

The following are recent testimonials and positive comments from TFA parents and players, opponents or officials (past and present) speaking on their various experiences/interactions with the Club.

2020

Soccer, as we know, is a metaphor for life. And it can be both individually and collectively transformative. Add to this a framework like TFA offers - one that focuses not just on the tactical but also on the intangible and immeasurable value of character building - and you have something quite magical. Enjoy your weekend! Sincerely, TFA Parent

I first would like to thank you and the Toledo Football Academy a home to call home for the 8 years I have been there. It has been a wonderful learning process for me. It has changed the perspective of football for me. I grew to learn more about the game as well as my capabilities. TFA has been a blessing to my family especially it goes beyond any words I can speak. May God bless this club and all the young footballers it produces. With that being said, as it is now my senior year in high school, and I have to begin to think about what is next in line for me. By the grace of God, I have been given a scholarship to continue my academic and athletic careers at Lourdes University in Sylvania Ohio. I have verbally committed and will be signing at a date to be determined. I would very much appreciate if you could join me in signing off the next big adventure by my side. Thank you once more. ~Former TFA Player

2019

Greetings Coach Holdgate,

I wanted to let you know that at today's soccer game between Central Catholic and Cardinal Stritch, 5 of Central Catholic's 6 goals were scored by those who have benefited from TFA training:

Matthew Webb - 1 goal

Owen Traver - 1 goal, 1 assist

Stephen Williams - 1 goal

Will Rudski - 2 goals

Additionally, Will Rudski was interviewed on BCSN (who recorded the game, perhaps there's a replay available?)

Thank you again for running such a quality program! Well done! ~ Former TFA Parent

Good to hear from you. I sent you a copy you can see better. He is playing soccer at Wittenberg. They offered him a spot a while ago and he recently accepted it. I'll let you know how it goes. As I continue to tell anyone who care, this opportunity being afforded him is a direct result of TFA. Your club was a great place for him to learn to love the game. His brother is playing both lacrosse and soccer, but he is not playing club anymore. Take care man. Former TFA Parent

He has enjoyed playing with TFA over the past three years and has made a lot of friendships. TFA has truly propelled his soccer skill level. Thank you for your leadership of these young men. TFA Parent

Thanks to both of you for the last two seasons with TFA, this last fall was an awesome season for the team and our son. With 10 basketball tournaments and practice 3-4 times a week we will not be able to make any spring events. I don't think it's fair to other kids to just show up for games. To me practice matters.

Our son has decided to not to play next year at this time, perhaps that will change, but if this was his final year of travel soccer I could not have asked for a better club.

Thanks again. TFA Parent

2018

I just want to say I love TFA- you guys do an amazing job with amazing people. Just needed to make sure that you know how amazing the parents believe that you guys are!!! Soccer Family Forever!

Great to hear from you and thank you so much for your kind words! We are very proud of them both!!

We both hope you truly understand what a great influence you had on the boys Paul!

Take care and keep in touch! - Former TFA Parents

2017

Thanks for all you've done to make my son a better player and person. - TFA Parent

We would like to thank you for all the support you have shown our son the last several years.

TFA has been a wonderful organization, and we would not hesitate to recommend it to any friends and colleagues who have children interested in soccer.

Wishing TFA continued success and a great season. - Former TFA Parents

Good morning,

I'm a USSF ref and head coach for Arcadia U15 Co-Ed team. This past weekend I refed at the BG Fall Classic and was the Center Ref for the TFA Vs. Delta U15 game. I

just wanted to write about how impressed I was with the captain number 23. It's very unusual at this age to have a young man that has full command of the field, constantly moving other players into position. Also the finesse he shows on the field is second to none. The other squad had many smaller players and instead of bulldozing them over with his size, he used his quality of football to move the ball. He also has great control of his emotions. He got whistled for a poor tackle and as he got up the other player pushed him in the back and he continued to walking away from the other player allowing me to deal with the young man. That's refreshing. His squad was flagged for offside more times than I can count. Instead of yelling at the other players he encouraged them and told them where they needed to hold their position at. One player spouted off a foul word in frustration and before I could call the young man over 23 had already addressed it.

