

Dear Wings Families,

This afternoon there will be a formal announcement that, Wings Soccer Club is combining with the Minnesota Thunder and Bangu Tsunami FC to form the Minnesota Thunder Academy. The structure of the Academy will consist of two parts; the Elite Academy and the Regional Academies (one each in the west, north, south, east, and urban areas of the Twin Cities).

The Wings Board of Directors approved this joint venture between Minnesota's top two competitive youth clubs and professional soccer organization. The Wings Soccer Club is excited to be part of the Thunder Academy as the Minnesota Thunder West Academy. The West Academy will work in conjunction with the other Regional Academies and Elite Academy in sharing resources and coaches.

The Wings Board of Directors is also happy to announce the hiring of David Alberti as the West Academy Director. Dave has been a Wings SC staff coach for the past eleven years, was the Armstrong High School Girls Head Coach for the 1996-1998 seasons, and holds the United States Soccer Federation National "B" License. "Dave brings a passion for the game of soccer from the youngest recreational levels through the most elite players. His experience and values parallel those that Wings has stood for throughout its 15 year history" said Mark Whitmore, Vice Chair of the Wings Board

The biggest change to Wings will be in our name. At the conclusion of the 2008 MYSA season, Wings will become Minnesota Thunder West. We will continue to be the destination point for District 281 families and neighboring communities which we have traditionally served. Not only will we continue to offer the current Wings programs (Soccer Saturday, Futsal, Rec, age group training, Wings Tournament), but our partnership with Minnesota Thunder and Bangu will improve these programs.

Wings players and families will also see many benefits from this new venture including but not limited to:

- Thunder Gold Pass (which allows free admissions to Thunder games for all competitive players)
- Enhanced development path (youth to college to Minnesota Thunder/Lightning to MLS/WPS)
- More nationally licensed and experienced coaches and trainers
- Increased opportunities for players to compete at higher levels
- More year-round training opportunities for all players
- Improved soccer opportunities for all competitive players
- Improved soccer opportunities for Rec players
- Community based training and game locations
- Local office and staff (current Wings Administrator, office location and phone number)

With Wings involvement, the Minnesota Thunder Academy will now be the Elite club in Minnesota and one of the largest clubs in the Midwest starting with over 90 competitive teams and 1400 players.

To answer any questions you may have, there will be a series of informational meetings within the next several weeks (TBA) in which your questions will be answered and more details can be discussed. Rest assured, this new venture will only enhance the soccer opportunities offered and will not impact our players in any negative fashion.

Sincerely,

Wings Soccer Club