

Dear Heart of the City Supporter,

My name is Michael, and I recently graduated from Waukegan High School. I joined Heart of the City a couple of years ago because I thought it would be a great opportunity to improve my soccer skills.

Before Heart of the City, I didn't give much thought to my plans after high school. I wanted to go straight to the workforce, or maybe the police academy, but I didn't really want to go to school. I was a student whose GPA wasn't really up there... I thought grades were not that important.

But when I got to Heart of the City, and met the HOTC staff, they really helped me and taught me how important education is. The coaches motivated me and told me I had the talent to play soccer in college. They pushed me to do better academically, so that gave me a bigger boost to consider college and play soccer at the same time and be a student-athlete.

With their support, my GPA improved. I was able to tour campuses, speak to recruiters and learn about financial aid options. Ultimately, all of this led to me being recruited to play soccer on scholarship at Lincoln College.

Heart of the City has opportunities for us to grow, not just as soccer players, but as students and as part of the community. For kids like me, who don't always have a lot of support or know where to start, this is a great program, and I'm personally really thankful.

There are other students like me who need the support and knowledge to plan for their future. Your support is really helpful and appreciated!

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Michael



"My most fond memory I would say is coming to practice and just interacting with the coaches. They're all open-minded... they'll give you advice, you know. But I think the thing I'll remember most is just the help that they give and the support. Because students like me and players like me -- I didn't know where to go and what path to go...I was kind of lost in the flow. They give us a push and a good path to take, and just help us see the options of what we want to do with our lives."