I commend TFA for the job they've done bringing this young man along. Good luck in your season. - Referee

Kevin!!!! Just read this now. Thank you for forwarding this to me. Can't wait to show him. You've had him from the beginning...a proud parent moment for all of us. Thanks for everything you do for the boys. They really do listen. - TFA Parents

Hi Paul and Kevin, Just wanted to share how proud I was of my once shy 11-year old son who marched right up to each of his 6 teachers at his school orientation today, looked each of them right in the eye, shook their hands and introduced himself without prompting. I was floored. I have to give credit to coach Kevin and his other coaches at TFA who have been great role models for him and helped his confidence over the past two years. Thanks so much for all you do, looking forward to another great season. - TFA Parent

Paul - We really appreciate the support, training and guidance our son gets at TFA. - TFA Parent

Paul - I must thank you again for teaching (requiring) the boys to shake hands with adult coaches/leaders and officials. Our boys have taken to this from the beginning. As parents, you watch with pride each time they do, win lose or draw; especially when they take off their gloves and actually shake hands, rather than fist bump with gloves as the large majority do. It's an incredible little thing. THANK YOU. - TFA Parent

Hey Paul, I just wanted to thank you for all you have done for me just to play at a tournament, and I'm sorry i there was any trouble. But, I just wanted to say I appreciate what you have done and I had a great time playing with the boys. Hope to see you soon. Thanks. - Former TFA Player

I would also like to take this time to let you know how much our son loves TFA. It was hard for him (us too) to switch last year, as all his friends and kids he has been playing soccer with since he was three were in that group. But when asked if he would come back... his answer to the team, nope I love TFA and we have a good team. His coach is SECOND TO NONE! He expects those boys to work their hardest, awards their achievements, and pushes them to the next step. I cannot say

enough about Coach Nick! He has learned so much! We were going to take a trip to the Grand Canyon over spring break, which we did... We had to schedule it around his soccer games! He didn't want to miss one single opportunity with his team... What a great testimony to your great program... Thank you! - TFA Parent

Jason and Paul, Thank you for your support of our son this season as he pursued his interest in theater at school. With his play behind him now, he'll be able to participate in regularly-scheduled practices with his team. He and we appreciate your flexibility with his soccer training schedule to allow him to also attend daily play rehearsals. Last spring he was offered a position at another club; obviously he declined the offer. We can't but wonder whether another club would have been so accommodating, allowing him to develop his varied interests and help him navigate around training schedules. Thank you for that. It's worth noting that both Thursday and Friday evening, the show's audiences were peppered with TFA players and their parents there to support our son. This, we believe, also speaks to the kind of collegial culture that can develop when the soccer club prides itself on helping players develop character [and characters? :)] on and off the field. Thanks for that, too. If anything, that has bolstered our son's love of the game and appreciation for TFA. - TFA Parents

Read your summary of the tournament and enjoyed it. Wanted to share with you a small event my son and I shared. On Sunday morning, we woke up early - was an 8am game so I got up around 5:30 to get him and out of the hotel by 6:30-ish. Was one of those mornings we weren't saying much. He was sore and tired and groggy and I was just old and groggy and tired. His team had lost its previous two games - but he had liked playing with them a lot. But, it was just not a great morning. Anyway, as soon as he gets to the field and starts to warm up, I could see him smiling and having some fun. A kid showed up and played and they ended up scoring a few goals and they won the game. He had a great game and it was the tournament highlight. I told him on the way back to the hotel this was a great example of how you never know what the next hour will bring. We went from feeling pretty low to having a GREAT morning in just a few hours. I've told you this before but I'm tell you again: The way you run this club is really very good for these boys. And I will always appreciate the positive experiences and values you have instilled in both my sons. - TFA Parent

I want to thank you so much for your leadership at TFA. After working with several clubs in the NW Ohio area, none, and I mean none, compare to the organization of TFA. I feel like I've learned so much from you in our short time here. - TFA Parent

We want to start by saying how much we love TFA. Everything about this program is exactly what we want for our son... Thank you for all you have taught our son over this year, we truly love being a part of the TFA family. - TFA Parents

I would like to thank you for your time, effort and energy you have put into our son. It truly means the world to us. Thank you to everyone at TFA for giving him a chance... He truly loves the game and thank you for all that TFA has done for him! He has grown so much being a part of the TFA family. You all are wonderful. - TFA Parents

Paul - I am lost for words by this honor and it would be my pleasure to accept... This award means a great deal coming from the club that gave so much to me and shaped me into the person I am today. The years I spent with TFA hold some of my greatest memories and I am grateful I was able to give back to the club during my senior year. I hope that all is well up there and that the young lads are getting back into form for the electric spring season I am sure you will have. Thank you to you and all of TFA's staff. - Former TFA Player accepting Hall of Fame Award

