



FROM: David Haney, Executive Director
DATE: October 21, 2010
TO: Members of the USA Fitness Corps Board, Advisory Committees, Colleagues, Major Supporters, Special Friends, and the Media

The mission of USA Fitness Corps is to improve the health and fitness of America's youth through the efforts of America's heroes - our returning Veterans.

USA FITNESS CORPS FIRST "FITNESS FUN DAY" A GREAT SUCCESS

The Doc Serpone playground on Lorillard Place in the Belmont section of the Bronx was the site of USAFC's inaugural "Fitness Fun Day," hosted by New York City's Thomas C. Giordano Middle School 45 on Saturday, October 16. Our thanks go to Annamaria Giordano, Principal of MS45, for all she did to make the day go so smoothly. More than 100 kids from MS45 and PS32 accepted our invitation to take part in a morning of outdoor fun on a beautiful, if windy, day. The children were led through a series of fun activities by a dozen Veterans who volunteered to be the pioneer USAFC Fitness Leaders. We want to thank Vets Morgan Cooley, Miguel Garcia, Digna Gomez, Cory Kraemer, Olga Nedlin, Darin Rummel, Alpha Sesay, Janie Thomas, Orlando Tyrell, Justin (?), James Vanie, and Corey Walsh for devoting their Saturday to demonstrating the benefits of a healthy, active lifestyle to the school children. The Vets were trained to be Fitness Leaders by Jaci VanHeest, PhD, and her colleague Carrie Mahoney of the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education. Jaci and Carrie gets special thank yous for traveling down from Storrs on two consecutive weekends, October 9 and October 16, to give our Vets the instruction and confidence they needed to face a school yard full of kids. Jaci also helped by recruiting 23 college students who traveled from Connecticut to help fight childhood obesity. From UCONN came Carrie Graham, Program Coordinator for the Public Health Learning Community at UCONN, and five students. One of Jaci's former students, Valerie Wherley, PhD, who now teaches at Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport, Connecticut, joined us on October 16 with 17 of her students. The SHU students were Lindsay Castaldi, Gina Dill, Amanda Hanson, Jessica Hurley, Emma Kuplicki, Nellie Long, Kristen McDonald, Evan "Chip" Mladenoff, Kim Pizzoferrato, Sarah Riccitelli, Jessica Rice, Adriana Sodano, Ashton Sroka, Taylor Sullivan, Jasmin Vicente, Michelle Whitton, and Kristin Wood. All the Vets and students deserve more thanks than we can express in words. The day was a terrific experience, and will be followed by more "Fitness Fun Days" in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey in the coming months. (The photos and captions below are also attached full-size for better viewing).



LEFT: Ashton Sroka gets a high five from a youngster at our "Fitness Fun Day" at Middle School 45 in the Bronx on Saturday, October 16. The event was the first of a planned series of USA Fitness Corps "Fitness Fun Days." Mr. Sroka, a senior majoring in Exercise Science, is one of 17 students from Sacred Heart University (Bridgeport, CT) who traveled to the Bronx to help fight childhood obesity, one kid at a time. Five more student volunteers joined us from the University of Connecticut in Storrs.

RIGHT: US Army Veteran James Vanie' (in blue T-shirt, center) plays Tag with kids from PS32 and MS45 at the Doc Serpone playground on Lorillard Place in the Bronx. A dozen Veterans of US military forces volunteered to demonstrate the benefits of an active lifestyle. James is a student at St. John's University in Jamaica, NY.



LEFT: One of the more than 100 kids who participated in our first ever Fitness Fun Days shows the joy of running around outside on a beautiful Saturday in the Bronx. The children were led through a series of six different activities/games by Veterans and exercise physiology students who gave their time for the event. The smiles on the faces of the USAFC volunteers were just as big as the one on this happy child.

RIGHT: Volunteer Morgan Cooley (in USA Fitness Corps T-shirt), a City College student and US Army Veteran, showed school children the finer points of hula-hooping at our Fitness Fun Day. Ms. Cooley is a certified personal trainer through the National Academy of Sports Medicine and also a Certified Nutrition Consultant.



Photo by Jacob Quinn