



CONTACT: Nikki Wilson, President and Founder
PHONE: 678-398-6693
FAX: 770-818-5461
EMAIL: dreammakersyf@aol.com

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 31, 2010

MEDIA CONTACT: Sheena McDonald, 404-530-9394 or media@5starrelations.com

DREAM MAKERS YOUTH FOUNDATION: RECIPIENT OF THRASHERS GRANT

Local non-profit organization for children with special needs
awarded grant from Atlanta Thrashers Foundation

Smyrna, GA--Dream Makers Youth Foundation was awarded a grant for \$4890.00 from the Atlanta Thrashers Foundation during the Hawks & Thrashers Grant Summit held on Wednesday July 28th, at Phillips Arena. Funds will be used for the general operation of their S.T.A.R.S. Adaptive Sports Program for children with mild to moderate intellectual delays.

Dream Makers' S.T.A.R.S. program was initiated in 2004, when they helped sponsor the Cobb Cougars wheelchair soccer team, an eight-member team coached by the President and Founder of the organization, Nikki Wilson; that year they went on to win the state championship. While that team has been dismantled due to limited player registration, their S.T.A.R.S. Program has continued to grow, and has served more than 40 children through their tennis and basketball programs. Tennis lessons are offered two times each month at the Universal Tennis Academy (Marietta, GA), and an adapted basketball league is offered two times each year, with one team in Smyrna, and the other in the city of Atlanta.

Everyone exposed to their program has been impacted. The children who participate in the basketball and tennis programs enjoy going to practices and lessons respectively, and have demonstrated improvements in their motor coordination and social skills. They all have learned to dribble, pass, and take a shot, and/or swing a racket and make contact with a tennis ball. Their attention spans and social skills have also improved, as they have been able to remain focused during practices longer than when they initially started, and interact appropriately with their coaches and peers on a more consistent basis.

The program has also affected the parents of the participating youth, volunteers, and spectators. The parents have developed relationships, and are able to network, discuss disability-related issues, and provide encouragement to each other when needed. Volunteers have recognized the difference one person can make in the life of a child with special needs, and finally, spectators have witnessed and learned to appreciate the abilities, rather than the disabilities of those with special needs.

Dream Makers Youth Foundation remains committed to helping children with special needs becoming active, productive members of society, and thanks to the generous donation from the Atlanta Thrashers Foundation, their S.T.A.R.S. Adaptive Sports Program they will continue to make a difference, through sport.

Openings are still available for Dream Makers' tennis and basketball programs. For more information, and to download the registration forms, visit their website at: www.dmyf.info

About Dream Makers Youth Foundation

Dream Makers Youth Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides educational and recreational opportunities for children with cognitive disabilities throughout Metropolitan Atlanta. Dream Makers currently offers tutorial services within Atlanta Public Schools, tennis lessons, and a competitive basketball league for children with mild to moderate intellectual delays, such as Down Syndrome, Autism, and Mental Retardation; these services are currently offered free of charge.

For more information, visit our website at: www.dmyf.info