

## Youth Sports Networking Seminar

December 15, 2014 – The First Tee of Greater Philadelphia

### Combining Sports and Other Topics

#### Introductions

- Nancy Peter: Introductions & welcome
- Who has attended previous PYSC Seminars, and who is here for the first time?
- How to become a PYSC Partner

#### Announcements

- **Mental Health and First Aid** - Mental Health and First Aid is offering free training that will educate you on recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness. A special curriculum is designed for adults who work with youth. Training is offered at local hubs, but they can come to your organization. For more information you can contact Dave Monico at [dmonico@pmhcc.org](mailto:dmonico@pmhcc.org) or [215-790-4990](tel:215-790-4990), or visit their website at [www.healthymindsphilly.org](http://www.healthymindsphilly.org)

#### Panelists

##### Todd Pride – Mid-Atlantic Youth Anglers and Outdoors Program

- I was exposed to the outdoors youth when I was young and I never let it go.
- A lot of people don't know about the competitive world of fishing. Around Philadelphia there are a lot of random people fishing here and there and people believe that it is just that, random. However, that's really the smallest part of fishing.
- The NFL is a 10 billion dollar industry. Bass fishing is a 17 billion dollar industry. The Bass master Elite Series is one of the most elite competitions and we brought it to Philadelphia.
- We have introduced about 7000 youth to fishing. About 70% of our work is in Philadelphia
- The core of our program is very academic.
- The major element of competitive fishing is not sitting and waiting for a fish. But, targeting what you're looking to catch.
- The core element of fishing knowing what to catch and when to release.
- It's the core element because it's really the most important because it directly effects the fish population. But really at the end of the day, it's most basic function is about keeping clean water.
- If trash is put in the grass in a park, it will be washed up by water and it will eventually end up in a body of water. When trash ends up in a body of water, it directly effects clean water and the health of fish.
- Storm water/Watershed is a very big initiative that is focused around; when it rains where does that water go and what does it pick up along the way? Oil on the ground, pesticides, trash...Eventually that dirty water ends up in the river.
- The concern for our water is what brought the Bass master Elite Series to our city. Because we have gotten very concerned about our storm water management, we were able to secure hosting rights in order to help bring more attention to our cause.
- We wouldn't have been able to attract this tournament without a healthy body of water.
- It's very hard to get our youth focused on STEM if there is something not fun about it.
- For us, STEM becomes fun because we inherently tie it in together with something fun, fishing.

- When we're teaching kids about fishing, we're also teaching them about the variety physics elements at different locations of water. However, when we teach our youth, we don't tell them they're learning physics. If you put those academic labels out there, the youth tend to be fearful and shy away from it. However, if you word it in a way where it's apart of golf, or something fun, then the youth don't shy away from learning because they don't realize until later that it's connected with academics.
- One of the major problems that hold youth back today is not being exposed to the academic component of athletics.
- Youth will take a different level of approach in athletics once they realize they're able to connect their fun to bigger things.

#### Joshua Nims – Franklin's Paine Skatepark Fund

- Franklin's Paine Skatepark Fund's mission is to fund education programs through their facilities and to spreading the love of skateboarding.
- I learned how to be a professional mason through building a Skatepark. That was my first connection of athletics and other topics. Since then I've help build 6 skate parks in Philadelphia.
- We were able to connect a nexus between skateboarding and the creative class in Philadelphia.
- What is the creative class? Fashion designers, graphic designers, program writers. Industries which will be a driving force in Philadelphia's economy
- We pitched our program on the platform that this creative class is connected with skateboarding, and in turn our program is directly connected to the future of Philadelphia's economy. The city and the state decided to invest in this.
- Stone management, architectural design, and recreational design are all a part of the nexus in creating 21<sup>st</sup> century recreation.
- The idea that you can tie together science, engineering, and skateboarding all in the same place has been exciting for the community, the state, and for us.
- We create academic incentives for our youth, if they fulfill the quota for those incentives they are rewarded with 'fun'
- We give away quality equipment to our youth. Quality equipment is key in order to do anything at a higher level. Even if we are very focused on academics, It's important to perform at the highest level in anything you do, and in skateboarding, that is with quality equipment.
- Homework completion is a common incentive for us because it directly ties to their school education. Although it takes perseverance to master a trick, it's equally important to set academic incentives, such as homework. If you set academic incentives, the perseverance that they learn in mastering a trick tends to trickle over to their academics.

#### David Zimmaro – The First Tee of Greater Philadelphia

- We teach leadership and life skills through the game of golf.
- Our national curriculum is already set for us because we're a national program.
- All of the things that happen in life, happen on a golf course.
- We have a core value system that we preach to our youth. The system is as follows: Honesty, Integrity, Sportsmanship, Respect, Confidence, Responsibility, Courtesy, Perseverance, and Judgment.
- We design activities that are designed to make our youth fail in order to teach perseverance.
- We often combine sciences with golf. The two sciences that we use are physics and biology.
- Social aspects are now being integrated into our program. For example, healthy eating.
- We're lucky to have volunteers who are in the restaurant industry. Our volunteers set-up workshops for our youth where they can learn how to cook healthy meals at home.
- We're also lucky to have police officers who volunteer to teach our youth about crime prevention and anti-bullying policies.
- Why? We do that because we're not trying to find the next Tiger Woods, but because we're trying to find the next leader in their generation.
- While youth do come for golf. It turns out many of them come with other interest and reasons. For example, some of them are very interested in science while others are very interested in the outdoors.

