

## A Letter From Mr. Jim Davis - Rising Stars President

Dear Friends of Rising Stars,

Welcome to our second issue of **PRIORITIES**. Our first issue began with an introduction from one of Rising Stars most illustrious alumni, Jason (Jay) Williams. As most of you know, Jay's affiliation with Rising Stars began when he was in the fifth grade and continues to this day. His mission of incorporating basketball skills to help youth succeed in life has been one of his lifelong endeavors. I am proud to announce that Jay has partnered with Rising Stars and its programs to assist him in that mission. We are honored to announce that Jay Williams is the new Chief Executive Officer of Rising Stars Youth Foundation.

My career as a law enforcement officer began similarly to Jay's - with a basketball. I am NYC raised, a St. John's basketball captain, and a former NBA player. Like Jay my journey began with a basketball, and it has helped me along the way. It was my time as a NYC homicide detective that showed me the reality of life - how lucky I was to have had that basketball in my hands - and which ultimately led to my decision to assume the presidency of Rising Stars.

My son Danny has also been a member of the Rising Stars program. Danny grew from a Rising Stars 4th grade basketball player, to Jay's teammate on a Rising Stars national championship team, to a current Rising Stars teacher, coach, and director. Rising Stars stayed with Danny throughout his journey. They watched him at school, at home, on the court, and more importantly, off the court.

He became a part of their extended family and spent as much time with that family as he did his own. He was in the best of hands and I was glad to have them. It's important for me to explain Danny's experience because it mirrors the experience of hundreds of youth like him in the Rising Stars family through the years. It is an experience I believe is vitally important

for our youth to have. It is an experience that offers a way to offset all of the social ills our youth face every day. It is an experience I feel all of our youth must continue to have!

“**BASKETBALL AND LIFE - BEING ABLE TO USE ONE TO TEACH THE OTHER, AND HELP OUR YOUTH DURING THEIR FORMATIVE YEARS - IS WHAT RISING STARS IS ALL ABOUT.**”

That is why I am both honored and proud to see Jay come aboard and assume the mantle of leadership. Jay knows basketball, but he also knows life. Basketball and life - being able to use one to teach the other, and help our youth during their formative years - is what Rising Stars is all about.

We hope you enjoy our second issue of **PRIORITIES**.

Thank You,  
Jim Davis, President  
Rising Stars Youth Foundation

### Governing Officers

Jim Davis, President  
Jason Williams, CEO  
Paul Savramis, Founder/National Executive Director  
Danny Gimpel, National Director of Operations  
Althea Bowman Williams, National Director of Public Relations/  
Gifting  
Tyrone Green, Goodwill Industries Youth Coordinator

### National Advisory Board

Bill Bradley, Former NJ Senator  
Seth Kramer, President, Cambridge Capital  
Tim Thornton, Vice President, Goldman Sachs  
John Hess, CEO, Hess Corporation  
Stuart Cohen, CEO, Metro Franchising Commissary  
Harvey Sanders, Former President/CEO Nautica/Under Armor  
Kevin Conway, Vice Chair Student Sponsored Programs  
Pastor Eric Crumbley, Harlem Faith Center

# Rising Stars

## JAY WILLIAMS



I am proud and honored to accept the position of CEO for my charity of choice, Rising Stars Youth Foundation. When I first began to play basketball it was for “love of the sport.” The longer I played, the more I understood what I was really being prepared for; and I began to see the connection between the plays and strategies used to win a basketball game on the court to the plays and strategies needed to be successful in life. I now have the opportunity to share the knowledge given to me by my elementary, middle, high school and AAU coaches, as well as one of my favorite grassroots coaches, Paul Savramis, and the infamous Coach Mike Krzyzewski who coached me throughout my college career.

I would like to thank you for your placing your confidence and faith in me. I will perform my duties with the utmost diligence as the CEO of Rising Stars. It is a great honor to be placed at the helm of the foundation that has had such a profound influence on my life. As we turn the page into another 25 plus years of history, Rising Stars and I look forward to working with you as together we forge into the 21st century.

## RISING STARS SUCCESS BEGINS WITH YOU

Your donations, sponsorship and contributions – whether it be your time, ideas, expertise- and yes, even your money, is necessary as we move ahead. Your gifts will help Rising Stars to achieve the following goals:

- ★ Increase scholarship donations for Rising Stars students
- ★ Continue promotional events, i.e. clinics and camps
- ★ Increase Rising Stars support base
- ★ Reestablish and upgrade our educational programs to ensure our kids continue to use their basketball/educational skills competitively throughout their lives.
- ★ Offset the costs of facilities rentals and staffing

Please contact Althea Williams at [abwilliams@comcast.net](mailto:abwilliams@comcast.net) or Paul Savramis at [risingstars55@optonline.net](mailto:risingstars55@optonline.net) for further information. Your tax deductible donations, made payable to Rising Stars Youth Foundation can be mailed directly to Rising Stars Youth Foundation, P.O. Box 1596, Flushing, NY 11354.

