

## SquashScholars News Letter

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### SquashScholars Complete General Mills Project: Focus on Fitness and Nutrition

SquashScholars received a “Communities of Color” project grant from the General Mills Foundation in late 2007 to be implemented in 2008. Under the title “Squash – the Game AND the Vegetable” we set out goals to augment our fitness program beyond the game



of squash and to implement a repeatable nutrition curriculum that enriches our academic offering. Univ. of



Minnesota faculty and graduate students provided direction: John Sirard and Danielle Simpson, left, (School of Public

Health) for the fitness component and Nimo Yusuf, right, (University Extension Service) for nutrition instruction. We successfully completed the project last month with a fitness



evaluation and a hands-on in-the-kitchen meal preparation session. A final report on all aspects of the project

including fitness measurement data and nutrition surveys will be published on the SquashScholars web site in the near future.

The fitness component included familiar strength measurements such as pushups and situps, but also interesting flexibility measurements. The running test



required our students to think about pace and conserving energy, not unlike the requirement to manage one’s energy over the course of a lengthy squash match. The nutrition training may well be remembered as the “many ways to avoid the harmful eating traps laid before young people today”. They now have a solid basis for what types of food to eat and why.



## Local Squash Tournaments, Here We Come!



Two months into our second year of operation, several of our “veterans” were beginning to show signs of readiness to be tested in the larger arena of Twin Cities metro area tournaments. Beginning slowly and picking a home court venue, we registered five of our experienced players – Mohammed Abde, Adnan Ali, and Awale Ali, Farah Hassan, and Shakinah Hickbottom, pictured here with coach Peter Michie – for the **University of Minnesota Fall Classic** in early December. Mohammed, Adnan, and Farah

played very competitively in the second to the lowest bracket, but did not medal. Awale and Shakinah played in the lowest bracket, where Awale (with medal) came back to win the consolation title in five games.

Next up was a one-day lightning round-robin team tournament at the **LifeTime Fitness Athletic Club** in Minneapolis just before Christmas. What a venue, located in



the posh Grand Hotel in the center of downtown, not bad for hanging out on a winter Saturday. Mohammed, Adnan, and Awale participated in this event, and again, all played well.

A similar one-day round-robin team event in early January was sponsored by the **Minnesota Squash Association** and our local **Howe Cup Team**. Thirty players showed up on a very cold day to hustle off some holiday calories. We expanded our SquashScholars team to six, adding Abdulla Sulieman and Yahya Hassan. No individual honors were awarded, but Adnan Ali contributed significantly to his team’s overall winning score.



The cat is convincingly out of the bag, not to be returned. The taste of tournament play has our team eagerly looking forward to future events. It is our hope at this point that the interest of other junior players in the Twin Cities may be kindled to start or restart tournament play by knowing there is a core of young players coming up.

## SquashScholars.Net

SquashScholars has met its fundraising goal for the 2008/2009 season with respect to corporate and foundation gifts. We wholeheartedly wish to thank Symantec Foundation, Bremer Bank Foundation, Boston Scientific Foundation, and Soup It Up Foundation for their generous support.

However, we are significantly short of our target for individual gifts. SquashScholars long term vitality will be assured only by establishing consistent support through people like you, regardless of the size of your gift. In this difficult economic environment, the importance of supporting educational opportunities for at risk children comes into clearer focus and reminds us to do what we can.

Our website is now ready and willing to accept contributions online. Please visit our site to get the latest information, check our calendar, see the latest photos, and send us a donation while you are there. Otherwise, you can still use the original method of printing this page, completing the information below, and returning it with your contribution to:

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**Thank you for your generosity!**

