

Dear SB players and parents,

This email is directed towards those players and parents who may have interest in our Young Leaders Program (YLP).

My last email was addressed to our whole community and was intended to provide general information without overwhelming everyone with unnecessary details about the YLP. I hope this email will answer some questions as you consider YLP as a potential fit for you/ your child.

Our Young Leaders Program, which we began in the Fall of 2018, is designed to provide an in-depth experience for our most committed players. Aside from the skill development workouts and AYBL games that every SB player is welcome to attend, I wanted to find a way to provide more for our most motivated players and to put them in a position to one day play at the collegiate level (if that is a goal they choose to pursue).

As Steady Buckets continues to grow and we help more and more beginners get a foundation in the sport, I've become concerned that we were failing our most committed players in the following ways:

1. Since the first days of Steady Buckets, our program's curriculum has featured five key components: Shooting, Ball Handling, Strength Training, Speed/Agility, and basketball IQ. I believe that if you can shoot, handle the ball, you're strong, you're fast and you're smart, you can play at any level. Addressing the first four components fits nicely into our Skill Development Workouts which represent the heart and soul of Steady Buckets. Instructional games (now in the form of our AYBL) address basketball IQ for the beginner. The question is, how can we continue to challenge our more advanced players? How can we provide our strongest players with the chance to leave their comfort zones within our program and play against other highly motivated kids in competitive settings? They would have to be surrounded by the other stronger players in order to bring out the best in each other and to learn advanced concepts not being taught at Skill Development workouts.

Our solution: Create SB All-Star teams that participate in the SB general community while also practicing separately from the rest of the program and competing locally in tournaments outside of SB.

2. Looking back at the last nine years of our program's existence, and specifically at how we could have helped our strongest players in more ways, one thing stands out: Players who maximize their potential have "it" and those who fell short of expectations lacked "it". But what is "it" and how could we teach "it" at SB moving forward so that all of our players can reach their maximum potential ?

I believe that "it" is independent thought manifested as leadership .

Leadership skills, including communication, high self-esteem, self-efficacy, honesty, integrity, compassion, and understanding teamwork are as important as what we cover in our Skills Development Workouts for a player to succeed at the highest levels of the sport.

So how could we develop “it” in our players ?

Our answer: Give ownership of youth sports back to the youth. Provide an arena for young people to be leaders. Give this responsibility to the players who want more out of Steady Buckets than just workouts and games.

I vividly recall realizing that I had become a much better player in my early and mid-20’s after experiencing the game for a few years in a coaching role. Unfortunately I only started coaching once my college career had ended. Giving our kids a chance to coach and ref games and take leadership roles in our Skill Development Workouts will expose them to a totally different experience of the game.

3. The history of Steady Buckets began with competitive AAU teams as a key component of our mission. We wanted to help high school players navigate the college basketball recruitment process. While we quickly became disenchanted with the state of AAU basketball, players who grew up with SB in our early days have gone on to play collegiate basketball at a number of schools including Notre Dame, Stanford, Davidson, and Yale, in part due to the experience they gained competing in AAU tournaments at a young age. In 2013 we stopped forming competitive teams and focused purely on the skill development and instructional league side of SB. I continued to advise families who asked for help through the high school and college admissions process including the ways that they can be recruited to play college basketball, but many who didn’t ask for help were left to figure things out on their own. While the current SB model helps more kids, I want to make sure we are also providing enough for players who hope to play after high school.

The Solution: As our YLP teams develop, we may send some of our high school teams to competitive regional or national tournaments during NCAA live recruitment periods or suggest appropriate exposure/elite basketball camps that fit each player’s prospect level. Young Leaders who set the goal of playing NCAA basketball will be guided through the college recruitment process as we help them plan for what may come after High School.

The rest of this email will address expectations for young leaders of all ages. If you are still confused you can either call me at 646-734-4395, email me at macky@steadybuckets.org or just show up at 10 E 15th Street at 9am on Saturday, September 7th and Sunday, September 8th for our Young Leaders training and make a decision after getting a better idea of what YLP will provide your child.

First, answers to some questions I expect to be asked...

Do we have to commit to YLP all year long?

No. I understand many of our players also play other sports or may have other commitments throughout the year. We plan to run three YLP seasons every year: Fall (September - January), Winter (January - April) and Spring (April - June). Young leaders are encouraged to sign up for as many as they please.

What if we can't make every practice?

I look at attendance as a matter of priority. I think every YLP participant should prioritize their family, their academics and their own development as a player over their YLP responsibilities. I understand how busy student-athletes can be (especially high schoolers) so missing from time to time is to be expected. Skipping because you don't feel like going or because you are prioritizing another team is not appropriate. A big part of being a young leader is accepting the responsibility of being a role model, showing up with positive energy, and embracing the spirit of servant-leadership. There will be no rule in terms of number of acceptable missed days, but I hope everyone who commits to this program understands the importance of their roles within our program and what they owe the SB community in return for what they are receiving.

Players who wish to play for other teams outside of SB are welcome to do so if their schedule allows both, but should never miss YLP responsibilities for outside practices or games. School basketball always comes first, but YLPs should be making Steady Buckets their top weekend basketball priority.

Is YLP the same as the Coach Lefty practices at 75 Morton Street from last spring?

Yes. I decided to make joining the YLP and giving back to the SB community mandatory for all players participating in invite only workouts. Moving forward, only YLP members will be invited to these practices.

What tournaments will we play in?