## RISING STARS SPOTLIGHT



### **Maccabiah Games**

Evan Conti attended the 18th Maccabiah games in Jerusalem this summer. He led his team (USA) to a gold medal and was awarded MVP of the games!! Evan began playing basketball in the 4th grade with the Rising Stars summer league in Bayside, Queens and has been a part of every event since that time. Evan is also a high school scholarship recipient at Holy Cross High School in Flushing, NY. Evan works hard helping our younger players throughout the year. He epitomizes the success of kids we work with on and off the court. Rising Stars congratulates Evan on all of his accomplishments.

### **Michael Lewis Wolkis Tournament**

Rising Stars 6th grade team members, Kyle Young, Cameron Biegel, Lucas Cotler and Casey Barone went undefeated in the 6th grade division of the first annual Michael Lewis Wolkis Tournament in Syosset, Long Island in July 2009. The tournament benefited the Michael Lewis Wolkis Miles of Smiles Foundation, Inc., a foundation set up in memory of the 15 year old Long Island boy whose life was tragically taken too soon. The tournament helped to raise our players' level of awareness for a need of greater humanitarian characteristics in athletics. The participation of these youngsters fulfills the yearly requirement of all Rising Stars members to be involved in a minimum of one community-based event program which supports an important cause. Congratulations on a job well done!



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## BRIDGING COMMUNITIES

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### **Duke vs. NCCU “Celebration” Clinic**

Jay Williams and the Rising Stars Staff traveled to Durham, NC on September 26, 2009 to put on a FREE clinic for youth residing in the communities surrounding North Carolina Central and Duke Universities. This clinic was held in honor of the first ever homecoming football game between Duke and NCCU, as well as a support vehicle to foster the growth of positive relations between the two diverse communities. The event also stressed the importance of community relations and the need to transcend goodwill. Special thanks to all who helped make this “Celebration” event a success. Please check out the photo collage on page 4 of this newsletter.

### **Rising Stars “Life Skills” Camp**

During spring break 2009, Rising Stars’ National Executive Director Paul Savramis traveled to Day Spring Christian Academy in Blacksburg, Virginia to conduct a free three day clinic for approximately 40 youth. Invitations to attend this Rising Stars clinic were extended to various communities throughout Blacksburg. Although the majority of the athletes present were members of Day Spring Christian School, there were also participants from surrounding area schools. The clinic was a huge success due to the fact that all participants experienced a high level of basketball instruction combined with life skills training, and an opportunity to meet other children of different races, colors, socioeconomic, and religious orientations.

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## GRASSROOTS BASKETBALL FRONT

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Rising Stars participated in a number of events this summer and was able to offer 23 boys the opportunity of participating in their clinics, camps, and travel programs free of charge.

The 16 year old team continued in their winning ways by attending the Amateur Athletic Union’s National Division One Championship at the Disney Sports Complex in Orlando, Florida in June. The team consisted of Tommy Botsaris, Evan Conti, Matt Quinn, Michael Florin, Jason Hernandez, Kyle Kube, Ryan Denicola, Anthony Motrie, and Chris Dorgler. The boys had a great tournament, won their pool, advanced in the gold bracket, and reached the Final 8! This was a great accomplishment as the nationals featured over 100 of the best teams in the country. Most significantly, most of the 16 year old team started in elementary school and have been together for seven years. They also played in the inaugural Game Over Classic, winning the championship in their age bracket. Evan Conti was awarded MVP honors for the division. The team finished the summer in the NYC Nike Swoosh League. Nike offers one of America’s premier summer grassroots programs with tournaments held throughout the country. Rising Stars made it to the city championship and lost to a very strong Christ the King team.

Rising Stars final event of the summer was its annual summer camp at Long Island Lutheran School from August 24-27, 2009. Long Island Lutheran is unique in that all the junior staff are former Rising Stars team members. The focus of the camp was teamwork, leadership, and learning how to successfully compete in today’s competitive world. Special thanks to John Coleson who once again provided the officiating from his excellent referee’s school. The addition of professional referees always adds to the high quality of a Rising Stars camp. John also gave the junior staff the opportunity of working with the officials to help them understand this important part of life.

Despite a very challenging fiscal year, Rising Stars was able to honor its commitments to continue with three partial private high school scholarships to Tiquan Gardner, Long Island Luther, Jason Oder, Holy Trinity, and Evan Conti, Holy Cross.

### **Blessed Beyond Measure (BBM) Basketball League**

BBM Basketball League has a new home in Harlem! Their practice facility and offices are located at the Salvation Army, Harlem Temple Corps, 540 Lennox Avenue and 137<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10037. BBM is one of Rising Stars most active outreach programs and highly touted inner-city organizations! BBM, under the direction of Pastor Eric Crumbley, was also successful in helping two young men achieve their dream of attending post secondary institutions. Congratulations to Fazon Gray and Carter Clerveaux. Please visit [www.bbmbasketball.org](http://www.bbmbasketball.org) for more information on basketball skills training for youth in grades 5 through 12.

DURHAM "CELEBRATION" PICTURES 9/26/09