Thank your the LARGE role you played in my son's development... he would not be the fine individual he is now without your help! - TFA Parent

The dome is awesome! Our son really liked playing there, great job setting this up to all involved! - TFA Parents

I will tell you this, our son raved and raved about playing in the dome. He absolutely loved it! He can't wait to play in it again. - TFA Parent

Loved the facility! Loved watching the boys play! - TFA Parent

Just wanted to let you know that my son did a 1:1 training with Josh today here in Findlay. What a great kid! Andrew loved it! Going to do several more with him. - TFA Parent

2016

I know there is not a coach review at the end of the season, but I wanted to drop a quick note to you while I was thinking of it. We had a great experience our first year at TFA in 15/16. Coach Jason far exceeded our expectations this fall. He is so hands on with the boys and really interacts in a way that they truly understand their goals. For years, coaches have told our son that he was a defensive player. Coach Jason saw something in our son where he made the choice to move him to offense. At first, he was upset and I could see him struggling. As the season progressed, he blossomed and I couldn't believe the difference in his style of play. He is so much more confident and aggressive. Thanks! - TFA Parents

Thank you for nominating my son for his Ohio North award! He was excited to learn what award he had won and was planning to attend the banquet - but the regional final game conflicted. So, thanks also to whomever picked up the beautiful plaque and delivered it to him on Sunday at TOPSoccer. As a parent, I have so much appreciated TFA providing the opportunity for my son to grow as a person and to develop skills in working with a wide range of individuals...something that has spurred his career interest in possibly a teaching or therapy field as well as holding true to the "building character" mission component of TFA. It has been a super experience for him! - TFA Parent

Regarding TFA's 1st Hall of Famer: Thank you for not only sharing, but again, all you do to make these young men respectful and to feel respected. - TFA Parent

Regarding TFA's 1st Hall of Famer: Very cool... and very inspiring! I hope my son can follow in his footsteps someday! - TFA Parent

To Coach Lanning - My son's U14 team played your Champ team at Fall Ball on Saturday night. I wanted to let you know what a good sportsman one of your players was. Prior to the start of the game, he offered my son a pre-game handshake on the field. During the game, we saw him help up one of our players who fell and also pat one of his own teammates on the back after he missed a kick and was clearly disappointed. This young man should be commended for being such a great example. Your team as a whole also played with great sportsmanship. Job well done! - Opponent's Parent

Nick - A quick note to say we really appreciate your approach with our son. He's learning from you and enjoying his first season with TFA. As a teacher myself, I know it is often helpful to hear when my efforts are appreciated. - TFA Parent

Regarding a player interview following a high school game: He was glad that his TFA emblem was clearly visible in the interview. Thank you for your support! - TFA Parent

TA email to parents: Attached is a picture of what TFA U11C parent dedication looks like! You may have seen it on Kevin's post of this weekend. A-M-A-Z-I-N-G... you are all, each and every one of you...amazing! Dedicated in the rain, sun, wind, and bees! Many thanks to Paul, too, for taking time to join the U11C's on the sidelines (both players AND parents). There is a pic attached of him offering "counsel and analysis" (no doubt to "our lads on the sidelines". We appreciate your efforts, communication, and commitment to our kids, Paul, and all at TFA. In case you missed

it, the Leadership Night was wonderful! It was really interesting to listen to what my son and other U11 players thought and wrote about that night! - TFA Parent

Regarding a Leadership Meeting: This was a great night for our son. We were both really impressed with his take on it and reading the notes he took. He was really happy to attend. Thanks for having it!
- TFA Parent

Regarding TFA Hall of Famer and Air Force GK John Wendt displaying sportsmanship in a college game: I love moments like these, particularly when the pros demonstrate such sportsmanship. We don't need to watch soccer players biting other people, we want to see this! - TFA Parent

Regarding TFA Hall of Famer and Air Force GK John Wendt displaying sportsmanship in a college game: I so remember the first time he did this with TFA under your guidance after a player got hurt in a similar situation. Thank you, Paul. - TFA Parent

Regarding an upcoming Leadership Meeting: Thanks for doing this. It is an excellent idea! - TFA Parent

Regarding a coach disagreement with a referee: As much as we appreciate this heart-felt apology from Coach Nick, it truly is unnecessary. There are so many moving parts in the officiating of any game and as much as we'd rather not bear the brunt of erroneous arbitration, it invariably occurs, even if occasionally. We appreciate Coach Nick's commitment to our boys and to the game of soccer, and anticipate a promising season ahead. Our son is honored to have him as a coach. - TFA Parent

