

Volunteer Handbook 2013-2014





Overview

Access Youth Academy is a fun and intensive program that immerses 7th – 12th grade students from under-resourced communities in San Diego in a regimen of squash instruction, academic tutoring, and community service. Our mission is to challenge and nurture youth to recognize and fulfill their potential by insisting upon best effort, respect, and integrity on the squash court, in the classroom, and throughout the community.

There are five core values that Access Youth Academy strives to teach and uphold in all components of the program. These values are central not only to success in Access Youth Academy, but also to living a positive and fulfilling life. The five core values are integrity, concern for others, appreciation, respect, and effort (I-CARE).

Access Youth Academy currently serves 40 kids from The Preuss School UCSD. They attend squash and academic practices five days each week where they hone their squash games, excel in their studies, and become well versed in healthy habits in our Health & Wellness Program (Fridays). The two-hour programming days are comprised of one hour of academic help and one hour of squash/fitness. Academic sessions include homework help, skill building, and readiness for college and future careers.



History

In April 2006, the founders of San Diego Squash felt the time was right to bring a quality urban squash program to the West Coast. Greg Scherman and Chris Walker wanted to create an opportunity for underprivileged youth to better their lives through a focused program of squash instruction, academic tutoring, mentoring, community service, and cultural experiences. They felt that the program can be headquartered at San Diego Squash with the ultimate goal of growing the program into its own facility nearby.

Access Youth Academy was fortunate and owes a debt of gratitude to the law firm of Cooley Godward Kronish LLP for their pro-bono assistance in bringing Access Youth Academy into non-profit status as a fully-fledged 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. Scherman and Walker then set their sights on the components where the success of the program could be assured – namely, a dedicated Board of Directors, a supportive school and an Executive Director that could bring an energy and enthusiasm to the early stages of implementation. With this in mind, The Preuss School, a charter school on the University of California, San Diego campus fit the bill perfectly. Not far from San Diego Squash, The Preuss School has now become a staunch supporter of Access Youth Academy.

The Board of Directors has gradually grown to include Richard Shapiro, now Chairman of the Board and an active supporter of urban squash in America, Blair Sadler, an avid squash enthusiast and the CEO of Children’s Hospital in San Diego for over 25 years and Palmer Page, the prior CEO of US Squash.

Amidst this process, the search began for our Executive Director. A difficult task for any organization, Access Youth Academy has been very fortunate to find Renato Paiva, former Brazilian squash champion and former Assistant Coach of the Harvard Men’s squash team for two years.



Our Team

Executive Director – Renato Paiva | Renato@accessyouthacademy.org

Academic Coordinator – Corinne B. Aparis | Corinne@accessyouthacademy.org

Marketing Manager – Pia A. Floresca | Pia@accessyouthacademy.org

Squash Coach – Yuri Franca | Yuri@accessyouthacademy.org

Alumni Coordinator – Joyce Pallasigue | Joyce@accessyouthacademy.org

Development Coordinator – Ashley Toolan | Ashley@accessyouthacademy.org

Office Manager – Chrissy Trinidad | Christine@accessyouthacademy.org

Programming Schedule

Students	Meeting Times
A Day: 11 th -9 th graders, some 8 th graders	Mondays & Wednesdays 2:45 – 4:45
B Day: 7 th -8 th graders, 12 th graders	Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:45 – 4:45
Alternating Fridays	Friday 3:30– 4:30



Roles of the Volunteer

Role	Task
Community Service/Special Event Chaperone	Help manage a group of students during a community service project or special event
Academic Tutor	Offer help for students with their homework, special academic projects, & applications/scholarships to extra-curriculum programs.
Mentor	Establish a mentee/mentor partnership after proper matching has been done by the Academic Coordinator. Mentor/mentee are committed to creating a long-lasting relationship where the mentor will offer support in a mentee's academic, professional, and personal endeavors.
Intern	Work alongside the Academic Coordinator to assist with administrative tasks or classroom conduct. Internships can be tailored according to the needs of the time and the expectations of the intern.

*No matter what your role is at Access, it is important. We cannot run a successful organization without a stellar volunteer base. Therefore, it is extremely important to communicate everyday with the Academic Coordinator regarding all issues, large or small. Because we work extremely hard to cultivate a familial atmosphere at Access, transparency is key.

Communication

Great communication is the key to success within every organization, and it is essential to ensuring the success of our students. If you have signed up for a shift and can't make it please try to give at least 24 hours notice to the Academic Coordinator so they can plan accordingly. We will periodically check in with you to make sure your needs are being met. We have an open door policy regarding complaints and suggestions for organizational improvement. Issues should be addressed to the Academic Coordinator, Corinne B. Aparis.



Volunteer Code of Conduct

Professionalism

It is important for Access Youth Academy volunteers to remember, amid the camaraderie that forms among faculty members and the silliness inherent in all that is Access, that being a volunteer at Access is an important job. Volunteers are “employees” who must be aware of and respectful of our expectations of them in the workplace. Volunteers are important role models for Access students – not friends or buddies. Being aware of our words, actions, and appearance is crucial because each of these send messages to those around us.

When using both written and spoken language, we must remember that Access is first and foremost an academic program. In speech and writing, volunteers should be clear, grammatically correct, and appropriate. As we support our students’ development of strong public speaking skills and written and spoken language that reflects their intellectual ability, we model this language use ourselves. Additionally, profanity is unacceptable in any context at AYA.

Finally, volunteers should be wary about the language they use in speaking or writing about students. Respecting students and honoring confidentiality means never speaking about students when they may be overheard. Using demeaning references toward students is never appropriate.

We encourage volunteers to dress comfortably for the weather and activity. At the same time, as is the case with students, we ask that you dress for respect.



The following kinds of clothing or accessories are not acceptable:

- Items that advertise drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, or otherwise inappropriate things
- Items that do not appropriately cover the wearer's body (ex: cropped shirts, muscle shirts, short shorts and skirts)
- Items with messages that are offensive or inappropriate
- Please set your phone to silent or vibrate

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco use at Access Youth Academy is prohibited.

Management

From time to time, you may encounter a student who is disruptive or disrespectful. That's why it is also important to have a plan for what to do if a student veers away from the established expectations of the program. The most important thing you can do is remember the following things:

- Students are here to learn
- Students are provided with structured tasks and activities that help them feel a sense of security and belonging
- Given this sense of security, students feel more empowered to transcend their "safety zone" and take risks.
- We model risk taking.
- We have high expectations of them. These expectations are communicated clearly.
- Students are actively engaged in learning and "on-task" time is maximized.
- Students are taught through various, multi-sensory activities that engage a variety of learning modalities.
- Students are taught how to work effectively in groups.
- We model the academic and behavioral expectations.



Proactive Management

- Be firm but fair with the students
- Be clear with yourself the capacity you're able to support in a certain subject
- If a student has finished their homework, tell them to let you check it
- Feel free to move around the room and ask students if they need help
- Have high expectations for their work; grade it like it was your own
- Expect excellence. Heads should be up, jackets should be off, and student engagement should be visible.
- Know the Access rules, policies, and expectations.
- REMEMBER, you are a volunteer not a peer or pal. Kids need structure/direction from you in order to be successful.
- You are not alone. We are all here to ensure student success. Talk to the Academic Coordinator frequently about your students' behavior – whether or not you have questions or need help.
- Communicate, communicate, and COMMUNICATE