

RailHawks Community Initiatives

The Carolina RailHawks have been teaming up with other organizations in the community to help promote the education of our youth. The RailHawks are currently working with Be Active North Carolina to help promote activity among elementary and middle schools students, Wake County Libraries to help promote literacy, Boys and Girls clubs and the Salvation Army to help tutor and provide positive role models to underprivileged children. In the past the RailHawks have also been helping out with English as a second language classes to help Latino students integrate better with the community they live in. Keep an eye out to see where the RailHawks are and how you can help them promote the health and education of the youth in your community.

Current Programs

"Soar with Swoops" Challenge

The Carolina Railhawks have joined forces with Be Active North Carolina in promoting physical activity among the communities youth. Over the past 25 years, youth have become increasingly inactive at an alarming rate. Because of this Swoops, Caleb Norkus, Nate Norman and other players are taking an initiative to get today's youth active. The RailHawks have been visiting local elementary and middle schools to promote the "Soar with Swoops" challenge. So far over 50 schools were visited and the RailHawks have talked to over 15,000 students.

Swoops and his friends at the Carolina RailHawks along with Be Active are challenging everyone to be active for 30 minutes a day for one month. Upon completion of the challenge and the signature of an adult confirming the completion of the tasks, they will be sent two vouchers for any 2009 Carolina RailHawks' USL-1 home match.

Soccer Kids America

Soccer Kids of America is a Raleigh based non-profit organization that teaches life skills to underprivileged children. Founded by Erin Johnson the pilot season took place at Brentwood Elementary in Raleigh with the help of Mark Schulte and Joseph Kabwe as volunteer coaches

At Brentwood Elementary school, underprivileged youth learned life skills, including respect, integrity, teamwork, perseverance, diversity, and sportsmanship, all through the medium of soccer. The program consisted of one-hour sessions during after-school hours once a week for seven weeks.

Boys and Girls Club

Every day after practice, several RailHawks including Mark Schulte, Joseph Kabwe and Caleb Patterson go to the Brentwood Boys and Girls club to tutor underprivileged children. The players spend an average of four hours a day helping Boys and Girls club staff with all the different programs they have going on. Some of the recent activities include: a mock press conference where the children asked questions to the players in a formal press conference setting and a live radio interview at WKNC 88.1 FM (NC State's radio station) where the kids once again asked the players different questions live on the air. The players provide positive role models and help the children with life skills.

Salvation Army

Eric Reed, Josh Gardner, Brian Plotkin and several others go to the Salvation Army Community Center in Downtown Raleigh to work with children in their after-school program. The players help the kids with their homework and other duties as directed by the community center director and the counselors. These programs enrich the lives of the children who, often, do not have positive role models in their lives.

Carolina RailHawks Reading Program

The Carolina RailHawks professional soccer organization believes in the importance of reading and the promotion of literacy for all children and young adults. Throughout the year RailHawks players are available to visit Wake County libraries as part of a 45-60 minute interactive reading and question program. The player will read 2-3 books, give information about themselves, show how reading plays an important part in their daily lives and answer questions about the book and being a professional soccer player. At the end of the program the player will sign autographs and there will be a raffle for RailHawks prizes.

Church Programs

Nate Norman has been visiting local churches and talking to children about life skills, health and fitness. Nate talks about his personal experience being a professional soccer player and how his faith has helped him achieve the goals that he has set for himself. In doing so, Nate inspires the children to set their own goals and gives them the tools to achieve them.

Past Programs

English as a Second Language

Santiago Fusilier was active in local middle schools helping students become more integrated and understand the English language here in the United States. Santiago was able to meet with students on a more individual basis and help with the demands of middle school, especially in a place where the only language spoken in the schools is one that is foreign to them. The teachers of the students Santiago has worked with have said "He has helped the students with communication issues and helped them integrate with the other students in the classroom. He is an excellent role model for the children."

Learning Together

Chris McClellan and Caleb Norkus spent a few hours each week working with children 18 months to six years of age. The players worked alongside the staff at Learning Together helping young children with, or at risk for, developmental disabilities achieve their goals by reading to them, playing with them and assisting both teachers and students in following their curriculum.