

Bio:

Aside from my own experiences in soccer through college, I have had various roles related to youth sports. My education is in sports medicine, and I've provided medical care for athletes ranging from middle school to university-aged. Later, my oldest son's involvement in sports prompted me to research and publish articles on competitive youth sports on topics such as specialization versus diversification, burnout, parents, and performance. As a parent-volunteer, I've coached, been a team mom/manager, trained coaches in first aid, spent two years as a Little League board member as a yearbook coordinator, and served as vice president of the same board.

Keeping up with the changes in competitive sports can be intimidating; however, it's helpful for parents to understand where their children would best fit and thrive. Moving between teams, clubs, and leagues requires learning new cultures and expectations. I recall asking a seasoned parent many questions when my son, at six, was trying out for his first competitive club. Him spending seven years in a well-developed Southern California soccer club before being recruited to play in an MLS Academy for the next few years allowed me to observe differences in the level of training for the athletes, quality—and number of—coaching staff, speed of play, interactions between parents and coaches, and the motivations of players, parents, and administrators. I also understand that fully-funded international travel, meals, and equipment are not the norm! The range of experiences helped me have a healthier view of youth sports when my daughter began playing competitively, and I became the parent whom the new parents sought for advice.

Why I'd like to serve the members:

Before moving to Florida from California in June 2023, I explored soccer clubs that could be a good fit for my daughter. Space Coast United was an obvious choice, and her coach at the time—who was also a college coach in Southern California—confirmed SCU's solid reputation as one he'd watch on recruiting trips. My interactions with coaches and administrators before the move were reassuring; they aimed to provide my daughter with a tryout experience that was considerate of everyone's schedule, gave her time to get acclimated to Florida's heat and humidity, and let her meet numerous potential teammates. In our first year with SCU, my daughter developed more confidence, skills, and friends.

I would like to serve the members of Space Coast United, especially the athletes, by helping to ensure the same positive experience. I understand there is a balance between operating a business and providing youth with development opportunities that extend beyond soccer skills and tactical knowledge. I would encourage all stakeholders

to consider each other's perspectives while ultimately weighing decisions based on the potential impact on the young athletes.