

# OIC of South Florida

**For Immediate Release:**

**OIC-SFL Launches the First Middle School Lacrosse Team of Its Kind in Broward County Public Schools**



*Click the button below to play a video highlighting the  
The McNicol Hawks!*

**Play Now!**

### *OIC LAX (Lacrosse) / McNicol Hawks*

OIC of South Florida recently entered into a partnership with US Lacrosse to provide a "varsity type" after-school component of the R.A.I.S.E. the Bar (RTB), School Is Cool initiative at McNicol Middle School. Supported by the Mary N. Porter Community Impact Fund of the Community Foundation of Broward's School Is Cool grant, the R.A.I.S.E. the Bar program invites male youth to Rise Above the Influence to Strive for Excellence and focuses on academic achievement, personal development, pro-social behaviors, and family strengthening.\*

Operating under the idea that "uncoachable kids are unemployable people," the OIC LAX (LAX meaning lacrosse) / McNicol Hawks R.A.I.S.E. the Bar program component focuses not only on training young males in the sport of lacrosse, but also on improving their academic performance, fostering youth leadership development, and preparation for the future. In order to play on the team, members must attend tutoring before each practice, resulting in an increase of after-school tutoring participation and a noticeable improvement in grades. The program has also increased student accountability to daily school attendance and reduced negative behavioral occurrences through positive youth development practices, such as one-on-one mentoring.

On March 1st, the Hawks played the first game of their inaugural season and, though they have only been in existence for a short time, displayed a high level of skill against an established team. Despite not winning the game, the importance of this team and the historic significance of this event was further emphasized when a special needs youth scored for the Hawks. His teammates all noted that moment as being the best part of the game.

The Hawks are highly competitive, but winning games isn't the only part of this program the players are focused on. After the game, one Hawks player said, *"I feel more confident about myself since starting with the team. I am conquering my fears. I feel so energized. And I am losing a little weight!"* He continued by saying, *"Being on the team has really helped my academics...a lot!. You have to come to tutoring and finish your work and you have to get good grades to play on the team...and I want to be on this team."* Another player commented, *"We lost on the outside, but we won on the inside."*

Together, with funding provided by the Mary N. Porter Community Impact Fund of the Community Foundation of Broward's School is Cool grant, OIC of South Florida, South Florida's Chapter of US Lacrosse, the McNicol Middle School's Hawks and the R.A.I.S.E. the Bar program have demonstrated the power of innovative collaboration.

You are invited to come out and support the Hawks at one of their upcoming games!

### **HAWKS SEASON SCHEDULE**

**March 17th: @ University School - 5pm**

University School address: 3375 SW 75th Ave, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33314

**April 5th: @ Holiday Park vs. St. Mark's Episcopal School - 4pm**

Holiday Park address: 1000 E. Sunrise Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

*For more information about The McNicol Hawks or OIC of South Florida, visit [www.OICSFL.org](http://www.OICSFL.org). Interviews and Media Coverage are available upon request. MEDIA CONTACT: Arlene L. Connelly, Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships, [aconnelly@oicsfl.org](mailto:aconnelly@oicsfl.org) | (954) 563-3535 | ext. 206*

\*Note: The design team for the McNicol Middle School R.A.I.S.E. the Bar, School Is Cool initiative supported the opportunity to collaborate with US Lacrosse to introduce an after-school lacrosse component. They recognized the potential of lacrosse to act as a vehicle which can help increase the academic performance, attendance, and positive behavioral occurrences of the 50 underperforming students within the RAISE the BAR Minority Male mentoring program at McNicol Middle School, which is a recognized member of the Hallandale Zone Minority Male Success Task Force developed by Broward County Schools.

OIC-SFL is currently seeking opportunities to expand lacrosse at McNicol Middle and other schools.

[Click here to learn more about R.A.I.S.E. the Bar and School Is Cool.](#)







COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION  
OF BROWARD

For Good. For Ever.



R.A.I.S.E the Bar  
(Rising Above the Influence to Strive for Excellence)



# School is Cool

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## About Opportunities Industrialization Centers of South Florida

Opportunities Industrialization Centers of South Florida (OIC-SFL) is a community-based workforce development, education and training organization that prepares individuals for the world of work by reducing barriers to employment, providing comprehensive vocational skills training and fostering youth aspirations through prevention and intervention strategies that support positive youth development and strengthen families.

OIC-SFL provides leadership, employment and vocational training to thousands of participants per year, including individualized case management and counseling, mentoring, and wrap around support services to address participant needs and barriers.

To date, over \$40 million dollars have been secured to serve the South Florida community. Since 2001, OIC of South Florida has placed over 6000 community residents into high-demand occupations and serves over 4500 youth annually. Our goal is give everyone the opportunity to realize their potential; to offer a "Hand UP" not a hand out.

Opportunities Industrialization Center of South Florida (OIC-SFL) is an affiliate of OIC of America(OICA) and is a proud member of the over 50-year-old national network of employment and training programs bound together by a common commitment to help people realize self-sufficiency through training and jobs.

For more information, visit [www.OICSFL.org](http://www.OICSFL.org). Interviews and Media Coverage are available upon request. MEDIA CONTACT: Arlene L. Connelly, Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships,[aconnelly@oicsfl.org](mailto:aconnelly@oicsfl.org)

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