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NEW SPORTS NON-PROFIT IN AUSTIN LAUNCHES TO HELP KIDS IN LOWER INCOME AREAS HAVE ACCESS TO TOP-LEVEL SOCCER PROGRAMS

*Soccer Assist makes official launch on April 23rd at PGI Studios downtown
with sports celebrities and community leaders*

(AUSTIN, TX. – March 24, 2015) – In soccer and in life, all kids should be able to make big goals. [Soccer Assist](http://www.soccerassist.org), the new organization that focuses on helping lower income Austin area youth grow and develop through Soccer, can help make those goals happen. The newly formed non-profit is officially launching April 23rd with an epic soccer social - featuring U.S. Soccer Legend Kristine Lilly, CNN hero of the year Jon Burns, and music from popular Austin entertainer, Tameca Jones. The event is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday April 23, 2015 at PGI Studios (formerly La Zona Rosa). Tickets are \$100 per guest, including drinks and appetizers, and must be purchased by April 10. www.soccerassist.org

Soccer Assist was founded by Dr. Aaron Rochlen in November 2014 and focuses on fundraising via events, parties, and sponsor relationships. Soccer Assist will be partnering with top-level clubs to award scholarships to boys and girls in lower income areas of Austin. Its' mission is to help underserved, deserving youth (age 7-11) participate in well-organized soccer leagues. In doing so, the organization hopes to add to, diversify, and strengthen the players and families involved in the "Beautiful Game" in the Austin community.

"Some clubs have scholarship programs in place, but most don't begin awarding them until age 12 or older. A child's most formative technical years occur much earlier. Soccer Assist's goal is to bridge that disconnect by allowing children starting as young as age 7 the opportunity to develop through participation with elite clubs and leagues. In doing so, they will benefit from exposure to top coaching and competition with other similarly talented players," commented Matt Prewitt, Soccer Assist Board Member and current Head Coach of the Men's Soccer Club at the University of Texas at Austin.

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Research has shown that participating in organized sports has far greater importance than an opportunity to play a game. Team sports is about building relationships, fostering passion, and building trust. It also teaches kids about sportsmanship and learning one's strengths and weaknesses. Soccer also teaches kids to respect those who are different, an invaluable lesson in today's increasingly diverse society.

In Austin, data from a recent report (Annie E. Casey Foundation) suggest that 25% of children live below the poverty – 15% of those in extreme poverty. For these kids, playing in top leagues is beyond their reach. Soccer Assist's main focus is to help these kids find a program and get them involved, opening the fields to all players who share a passion and drive to be a part of the sport. This benefits not only the kids who will gain entry to top leagues, but for those kids and their teams who are there already.

The Soccer Assist Launch Party marks the start of what is to be a prosperous relationship between many top clubs, players, and individuals. Current partners include the Lonestar Soccer Club, Westlake Youth Soccer Association, and the Austin Aztex.

"So many of us have experienced the joy of either playing or seeing our kids play and grow personally and athletically from the game of soccer. That's a joy and benefit that shouldn't be limited just to those who can afford to play," says Dr. Aaron Rochlen, founder of Soccer Assist.

Soccer Assist's board members are equally devoted to the Austin community and share a passion for Soccer and helping kids. Dr. Paula Requeijo is the President of *Soccer Assist* and originally from soccer-fueled Argentina. As Medical Director for multiple organizations she has led significant changes in the transition of complex patients by aligning resources between acute and post-acute facilities. Chris Ragland is a serial entrepreneur and has served as a principal in over two dozen companies providing various levels of leadership and support. Dr. Tony Gamboa is a Texas native with a long-standing passion for soccer. Finally, Matt Prewett played soccer at Rhodes College in Memphis and has been the Head Coach of the University of Texas Men's Soccer Club for 10+ years. He looks forward to helping the children of his home town improve their skills and have a chance to achieve their dreams. He also manages and plays for Austin Thunder, a top-level men's amateur club team.

About Soccer Assist

Soccer Assist was created to even out the playing field in the game of soccer, placing more kids on the pitch and parents on the sidelines. With high costs associated to participate in top-level youth sports, too many kids get shut out of the best leagues, limiting their development and visibility. Soccer Assist's main focus is to get more youth, ages 7-11, involved in soccer - both boys and girls, through endowments and scholarships while connecting them to top-level area soccer leagues. The 501(c)3 was formed in late 2014 and will officially launch on April 23, 2015. For more information on programs, guidelines or donations, go to www.soccerassist.org

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