. The program uses architecture as the basis for hands-on, interactive projects that connect, integrate and deepen student learning about design. The Senior Leaders will explore their world through drawing, writing, model making, field trips, research, observation, and class presentation. This opportunity provides each Senior Leader the kind of engagement with real world problem solving that will make a difference for a life time.

We look forward to June when we can share the outcomes of this exciting project with everyone in the Starfinder family. If you have suggestions for improvements to our facility that you believe will make the experience for our kids even better, please share your ideas.

Thank you Corporate Partners!!

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Field Improvements

- Cleverness / lighting / Daylights
- Plexiglass partitions to enclose field
- Tiered seating / raised platform
- Improved lighting at the very least

Entry

- Obvious & visible point of entrance
- Solid or Void
- Material Change
- Cheering / Canopy

Report number: 01-20-13
Date: 01-20-13
Starfinder Foundation
Case Studies: Field Space & Entry

The Community Design Collaborative provides an advisory service. All work is provided on a pro bono basis. The Collaborative is not responsible for any work that is not approved by the client. The Collaborative is not responsible for any work that is not approved by the client. The Collaborative is not responsible for any work that is not approved by the client.

The Community Design Collaborative presented a variety of case studies to inspire brainstorming about possible improvements to the facility.

All in the Starfinder Family

By **STEVE JACKSON**
Program Development Director

Sony and Sothea McBain, sisters from the Logan section of Philadelphia, walked into the building with huge smiles on their faces—they had brought some friends. They did not need any prompts. They knew what to do.

“Sony and Sothea led by example,” said Jesse Petrillo, a Junior Leader coach who works with the girls. “Whether they are on the field or in the classroom, you know what you are going to get from them. Sony is very personable, helpful, and always willing to motivate and teach her teammates. Sothea is very bright and comes to Starfinder to learn. This

“At Starfinder, giving your all to the game is the best feeling.”

- Sony MacBain, Starfinder participant



Sothea MacBain plays during the Junior Leaders program.

hunger for knowledge is contagious. They both have a very bright future.”

The Starfinder culture is special, and the fervor and commitment of the families that return over and over again helps create our unique environment.

Sony, Sothea, and Joshua MacBain came to Starfinder’s programs over a year ago. How they came to be part of the Starfinder family is a wonderful story.

In 1991, Ken and Anita MacBain moved from the Philadelphia suburbs to the Logan section of Philadelphia. They immersed themselves in the Cambodian community and worked with a Cambodian church to help provide an array of programs to its members.

After ten years of working with local families, the MacBains created LOGAN Hope, a private Christian school for grades K-8, designed to help children, mostly Cambodian, who struggle with learning in a traditional Philadelphia public school classroom setting.

“We wanted to serve poor families, who didn’t have or perceive school choice, with a safe and excellent school,” said Anita MacBain, mother of Sony and Sothea. In its first year, LOGAN Hope enrolled 17 children and had 3 teachers. Today, there are 70 students, and they have graduated 18 young people

who are currently attending quality high schools and colleges throughout the region. They have designed a school that values excellence, teaching youth that they have a choice in their educational pursuits and there are people who care about their choices.

After LOGAN Hope started, Ken and Anita decided to adopt a child from Cambodia. In 2002, after a long and arduous process, the MacBain’s welcomed Joshua to their family. Just a few years later they were able to adopt Sony and Sothea.

Both girls admit to struggles when they first arrived in the USA as 4 and 5-year-olds. Their biggest struggles were in English and math, but they both understood the importance of perseverance and the impact that these subjects would have in achieving their life goals.

“I keep telling myself I will have a bright future and potential,” Sothea said. “But right now, I have to suck it up and do my schoolwork to get that great future. I might break down sometimes, but I have to get back up. Math will not be the [downfall] of me.”

Although their attitudes and aspirations are clearly nurtured by their family and teachers, they believe Starfinder plays an important role in their development and future.

“Starfinder is good for me, because instead of going to the computer, I get to go out and do physical [activity], get in shape and get healthy,” Sony said. “Starfinder is hard, but it is also fun. My skills in soccer have improved a lot. There

continued on page 3



(L-R) Emily Uk, Sony MacBain, Sothea MacBain, and Emily Khem.

is teamwork and encouraging words.”

“Team sports, in particular, help children learn teamwork, leadership, and the need for discipline to get their other work done, as well as to train and improve on their own,” Anita said. “Children in our community have many easy distractions and activities that either lead in negative directions or don’t lead to learning and growth. Structured learning with fitness and a sport that they can play for life is a valuable combination.”

This is why she continues to bring her children and invites others to join. And, like any good parent, she understands the need for a quality education.

“The kids don’t come if they don’t complete their homework before the program,” Anita said.

When evaluating our programs, participant retention and referrals are two indicators of success. The MacBains are among our most eager supporters, continually finding ways to integrate the kids from their community and LOGAN Hope into our program.

