

Teen amazes Boys & Girls Club with his nonprofit

BY KRISTINE CANNON
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Typically, 13-year-old kids spend their summer breaks hanging out with friends, playing sports and doing absolutely zero homework.

But this wasn't the case for Scottsdale teen Wade Crum.

Wade spent his summer starting his own nonprofit, Pass It On, which collects new and gently used soccer equipment to share with youth in need.

"We found there's a real hole in the system because there was no mechanism to collect all of his equipment," Wade's dad Greg Crum said.

When Wade took one look at all of the used soccer equipment piling up in his closet, a light bulb went off.

He would donate everything.

Instead of donating to Salvation Army or Goodwill, however, he and his mother Sara Crum lugged all of his used items to the head office of their soccer club.

"We thought, 'Of course, they're going to have a place to collect it,'" Sara said.

But they didn't.

"Nobody knew about it!" Sara added.

So, Wade approached his mom with the idea of starting his own nonprofit.

"I said, 'OK, I don't know about that!'" Sara admitted. "Let's just say we did a lot of Googling."

Wade spent weeks studying and researching. He also reached out to the Boys & Girls Club to form a partnership.

"I can honestly say that never have I received a reach-out like this that was so formal, so organized, so on-point," said Kristina Chumpol, director of programs and partnerships at Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Scottsdale. "It was very put together."

Chumpol was more than happy to help with Wade and his family.

"Obviously, our hearts are grateful that he's even reaching out to us to work with us, but whatever we can do to make this happen because I think it's just awesome to see a young person doing such great stuff," Chumpol said.

Wade held his first donation drive in August, with the help of Phoenix Rising FC Youth Soccer, one of Arizona's largest independent youth soccer clubs for boys and girls.

"Being part of a professional organization, we get all these requests throughout the week for donations, so hearing someone wanting to donate and not necessarily looking for donations, it filled a need in



Wade Crum draws support from his parents, Greg and Sara Crum, and older brother Tyler, right. (Kimberly Carrillo/Progress Staff Photographer)



Wade Crum and volunteers sort through donated equipment following his donation drive for old soccer gear. (Kimberly Carrillo/Progress Staff Photographer)

the community," said Heber Valenzuela, community and partner relations with Phoenix Rising.

Wade collected over 2,000 items, including shoes, clothing, soccer balls and various other soccer equipment.

The result of the drive far exceeded Wade's expectations.

"I thought I'd get around 500 pieces, but I was surprised how much I actually got," Wade said. "I was surprised by how many cleats I got. I thought that was going to be the hardest part because they're the most expensive [item]."

Following the donation drive, Wade and Sara immediately went to work sorting, tagging and bagging the items.

"It was tedious. It was long. My husband was nowhere to be found," Sara said with a laugh. "Every single thing [Wade's] done, whether it's spreadsheets, tagging,

he never complained."

When Wade came back to the Boys & Girls Clubs with donations in hand, already sorted and organized in a spreadsheet, Chumpol was blown away.

"They came back with an overwhelming amount of stuff and resources for our kids," she said. "They were very sensitive to us understanding that we're a nonprofit."

"We don't always have a wealth of resources to organize something like this," Chumpol continued. "What was amazing about Wade's family is they wanted to do whatever they could to help."

Through his partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Scottsdale, donated items will be distributed to local Boys & Girls Clubs chapters.

"They're already a well-oiled machine," Chumpol said. "Now all I have to do is go

to our branches. We already know who our kids are, we know what they need, and I have it ready to go for them – so all the work is done."

Wade's first donation event was held Oct. 12 at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Scottsdale's Scottsdale Charros Branch.

During the event, Wade and his 15-year-old brother Tyler played soccer with the children at the Scottsdale Charros Branch.

After about an hour of playing, Wade spoke to the kids about Pass It On and his intention behind it.

"My goal is to achieve zero waste and to have all gear passed on to another child who can use it," he said in front of the 27 kids. "I have collected a large amount of equipment and soccer gear in the past two months, and I am very happy to finally be able to donate it and to be working toward my mission."

"It means a lot to me to know that I can help other kids play the game I love," he said.

Wade also emphasized how important it was to him for kids to give to other kids.

"The idea is I want to help other kids play soccer, and I want them to be able to play the game I love," he said ahead of his speech. "I want kids to give to other kids, and not just parents, which makes it so much better, in my opinion."

Valenzuela, Chumpol and the CEO of the Arizona Soccer Association, Rick Kelsey, also spoke at the donation event.

"Look, here's a young man not much older than most of you," Chumpol said to the children. "He had a dream, he had a vision, and instead of brushing it off and thinking 'maybe one day,' he decided to take action. That's what you can do."

Right now, there are currently over 40,000 registered soccer players in the state, according to Kelsey. Greg said the goal of Pass It On is to work with the Arizona Soccer Association and expand the donation drive to other clubs in the state and reach those 40,000 players.

"We've already talked to Wade to find out how we can support him across the state and get involved," Kelsey said.

Wade hopes to hold another donation drive early next year, with the hope of collecting at least twice a year.

"Once I get to other clubs, I can do it even more often," he said. "I've only done the one club, so there's a lot more to get."

Anyone interested in donating to Pass It On or interested in running a donation drive, email Wade directly at wadecrum@passitonsoccer.net. 🐾