



SPORTS FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT “COACHING COACHES”

Sports for Youth Development, especially for disadvantaged youth, has been increasingly recognized as a naturally effective way to encourage participation in educational and wholesome developmental activities, build job skills, and promote life success. Sports can transcend the barriers of culture, language, even politics. Through sport, Partners of the Americas International builds mutual respect and understanding, and creates educational and play opportunities for our youth of the Americas. Indiana Partners began its sport program with “Coaching Coaches.”

The Coaching Coaches program, funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and implemented by Partners of the Americas, builds on training and mentoring techniques for disadvantaged youth through an exchange between the US and Brazil in the sports of basketball, soccer, and baseball. This program provides professionals in the US and Brazil the opportunity to share their expertise in the technical aspects of these sports through workshops, ‘shadowing’ opportunities, and hands-on coaching—with the goal of starting up networks of sports professionals that strengthen and expand opportunities for sports to play a role in youth development and promote global connection and consciousness.

Providing boys and girls, 8-18 years old, with the **technical** and **life skills** they need to succeed on and off the field, coaching exchanges help sports organizations and coaches integrating these two components into their coaching and training programs. Exchanges between Partners’ US and Brazilian chapters and the participating schools, clubs, and city parks programs lead to the development of sustained networks based on mutual respect and understanding, professional growth, and interaction. Brazilians participants have the opportunity to put into practice what they have learned through a small grants program. As a result, organizations and coaches develop increased technical proficiency in their selected sports programs, the ability to integrate Sport for Development methodologies into their coaching/mentoring relationships with youth, and a network to and promote awareness and participation of the benefits of sports in youth’s development.

The IN – RS Coaching Coaches program, as part of the POA International Coaching Coaches Program, is the cornerstone of a projected 5-year program on Sports for Youth Development between the Partners states. Indiana and Rio Grande do Sul Partners are in the planning state of a series of Youth Development sports programs---intended to include players, coaches, and teams and culminating in the 2014 World Cup Games in our Rio Grande do Sul Partner state.

For more information about the Partners of America’ growing Sport for Youth Development program, please contact Paul Teeple (pteeple@partners.net) or Cara George (cgeorge@partners.net)