

****PRESS RELEASE****

BEYOND SOCCER, INC. AWARDED \$60,000 FROM U.S. SOCCER FOUNDATION

Beyond Soccer Receives Grant to Fund Innovative Programming That Keeps Teens in the Game [May 2018]

LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS – Beyond Soccer, today announced it has been awarded a three-year \$60,000.00 grant from the U.S. Soccer Foundation, the national model for sports-based youth development programs in underserved communities. This grant, intended to fund Beyond Soccer's year-round Sport, Health, Leadership & Academic programs, is extra special because Beyond Soccer was one of only four organizations, selected nationwide, to receive this grant.

"This support is a game changer. Like the U.S. Soccer Foundation, we recognize the transformative power of sports to open doors, improve lives and bridge gaps between communities. A sustaining 3-year grant will allow us to make an even larger investment in our Lawrence programs and kids. We can grow our influence as a model for positive sports-based youth development, not only in Lawrence, but throughout Massachusetts. With this support, we can continue our important work, including cross collaborative efforts, such as private-public facility projects and innovative program approaches, like Active Science with Merrimack College and the YMCA, and our multi-sports leadership academy, ensuring that young people stay connected to supportive, quality, and low-cost programs on a year-round basis. Thank you, U.S. Soccer Foundation for all the 'game changing' you do for youth organizations like Beyond Soccer across the country." – Stephanie McArdle

This grant was awarded as part of the U.S. Soccer Foundation's annual Program Grants. Each year, the Foundation identifies one specific category or theme in the sports-based youth development field and seeks to support organizations that are related to such categories. The U.S. Soccer Foundation awarded grants this year to organizations that are working to address the alarming drop-off rate of teenage participation in team sports.

About Beyond Soccer: Since 2006, when Beyond Soccer formed Lawrence's first girls team --the Wolves-- for competition in the Essex County Travel League, its programs have been helping kids move in the right direction related to obesity prevention, enhanced high school graduation and improved sports participation and retention rates. Today, Beyond Soccer connects 2,000 boys and girls, with much of that tracked to the Lawrence Public Schools through comprehensive school-day sport, team-building & fitness curriculum. Travel Soccer, our principal program, has been flourishing since that first girls team almost 12 years ago. It provides 250 middle and high school youth with a minimum of 26 weeks of consistent participation. These players also benefit from homework assistance in our office computer lab, summertime employment, plus financial literacy, and other college counseling support to help them become better prepared following high school. Beyond Soccer's cooking courses and "Fuel for Performance" programs focus on preparing meals with healthy ingredients in its on-site Health Kicks! teaching kitchen. Further, our recreational soccer league presents an important after-school feeder program for elementary school students in the spring and fall and a great opportunity for high school participants to get involved as Junior Coach Mentors. A menu of summer camps give our city kids meaningful, quality, and affordable summertime experiences, where they can maintain access to our long-term, year-round support system, where they can develop their sports interests, and find inspiration from motivational speakers, fitness, and sports professionals. Included programs are a collaborative Lawrence Sports Leadership Academy, which reached 165 middle and high school youth in its 2nd year, and a two-week Soccer & Wellness Camp, heading into its 8th year this July.