To start, teams can expect to play at a locally run tournaments run at 5th and Ave. B and 20th Street between 1st and 2nd Ave. The proximity of these tournaments will allow us to compete and still honor the rest of our YLP commitments. Depending on the competitive level of each age group we will determine which other tournaments we will enter moving into the winter and spring seasons.

What ages are allowed to join YLP?

7-18 years old.

What can families expect for all ages of young leaders?

Below is a short description for each age group. The schedules posted below includes events that all YLPs should make a priority. Practices offered to the whole community can be found in my last email and of course YLPs are encouraged to join as many Skill Development workouts as possible.

Part of next weekends training days will include mapping out each young leaders schedule of responsibilities, so even if the schedule posted below doesn't work, there may be another solution. I want to be as flexible as possible while still maintaining a level of commitment by all participants. If you aren't sure YLP is a fit, I encourage you to come this weekend before making a decision. After this weekend, if you decide that you can not commit to YLP, just let me know. You can continue to resume all other SB workouts and skill development workouts .

For those of you interested in YLP, I look forward to seeing you this weekend. Everyone else will start their 2019 SB Fall schedule on Monday 9/9/19.

Best,

Coach Macky

1st and 2nd graders - This will be the first year that we offer the Young Leaders Program to this age group, but I think starting young, will lead to future success within these challenging roles. 1st and 2nd graders will be expected to join at least one of the two 6U workouts at 10 E 15th Street from 9-10:30am. Not only do I think that 1st and 2nd graders can still benefit from these workouts, I believe their presence at these workouts will benefit the new crop of 6Us and that our 1st and 2nd graders will learn the power of leading by example and the importance of helping others.

Saturday (YLP)*	9-10:30am	Jr. Coach 6U	10 E 15th St.
(AYBL)	10:30-12pm	1st and 2nd grade	10 E 15th St
(SD)	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
or			
(SD)	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
Sunday (YLP)*	9-10:30am	Jr. Coach @ 6U	10 E 15th St.
(SD)	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
(YLP)	4:15-5:45 YLP	Team Practice	75 Morton

* - Players are expected to attend either one of the two 6U practices to help out by participating, demonstrating and encouraging younger players.

2nd and 3rd graders - Some 2nd and 3rd graders may be asked to join the 1st and 2nd grade YLPs during the 6U workouts (see above), if they aren't quite ready to run the 1st and 2nd grade AYBL games. Others will be invited to either ref, coach or score keep for the 1st and 2nd grade AYBL on Saturdays from 10:30am-12pm at 10 E 15th Street.

Saturday (YLP)	10:30-12pm	1st and 2nd grade AYBL	10 E 15th St
(SD)	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
(YLP)	4:15-5:45pm	YLP Team Practice	75 Morton St

Sunday (AYBL)	10:30-12pm	2nd and 3rd grade AYBL	10 E 15th St
(SD)	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
or			
(SD)	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St

4th and 5th graders - 4th and 5th graders will be asked to run the 2nd and 3rd grade AYBL league on Sundays from 10:30-12pm at 10 E 15th Street. Additionally, there will be an optional Monday workout at 75 Morton from 6-8pm.

Monday (YLP)	6-8pm	YLP Team Practice	75 Morton St
Saturday (AYBL)	11-1pm	4th and 5th grade AYBL	75 Morton St
(YLP)	1-2:30pm	YLP Team Practice	75 Morton St
(SD)	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
Sunday (YLP)	10:30-12pm	1st and 2nd grade AYBL	10 E 15th St
(YLP)	1-2:30pm	YLP Team Practice	75 Morton St
(SD)	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St

7th and 8th Graders -

***** 8th Graders who will be taking high school admissions tests will be excused from all volunteer work until after the tests are over. Additionally, SB will be offering a test prep/ basketball workout (more details coming soon, call me if you have questions at 646-734-4395). 7th graders and 8th graders who aren't preparing for high school admissions tests will run the 5th and 6th grade AYBL on Saturdays from 11-1pm at 75 Morton Street.

Additionally, there will be an optional Monday workout at 75 Morton from 6-8pm.

Monday (YLP)	6-8pm	YLP Team Practice	75 Morton St
Saturday (AYBL)	9-11am	7th and 8th grade	75 Morton St
(YLP)	11-1pm	5th and 6th grade AYBL	75 Morton St

(YLP)	2:15-3:45pm	7th-12th grade Team Practice	10 E 15th St.
(SD)	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
Sunday (SD)	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
or			
(SD)	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
(YLP)	2:15-3:45pm	7th-12th grade Team Practice	10 E 15th St.

9th - 12th graders - Some 9th - 12th graders will run the 5th and 6th grade or 7th and 8th grade AYBL on Saturdays from 9-11am at 75 Morton Street. Others will be asked to fill leadership roles during our Skill Development workouts. Additionally, there will be an optional Monday workout at 75 Morton from 6-8pm.

Monday (YLP)	6-8pm	YLP Team Practice	75 Morton St
Saturday (YLP)	9-11am	7th and 8th grade AYBL	75 Morton St
or			
(YLP)	11-1pm	12U AYBL	75 Morton St
(SD)*	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
(YLP)	2:15-3:45pm	7th - 12th grade Team Practice	10 E 15th St.
(SD)*	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
Sunday (SD)*	12:15-2:15pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St
(YLP)	2:15-3:45pm	7th - 12th grade Team Practice	10 E 15th St.
(SD)*	3:45-5:45pm	All Ages	10 E 15th St

YLPs must attend at least one of the four starred workouts.