The culture that you see at Starfinder is one that invokes inclusion, understanding, guidance, support, knowledge, and friendship.

“At Starfinder, giving your all to the game is the best feeling. Getting that feeling that you tried your hardest makes you feel good,” Sony said.

The Olsan Shinguard Challenge

You don’t need much to play soccer—a ball, some open space, and a friend or two. But there’s one thing that every kid should have to prevent injury: a decent pair of shinguards.

Many of our young players can’t afford even the most basic equipment. That’s why **Michael and Kimberly Olsan** stepped up with their Shinguard Challenge this winter. If we could collect at least 100 pairs of donated shinguards, they would contribute the funds for another 100 pairs of new shinguards.

Thanks to our generous community, we collected 130 pairs of gently used shinguards, and the Olsans chipped in for 100 more. **Thank you for keeping our kids protected!**

Staff Transition

In January Ellen Freda departed her post as Chief Development Officer at Starfinder. **Thank you, Ellen, for all your hard work on behalf of Starfinder and our youth!** Taking over her role, Heidi Warren has assumed the position of Executive Vice President & Chief Development Officer. Heidi will focus on strategic organizational development and fundraising. She welcomes your fundraising ideas and leads!
heidi@starfinderfoundation.org

Upcoming Events

March 23rd
Soccer Girls Rule “Be One” Event

June 4th
Soccer Girls Rule Jamboree

April 1st
Beginning of Spring Programs

June 12th
Starfinder Graduation Event

April 2nd
Final presentation of Community Design Collaborative Facility Design Project

Congratulations Doc Cousounis Award Winners!



Tallinn McNulty, Soccer Girls Rule participant

This winter’s Doc Cousounis Award recipients are Tahir Mohammed (age 16), Irvin Dinkins, Jr. (age 11), and Tallinn McNulty (age 11).

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>.

“Tallinn shows responsibility beyond her years. As a captain of the Soccer Girls Rule program at Cooke, she is consistent in her leadership by helping her peers to calmly resolve problems with fairness, by showing respect as a good listener, and by reminding teammates to keep the bus clean of snack wrappers.”

- Jeanette Hibbs, Soccer Girls Rule Director & Coach

More Program News...

2nd Annual Starfinder College Showcase

Twenty-five college soccer coaches from Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Washington D.C. came together at Starfinder for our 2nd Annual College Showcase on Monday, January 21, 2013.

The day started with a little “pep” talk from one of the college coaches, Steve McAnulty, assistant coach at the United States Military Academy. He briefly explained what the coaches would be looking for in their play. In addition, and more importantly, he highlighted that the coaches would be concerned with their academic records and the quality of their character.

The talk really worked because all of the kids played with passion, intensity, and inspiration. Every game was highly competitive and was played in a manner that demonstrated the kids’ personal skill as well as their knowledge of the game. When you combine these attributes with the kids’ love, desire, and dedication to the game, it was not a surprise that many of the coaches left incredibly impressed.

“Starfinder provides so many services for the young kids that help to make them better people both on and

off the field,” said Brian Gill, Assistant Coach at Georgetown. “I think having a college showcase at Starfinder allowed the players to gain perspective first hand on how closely linked their academic and athletic worlds actually are. It was a great event for us to see these players

in their natural environment, getting a chance to showcase their skills on the field, and for us to learn more about them as people.”

The College Showcase is an important component to the Senior Leaders

Program. Many of Starfinder’s participants do not play on a club team, making their high school games the only opportunity to be seen by a college coach.

Unfortunately, college coaches do not often recruit at high school games. Therefore, the College Showcase becomes the opportunity for each player to impress a coach who can help him realize one of his many goals – playing college soccer.

Our coaches continually encourage each Senior Leader to talk about his goals, ambitions and aspirations for the future. They discuss with all participants the steps that are necessary to achieve their goals and the ways in which Starfinder can provide assistance. The College Showcase is a wonderful opportunity for the Starfinder staff to reinforce these important messages.

“Starfinder provides so many services for the young kids that help to make them better people both on and off the field.”

- Brian Gill, Georgetown Assistant Coach



The Senior Leaders listen to Steve McAnulty, assistant coach from the United States Military Academy, while he describes what the coaches are looking for in their play.



We did it! YOU did it!

We surpassed our Fall Campaign goal.

Thank you. Thank you. **THANK YOU.**

You, our community, just did something truly **extraordinary!** 283 generous friends helped us surpass our ambitious fall campaign goal of \$75,000.

Thanks to **YOU**, we raised a total of \$75,625!

More importantly, your donations will allow us to continue to serve all of the kids who need us. Kahlia and Kadir, pictured here, along with all the children Starfinder serves, thank you for your generosity.

Thank You Donors! (Jan. 1, 2012 through Feb. 12, 2013)

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Senior Leaders in the debate class make blog posts with text and video clips to support their choices for the best soccer team in the world.

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