

2011

Dream Big

James Matthew Parker
Southern Methodist University

Brad Namdar
Southern Methodist University

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Recommended Citation

Parker, James Matthew and Namdar, Brad, "Dream Big" (2011). *Big iDeas 2011 Proposals*. 2.
https://scholar.smu.edu/big_ideas_2011_proposals/2

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James Matthew Parker

Senior Marketing Major & Spanish Minor

Brad Namdar

Junior Journalism Major & Philosophy Minor

Problem: In 2004-2005, DISD had 14,890 students enrolled as 9th graders. In 2008, only 6,102 received diplomas. This means that 8,788 or approximately 59% of DISD students were “missing at graduation.”

Additionally, children in America face issues of improper diet and physical fitness; issues which go hand and hand with education. “Scientific studies during the past decade suggest a direct relationship between obesity and academic achievement, particularly among elementary students. One such nationwide study noted a direct relationship between obesity, insufficient physical activity and lower performance on standardized math and reading tests... A tendency toward higher absenteeism among obese students was one of several contributors to lower academic performance, another study found” (Dallas Morning News).

The effort in combating these issues can only be accomplished by changing the way kids perceive and think about fitness and health. Simply giving children healthy food and telling them to go outside to play is not enough. Children need structure, support, constant encouragement and attention. Our educational system fails to connect the dots within the minds of young students in how exercise, eating right and staying in school are all related to happiness and success in life.

Our Solution: HAVE FUN! Our concept is simple: “Give a child a ball and then teach him/her how to play”. Through the median of sports, we teach students the value of education, health, leadership and community at our free one day camps.



We are called “*Dream Big*” and we have already held 3 previous camps for both refugee and underprivileged communities. On April 10,



2010, Dream Big held a soccer camp for over 300 refugee children with the help of 100 SMU students. Each child received a free t- shirt, goodie bag, and soccer ball. Furthermore, players

from the FC Dallas Youth Development Program helped coach the children. Throughout the day, we motivated these children through speeches and encouragement to stay in school and chase their dreams.



On November 13, 2010, 50 elementary students' and 40 SMU volunteers' lives were radically changed at Dream Big's first basketball camp for the 4th & 5th graders of J.W. Ray Elementary. Each student was challenged through interdisciplinary activities, both physically and mentally.

In the drill "Math around the world," students could not advance to the next shooting spot, until they correctly answered the math question. The symbolism of the drill was later revealed to students; you must succeed in school before you can go anywhere in life.

Finally, on November 20, 2010, Dream Big partnered up with the IRC (International Rescue Committee) to throw a Dream Big Soccer Camp for over 170 refugee children. The camp was held at J. Conrad High School in Dallas, TX, and the children that attended the camp were from refugee families from countries such as Thailand, Nepal, Cuba, Iraq, Burma, and more. These children came from families that had to



leave their homeland due to political asylum, natural disasters and religious persecution. Although most of the children couldn't speak English, we ensured that all of the kids received quality soccer training, a chance to scrimmage and high-fives all around. Furthermore, each child received a free soccer ball, t-shirt, goody bag with pens, pencils, snacks and a certificate of completion. "This was one of the best days of my life", said Xaio a camper at Dream Big Soccer.

Dream Big reaches out to communities in need, listens and responds with the sport that they value most. It is in the midst of the fun and excitement of our sports camps that kids begin to understand the importance of college, friendship and discipline. All it takes is one moment to change a child's life and we hope to be a part of that.

Additionally, *Dream Big* allows for volunteers and SMU students to give back, thus showing the communities we reach out to that someone cares; being that smile that brightens their day.

Finally, we are changing the way children perceive the world at a young age. If we can positively influence their decision making process early, we can expect to see higher graduation rates, lower counts of obesity and more gleaming smiles from a happy and active child.



Dream Big intends on throwing 3 camps this coming semester. One camp at the end of February, one camp in the middle of March and one camp in the middle of April. *Dream Big* will continually seek out various communities in need within Dallas to throw free sports camps for. *Dream Big* intends to enhance and further develop its program by incorporating teachers and parents from the schools, so that the entire community can share in on an experience that will last a lifetime. Here at *Dream Big*, we have found that the lives that are changed the most are the SMU students and those who volunteer. It is a fact that when we give our time and attention to others, we receive so much more in the return.

Budget:

Camp Expenses (3 camps)	Price	Quantity	Total
Shirts	\$3.50	360	\$1,260.00
Basketballs	\$4.25	80	\$340.00
Soccer balls	\$7.80	230	\$1,794.00
Drinks			\$300.00
Snacks			\$300.00
Awards/Certificates	\$1.50	150	\$225.00
Goody bags(pens, pencils, etc)	\$1.00	300	\$300.00
Flyers/permission slips/waivers	\$0.10	600	\$60.00
Uhaul			\$100.00
Miscellaneous (nametags, etc.)			\$80.00
Total			\$4,759.00

Resource Sites:

<http://www.studentmotivation.org/DallasISD.htm>

<http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/editorials/20100728-editorial-disd-makes-a-healthy-food-choice.ece>