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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Youth Soccer Receives Social Innovation Fund Sub-Grant from U.S. Soccer Foundation to Support *Soccer for Success*

FEDERAL WAY, WASHINGTON (Thursday, March 8, 2012) — Washington Youth Soccer is proud to announce the U.S. Soccer Foundation has awarded the organization a Social Innovation Fund Sub-Grant to support the implementation of *Soccer for Success* in South Seattle area schools. *Soccer for Success* is the U.S. Soccer Foundation's after-school, sports-based youth development program that uses soccer as a tool to combat childhood obesity and provides nutrition education and mentorship to children in at-risk communities.

In August 2011, the U.S. Soccer Foundation was awarded a grant from the prestigious 2011 Social Innovation Fund, on behalf of the Corporation for National and Community Service, to support programs that promote healthy lifestyles and reduce obesity rates for children in urban, underserved communities. The U.S. Soccer Foundation, the Major Charitable Arm of Soccer in the United States, was one of five intermediaries to receive this award.

“The U.S. Soccer Foundation is proud to receive an award from the Social Innovation Fund to expand the *Soccer for Success* national footprint,” said Ed Foster-Simeon, President & CEO of the U.S. Soccer Foundation. “We believe that *Soccer for Success* is an innovative program that can make a positive impact on youth. We are happy to assist organizations that are committed to improving the well-being of children in at-risk communities using soccer.”

In 2012, the *Soccer for Success* program will expand to serve thirteen cities and over 12,000 children, as a result of the award the Foundation received from the Social Innovation Fund. Washington Youth Soccer was one of thirteen organizations to receive this Sub-Grant.

“As a parent and former educator, I consider it a top priority to provide our children with the tools to make smart nutritional choices that will give them the energy to engage and be active,” said Senator Murray. “The threat of childhood obesity to the health of our children and the health of our nation has never been greater and I applaud the Washington Youth Soccer for encouraging Seattle's youth to get off the sidelines and into the game.”

Rep Reichert said, “I'm proud to join the U.S. Soccer Foundation in recognizing the important work of the Washington Youth Soccer to promote active, healthy, and safe lifestyles for youth across our state. This grant will enable the Association to continue its Soccer for Success program. As Co-Chair of the Soccer Caucus, I know very well the benefits that after-school, sports-based programs like this provide to at-risk youth and congratulate them on their continued success improving kids' lives.”

The Social Innovation Fund requires that each federal dollar granted be matched by the intermediaries and again by the organizations selected to receive a Sub-Grant. Implementation of *Soccer for Success* will begin in Fall/Winter 2012.

“We are honored to have been chosen as a recipient for the U.S. Soccer Foundation *Soccer for Success* grant. This after-school program will provide many of the youth in South Seattle their first experience in an organized team sport,” said Doug Andreassen, Washington Youth Soccer President. “As we continue to make sure that every child in our state has access to youth soccer, this program will encourage communities to come together and support youth development, healthy lifestyles and nutritional education. We look forward to working with our many community and elementary school partners as we prepare to launch the South Seattle *Soccer for Success* program this coming fall.”

“The Social Innovation Sub-Grant will allow us to expand and further achieve our mission of fostering the physical, mental and emotional growth of the youth of Washington through soccer opportunities,” said Hillary Beehler, Washington Youth Soccer Organization and Member Services Director. “The fact that we now have the opportunity to bring soccer lessons to kids who may have never played organized sports before is wonderful and we are excited to get started!”

“As a member of the global soccer community and the greater Washington community, it is our duty to enrich the lives of as many youth possible through the great sport of soccer,” said Terry Fisher, Washington Youth Soccer CEO. “We look forward to leveraging the *Soccer for Success* program to better our greater community.”

For more information on Washington Youth Soccer, and the new *Soccer for Success* program, visit WashingtonYouthSoccer.org.

About Washington Youth Soccer

Washington Youth Soccer is the largest youth soccer organization in Washington. Washington Youth Soccer is the state's affiliate for US Youth Soccer, which is the largest sports organization in the United States and the most populous member of the United States Soccer Federation, the governing body for soccer in the United States. The Washington Youth Soccer is the sixth largest membership in the nation; our organization represents over 128,000 players (ages 4-19) and their families, 15,000 coaches on 12,000 teams and 6,500 referees in the state of Washington. Washington Youth Soccer's mission is to foster the physical, mental and emotional growth and development of the State of Washington's youth through the sport of soccer at all levels of age and competition.

Media Request: When referring to Washington Youth Soccer, please refer to the association only as Washington Youth Soccer, and never as WYS or WSYSA. We appreciate your cooperation.

About the U.S. Soccer Foundation

The U.S. Soccer Foundation is the Major Charitable Arm of Soccer in the United States. Established in 1994, the U.S. Soccer Foundation has invested more than \$55 million in all 50 states. The U.S. Soccer Foundation supports programs and field building projects that provide underserved youth in urban communities with opportunities that promote positive behavior, healthy lifestyles, self-confidence and positive alternatives to drugs, crime and other at-risk behaviors.

Media Request: When referring to the U.S. Soccer Foundation, the Major Charitable Arm of Soccer in the United States, please refer to the organization only as the U.S. Soccer Foundation or the Foundation, and never as USSF or US/U.S. Soccer. Furthermore, please format “U.S.” with periods and never without. We appreciate your cooperation.

