



Dear Family and Friends of StreetSquash,

StreetSquash will celebrate its 25th birthday in 2024. It is hard for me to fathom the passing of a quarter-century (nearly half of my life), but it will mark the right time for me to step down as Executive Director. Thanks to all of you, StreetSquash is by any measure in excellent shape, strongly positioned to carry on with its important work long after my departure.

Any attempt to capture in this letter, or any other way, what our shared cause has meant to me would be impossible. I remember clear as day the fall Saturday morning in 1999 when I went into the gymnasium at Thurgood Marshall Academy to recruit our first group of students. Outfitted with a squash racket, some t-shirts and a signup sheet, I got in front of 75 7th graders to pitch the program. A founding group of board members and volunteers had put in a lot of work setting up the structural foundation for StreetSquash - our 501c3 certification, our usage contracts with the Harvard Club and Columbia University - but none of it would matter if the kids weren't interested. I was very nervous. Fast forward 24 years; it's safe to say there was interest - a lot of it. From an initial cohort of 28 students, we have seen literally thousands of children and families pass through our doors since that first year.

Along the way, people with widely varying backgrounds and skills came together for a very simple and clear purpose: to help kids. Countless individuals - caregivers, volunteers, staff, board members, donors, community partners - have given in their own caring ways to support our students. And the work and commitment has more than paid off. StreetSquashers have gone on to do amazing things all over the world and have given back in many ways, from educators, health care professionals, and military service, to government and foreign service. In the end, this is our strength, and what has given me the greatest joy - to be a part of this community. Not surprisingly, I remain in close contact with many of those original recruits, and it brings me profound happiness to see them with their own families and amazing professional careers.

After stepping down as Executive Director, I will remain involved in StreetSquash, continuing to serve on the Board of Directors and helping the new leadership settle in. We have formed an 8-person search committee, comprised of board members, and they will be working with an experienced recruitment firm specializing in non-profit executive searches. The committee will soon begin a series of listening tours with different StreetSquash constituencies to hear their thoughts on the type of leader StreetSquash should be looking for in this next chapter. Formal launch of the external outreach to candidates will commence at the start of 2023, with the goal of selecting a new ED by mid-year 2023. That person will then have ample time to train with me during my final months and ensure a smooth transition.

Though there is a real part of me that will be sad to depart, I am heartened by the fact that StreetSquash remains in terrific shape - in its programs, finances and reputation. I have been so lucky for this opportunity, and I am grateful to each and every one of you for joining me on this amazing journey.

My deepest gratitude,

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