Thank you Paul!!! What a fine example of an amazing director and professional club you run. Your time is sincerely appreciated to put this together - TFA Parent

Hello Paul - I wanted to say it was really nice for my husband and I to get a chance to talk with you the other day at practice. Our son attended his first goalie training yesterday and I wanted to tell you how excited he was when he came off the field. He had a blast. He came off smiling and sweating. It was fun watching - the boys really kept moving and doing all sorts of drills. He can't wait until next week's practice now! - TFA Parent

I have been in Northwest Ohio for seven years now and I have always been impressed with TFA and what the club stands for. In all of my years of being around soccer and soccer clubs, I am not sure I have seen a club with such a holistic and balanced

approach to developing players and creating a real family with the club. Congratulations on being a part of a truly special club. - Local College Coach

Paul - Really appreciate the work TFA is doing. - TFA Parent

Paul - I want to take the opportunity to respond to this educational email in appreciation. We value your commitment to helping raise our sons to love the sport, have the motivation to learn, work hard and respect teammates, opponents and coaches for the same. I also want to let you know that our oldest son made it onto the JV team this week. This is a huge accomplishment for him personally. He attempted club soccer for the first time in his 7th grade year and did not make it onto another club team. He learned a great amount about the game that year playing with TFA. Despite his small size and lack of past training, he showed enough improvement to make his HS team. A good amount of his friends did not. I look forward to his growth and continual training with TFA in the spring, and thank you for helping him get to this place mentally, physically, and most importantly a love and desire to master the game. - TFA Parent

Coach Paul - Thank you for making these past years of futbol great for me. Not only did this club teach me about the game, it also has taught me great character and to be responsible for my actions. TFA really is a better club for me and what you do and all of the other great coaches do there is very amazing. So once again, thank you! - Former TFA player

Hi Elaine - I just wanted to thank you and let you know your communication is appreciated! Very organized and easy to understand. - TFA Parent

Since I first got to BG, I appreciated how your club operates. I don't know all the ins and outs, but from my perspective you have built one of the most cohesive clubs I have seen. By that I mean there is a real family feel, and your teams do things together away from the games. We would love to be a part of that in any way we can. - Local College Coach

Our son has spent 8 years there (at TFA) and has become a true player of the game, leader, respected teammate and a gentleman from all of your efforts... Our family thanks you unconditionally for all TFA has done for our son. We will continue to promote TFA and send boys your way. - TFA Parent

Dear Paul and Jason - I am very grateful to you both, and especially you, Paul, for sharing your passion for the game and your leadership with us. - TFA Parent

Hi Paul - I also wanted to thank you for taking the time to talk to both of us at the tryouts. Your personal attention meant a lot to us, and it is one of the reasons our son is pretty certain that he will be coming back for tryouts again next year. - Parents of Prospective TFA Player

Paul - As small as you think these emails have been, it has left quite the impression on my husband and me. We didn't receive this kind of response from anywhere else. Thank you again. - Parents of Prospective TFA Player

Love it, Paul! Keep moving forward! - TFA Parent

Hi Paul - The boys are very much into soccer so I'll have to think about what would be the best placement for them at this point. It's great to see the coaches at TFA are involved with ODP!

Coach Nick - I wanted to say thank you for a great season with the boys... I think you did a great job with the team. My son enjoys playing and I feel he works pretty hard. I hope you enjoyed the present - you deserve it. - TFA Parent

Hi Paul - It was a pleasure working with TFA this spring and I am extremely grateful for all of the opportunities you have provided me with - starting when I was still playing in college, all the way until now. TFA was a fantastic club to be a part of with the values you have built the club on and continue to carry out on a daily basis. Again, I can't thank you enough for everything you have given me over the years, and I will tremendously miss working at TFA with the players, the staff and especially you. You should be extremely proud of what you have built with that club and I can't wait to continue to follow along and see all the great things that are in store for you and the club in years to come! - Former TFA Coach

Paul - I would like to thank you and TFA for helping our son play the game he loved and teaching him the TFA values. The drive and motivation he learned from you on the field has been a big part of his success off the field. - TFA Parents

Hi Paul - You and your staff probably do not hear this stuff as much as you deserve to. What a great coach, we are really blessed to have him. The recap, like always, is very thoughtful, strategic, and with player and team development/improvement in mind.

