



## COMMUNITY SERVICE ABROAD

### *HP lacrosse teammates to teach lacrosse camp in South Africa*

BY ART FINLEY

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Haydyn Anigian, Bailey Ewing, Rachel Mannes and Sarah Morgan, Highland Park High School seniors and members of the Highland Park varsity lacrosse team, will be spending July 5-9 in Vaalwater, South Africa helping run a lacrosse camp for orphaned and vulnerable children with The Wilson Foundation. All of the schools in South Africa are closed during that time for the 2010 World Cup.

The girls will be participating in the South African Lacrosse Project. Two teen brothers and their mother from Towson, Maryland established the project four years ago. While visiting a family friend in Vaalwater, South Africa, the boys decided to host a camp to introduce the game of lacrosse to children at the local youth center. What began with 15 participants in the first camp has grown into a year-round sport in this rural community. Over 150 children are expected to participate in this year's camp.

The Wilson Foundation, which was founded by Trisha Wilson in 1997, funds education and health care programs for AIDS orphans and other at-risk or vulnerable children throughout the Vaalwater community.

University Park resident and Executive Director of The Wilson Foundation Tori Mannes learned of the South African Lacrosse Project last summer when she and her daughter, Rachel, met the founders during a lacrosse tournament in Maryland. Since The Wilson Foundation and the South African Lacrosse Project are two of the only U.S.-based nonprofits working in this small community halfway across the world, Mannes knew the two organizations



Rachel Mannes, Haydyn Anigian, Bailey Ewing and Sarah Morgan.

needed to work together. "It's a great fit. The Wilson Foundation is committed to making a difference in the lives of orphaned and vulnerable children in Vaalwater. The South African Lacrosse Project shares our vision and we are thrilled to be able to partner with them for the 2010 lacrosse camp," Mannes said.

In addition to the Highland Park lacrosse players, other volunteers include Tom Greene, SMU Men's Lacrosse Assistant Coach, Sue Heether, Head Coach of the US Women's National Lacrosse Team, and midfielder Katie Chrest, member of the US Women's National Team.

To help defray camp expenses, the Highland Park girls have solicited donations from teammates, friends and family, and from the Gene and Jerry Jones Family/Dallas Cowboys Charities.

The group is also seeking donations to offset the 'heavy baggage' fees they expect to incur as they transport several hundred pounds of lacrosse equipment donated by Warrior, 1 Lacrosse, and Not Just Soccer, including 150 pairs of cleats, 125 lacrosse sticks, and 120 T-shirts. "We're all

taking extra-large duffle bags to carry over the lacrosse gear," says Rachel Mannes. "I can't wait to see the kids' faces when we give them their new cleats and sticks. They are going to be blown away."

To make a donation to help 'Send a Kid to Camp' or defray shipping costs, please contact The Wilson Foundation at 214-521-6753. Established by Trisha Wilson in 1997, The Wilson Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting a wide range of education and health care programs for disadvantaged children in rural South Africa. The Wilson Foundation's mission is to 'change lives, one child at a time.'

The South African Lacrosse Project is a 501c3 nonprofit corporation organized for the advancement of education by implementing and coordinating a lacrosse program in South Africa for at-risk youth, and assisting in the development and promotion of HIV prevention programs for orphans in South Africa.

For more information please visit [www.thewilsonfoundation.org](http://www.thewilsonfoundation.org) or [www.southafricanlacrosseproject.org](http://www.southafricanlacrosseproject.org).