- We're able to combine this variety of elements in order to create something fun and educational.

## Q&A

Q: - When you teach academics in sports, is it always imbedded or is it more formal?

A: -David: A good mixture is critical. For example I would say, "Today we're gonna do a little science," in order to spark some interest that will get their minds running. In contrast, there are often situations where the opportunity to imbed a scientific lesson during golf arises. We call those moment coachable moments. It's important to capitalize on those coachable moments because the children learn from you to think for themselves about how to connect golf to other things.

Todd; We talk about gear ratio and why one gears ratio is important to one another, which is ultimately about understanding what gear ratio actually means to a reel. We will also talk about what type of plastic is used in a particular reel. We often spend a lot of time on these very specific elements of fishing. We have teachers that are there to make that connection between what they're doing, and what they will learn in the classroom.

Q: - Particularly for some of the academic content knowledge that you imbed in your programs, how do you tangibly connect that with schools?

A: Todd; We connect a lot of our elements with school curriculums. We will relate what they're learning at that point in the academic year to what we do throughout our athletic year. We try to seamlessly work what we do to what happens in the academic year. When I was in high school we had about as many sports as a college campus. During my youth, there was no connection between athletics and academics. The biggest advantage that we have is providing these opportunities for youth. It becomes more about exposing the youth to everything. It can be something as small as habit, for example, the habit of studying.

David; We also go into schools in the beginning of the year in order to create a lesson plan that works accordance with academics. Also, informally we connect math and physics to golf, which allows them to apply their knowledge to real life situations whenever the opportunity arises.

Q: - For small non-profits, the cost of insurance is a big consideration.

A: Josh; Insurance was very difficult for us because there is this notion that skateboarding is very dangerous. When I began my career I was in law school, instead of passing the bar exam I did research on skateboarding. I found that there was a great lack of recreational space for skateboarding. What we do is create the facility as a space that is classified as a donation to the city, therefore, the city owns it. For me, it's about taking chances and understanding the liability. Sometimes it's about the creativity of your argument on why our youth need this activity. The argument that I presented with skateboarding is our youth need to learn to take chances.

Todd; A lot of national associations are helping to bring insurance to small organizations. I wouldn't let that hold you back.

Q -How do you guys bring people into your programs to teach areas that require expertise?

A: David; We're lucky enough to have an after-school teacher who comes in to teach. However, most of our staff does have to go out and learn whatever technical or expert aspect is necessary in order to teach it to our youth..

Todd: When it gets really technical we don't necessarily rely on staff. We will have about 5 training seminars a year, in these seminars our staff is educated on the technical aspects in order to relay it to the youth.

Josh; We had this one guy who was very talented at teaching. But, it's hard to rely on one person. If you can initially find one great person who can efficiently train someone, and that person can then train another, it creates this cycle where we don't need to rely on one person. Because, a variety of persons have knowledge and experience teaching.

Nancy; After-school staff are expected to be classroom teachers, guidance counselors, sports experts, artist, etc. How do you create a staff person that is competent in all those areas? One of the reasons we created the OSTRC is because we saw that this was a problem. We try to provide training services and expediting services for people are willing to go out and teach once or twice a week.

Q: How can I get some of my schools connected to some of the programs that you guys offer?

A: David; Email me. We're always looking for schools to partner up with.

Joshua; Email me.

David; We're always looking for a champion within an organization or school that can help us grow.

Nancy: PYSC has a variety of programs that are very different and spread across Philadelphia. If you just look at the directory, you should find a variety of organizations that are similar to yours.

Q: We provide scholarships for youth to do after-school programs. What is your application process like? At the moment I'm too nice because we accept everyone.

A: Josh: What we do usually is work through a school or after-school program, they are the ones who really pick the kids. Once they are enrolled, we look at grades, attitude, and attendance. If you aren't complying with the academic standards then you're in trouble. It's not about being selective, it's about the participation.

David: We charge a small monetary fee. The fee doesn't only bring in a larger income, but it makes the parents a stakeholder. It's saying that they are committed to doing the eight weeks. As small as it is, it's still something that they're contributing. Also, If the students don't show up, they can't go on the out-of-facility activities.

Todd: We don't have an application process.

Q: In terms of elements like crime prevention, risk-reduction, etc. What have you done to impact those factors?

A: Josh; We have a skate park in Fishtown. This park had a significant drug program in the midst of a tough neighborhood. The police told us that after we built our skate park, there has been an 80% reduction in crime within the 3-block radius of our skate park. The skate park engages young people by giving them something to do on a weeknight between 7:00pm-10:00pm. We know that youth are using the facility all the way up until the closing hours, instead of being somewhere else.

Todd: A lot of youth come in and change immediately. These youth are in a sense, trapped in these concrete jungles. When they get into the outdoors, it exposes them to a completely new perspective of what life is like.

David: Working with SJJ (Sports for Juvenile Justice) we see the dramatic turn around that youth have once they are exposed to the outdoors. They're completely out of their element when they are initially exposed. It opens their eyes to something new, which changes their outlook on life because they don't want to get in trouble. Because, they know if they get into trouble they won't be able to come to the golf course that week. We give them a foundation that allows them to come back each week in order to work to become better.

## **Small-Group Discussions**

### **Next Seminar**

**Topic: Connecting Sports and Schools** – The panel will discuss some of the opportunities and challenges that arise from connecting sports and schools.

**Location:** Philadelphia School District Education Center

**Panelists:**

- **Robert Coleman**, Executive Director of Athletics, School District of Philadelphia
- **TBA**