I know the boys will be facing incredible challenges from here out but I'm looking forward to what the future may bring and seeing how this group handles adversity. Thanks again for providing our son and the rest of the TFA players such an awesome opportunity and playing experience. - TFA Parent

Hi Paul - I wanted to let you know that we absolutely loved the face-to-face meeting with Jason tonight. It was wonderful to get some insight on what our son's strengths and weaknesses are, and how to prepare him for high school soccer. I loved watching Jason explain things to him and encourage him to keep getting better. It was a positive experience I don't think any of us will forget. I definitely hope for more of these meetings in our future with TFA. - TFA Parent

I wanted to let you know that I have been involved with club soccer for four years, and never in my time as a soccer mom have I seen such gracious and outstanding young men on the field, and after the game. I would especially like to point out number 20 and the goalie. They were talking to our players during the game and encouraging our players. They congratulated our players after the game... In the parking lot. I have never seen anything like it. I am so thankful to have witnessed that. I hope our team will learn from them. - Parent of Opponent

Hi Luis - Thanks so much for being a great coach to our son. We really appreciate your efforts! - Former TFA Parent

Regarding Annual Europe Trip: Good Morning Coaches - Thanks again for taking care of him through this and for dealing with the frustration and tears. I'm sure that was a tough call to make. We know that he was pretty disappointed about this, however, it hasn't clouded his impression of the entire trip - a truly great experience. We certainly appreciate your efforts and the care you showed him through all of this. - TFA Parents

Regarding Annual Europe Trip: Paul and Kevin - Just wanted to thank you for watching over the boys and bringing them back home safely. Our son talked non-stop about the trip and had great stories. He truly had an amazing time. I'm so thankful he had this opportunity. Thank you for providing this experience of a lifetime for him. - TFA Parent

Hi Paul - It's always so nice to chat with you. You are one of a kind and such a special person. You know our family adores you and your most amazing club. The passion you have for the club and the boys are so appreciated. There are so many behind the scene

logistics none of us see but sure appreciate. I have to share that when our son was U9/10 he played with a few boys that left TFA and went elsewhere to other clubs trying to gain the upper hand on a "more advanced" team. We ran into a mom a few weeks ago and she shared her son is now on a team and said his placement was OK and his team was OK... she asked about our son ahs his team and I proudly bragged how impressed we are with the team and all of the talent on it. A new team coming together and playing strong, and to think this core group will play together for many years to come is very, very exciting. It was fun to share from my end. - TFA Parent

*Hi Paul - I am really missing soccer right now. I hope things are going well at TFA and with yourself.
- Former TFA Parent*

Regarding TFA's First Fundraiser: Please forgive me, but I failed to appreciate the wonderful speech you made on Saturday night, both humorous, and touching. Our guests agreed as well. We needed Kleenex. - TFA Parent

Hi Paul - I can't say thank you enough for all you have done to help my son continue with TFA. Your kindness means so much and is a true testament to TFA and the love of the game. - TFA Parent

Elaine - Our first week experience with your was a HUGE hit. He is really enjoying the drills, the coaches and all the other players. He REALLY liked how things went on Wednesday night, but enjoyed Monday, too. Thank you so much for all your help getting them registered. - Former TFA Parent

Hi Paul - In the last week, I've had two different opportunities to tell to friends about TFA. They both have young boys that are beginning to play soccer and trying to determine the best place for their children to develop. Understanding their position all too well, it has been very nice to be able to highlight the benefits of your program, as you relayed to me.

I want to extend my thanks for your time and efforts developing (what I consider to be) a potentially amazing program for the boys and girls in this area.

Paul - I always tell you Paul - I hope you truly know how you changed our son's life... and continue to do so. We absolutely adore you and thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Humbled to be a part of your family and TFA. - Former TFA Parent

Hey Paul - I just wanted to thank you for everything. TFA has changed me into a better

player and person. Thanks for all the great experiences and memories. - Former TFA Player

Hi Paul - TFA is a great organization and I am thankful that I was able to be a part of it. I will never forget the wonderful experience of going to Europe with you and my teammates, and will cherish it forever. - Former TFA Player

Kevin - Thanks for all you guys are doing! Our son is really enjoying TFA. My comment about small sided games was because at the ripe age of 12 1/2, sometimes when parents bring up these opportunities you put out like 3v3 and futsal, it goes in one ear and out the other... If someone "cool" brings it up and plants the seed then it's taken differently. He really looks up to you guys! - TFA Parent

Paul - Our son has loved being a part of TFA. This experience has meant so much to him. He loves this team... We are very grateful to TFA and we promote the program to anyone who asks or anyone looking to make a change. - Former TFA Parent