



2004 ANNUAL APPEAL

The spirit of learning and achievement is alive and well at SquashSmarts. Squash, the sport behind Philadelphia's most unique after school youth program, is a simple game of "choice" and "execution". Through a rigorous combination of squash and academic instruction, SquashSmarts is advancing the lives of Philadelphia's urban youth one child at a time. Like the sport, our program is also founded on the guiding principles of choice and proper execution. Let me share a few powerful choices - and their fulfillment - from this past year and encourage you to support the future development of this special youth program.

CHOICE: Under the leadership of Vince McGuinness, SquashSmarts' Board of Directors chose to expand its staff to ensure that students received the best possible support . **EXECUTION:** Julie Williams was named *Academic Director*, David Kanthor was hired as the new *Squash Director*, Verdi DiSesa was brought on as an *Assistant Squash Director* and I was hired as the new *Executive Director* to lead this truly talented group.

CHOICE: Philadelphia's public school system faces a daunting challenge: one out of every two students (fifty percent) quits school after 9th grade. Our Board chose to address this critical issue and to expand our mission. **EXECUTION:** Originally designed for 6th, 7th and 8th grade students, SquashSmarts is now committed to our current and future team members through 12th grade. This simple yet dramatic shift allows us to give each student his or her "best shot" during four critical years of their life.

CHOICE: Eleven veteran students returned to SquashSmarts this fall. We saw an opportunity to reach out to more young students from West Philadelphia. **EXECUTION:** SquashSmarts orchestrated the single largest recruiting effort in the history of Philadelphia squash. For five days, staff and volunteers introduced squash to two-hundred and fifty-seven middle school children! Cheers of "Squash!" "Smarts!" were heard ringing throughout school gymnasiums and, last month, twenty new students were selected to join the team.

These are just a few of 2004's highlights. There are more, to be sure, and perhaps you played a part in shaping them. If you participated in our inaugural *Embrace Camp* sponsored by *Prince*, you connected with America's first-and-only community service squash camp for kids; if you helped celebrate the "Grand Opening" of our new Classroom-Technology Center, you saw SquashSmarts secure its future and cement its relationship with Drexel University; or if you volunteered your time, then you watched our students grow, mature and succeed. In one way or another, you have witnessed the energy -- and the potential -- of SquashSmarts.

In 2005, we will continue to make positive, responsible choices and faithfully execute the mission laid by our founders Ben DeSombre, Pamela Ende, Fred Guyott, Andy Nehrbas, Matthew Stern and Lisa Stokes. You can be proud of Philadelphia's urban youth squash program. It began with a vision, a choice and an execution and it will continue to thrive with your generous support.

Thank you for your Commitment.
Best wishes in this Holiday Season,

Stephen S. Gregg
Executive Director



GIVING KIDS THEIR BEST SHOT!

www.squashsmarts.org

SquashSmarts, Inc - c/o Drexel University - Department of Athletics - 3141 Chestnut Street - Philadelphia, PA 19104





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