



Hartford Lions Soccer Academy (HLSA) is a Non-Profit Corporation dedicated to the academic and athletic success of the youths in the Greater Hartford area through the sport of soccer. Our mission is to cultivate and nurture valuable soccer instruction in a positive and safe environment. We believe that in this environment, we can enhance not only their love for the sport and their physical health, but also their socio-emotional well being which will equip them to be leaders in the community. The youth are the future and we are committed to providing them with the tools and skills needed to create a world that works for everyone. Hartford Lions Soccer Academy was founded on three pillars: Vision, Discipline, and Community.

Hartford has a population of over 123,000 residents. The largest age group is under the age of 18 based on census data from 2019. While Connecticut is home to many wealthy counties, Hartford is considered one of the poorest cities in the nation with approximately three out of every ten families living below the federal poverty line. This is one of the reasons the work we do as an organization is so critical. It is important that we provide additional pathways for children in the community to be successful and supported.

Founded in 2018, the Hartford Lions Soccer Academy has expanded from a small local club to an expansive and impactful organization recognized throughout the State of Connecticut for our high-quality programming. We have been able to accomplish this with the assistance of community partners willing to invest in youth sports in Hartford County.

Community is fundamental to the success of this program and it is an aspect of our work that we do not take for granted. Creating partnerships that are mutually beneficial is one of the ways we seek to enhance the experience for our athletes at HLSA. We would like to create a partnership with the University of Hartford. Our vision for what that entails is as followed: an undergraduate student in communications and/or marketing that would support HLSA's social media pages and website. In turn, this would provide the student with an opportunity to gain experience working for a local non-profit organization, working with local youths, and assist in creating community involvement for the University of Hartford. As an alumni of the University of Hartford, I understand the importance of partnering with the local community. I had many opportunities throughout my undergraduate program to work with and alongside those in the community such as reading to children in their classes, speaking with children about my personal experiences having moved from Jamaica at a young age, etc. I felt that this not only enhanced my college experience but also equipped me with real world experience, which is paramount to an individual's success as they begin to transition into their career.

In closing, community and partnership are key to the success of any program looking to cultivate the leaders of tomorrow. We hope that you will strongly consider this partnership between the University of Hartford and the Hartford Lions Soccer Academy. We appreciate your time and attention to this matter and look forward to working with you in the near future.