

Sticks-2-Schools “All-Star” Day

By: Philip Anderson

In front of 600 students and teachers of Gateway Middle School, the Washington Stealth brought Sticks-2-Schools to an “All-Star Assembly” with an All-Star of their own on Wednesday. Fresh off an appearance in the National Lacrosse League All-Star Game the weekend prior, Rhys Duch was at Gateway Middle School to share with students about lacrosse, setting goals and accomplishing them.

“While we are teaching them about lacrosse, we also want them to dream big and know that anything is possible,” said Duch.

The Sticks-2-Schools program was a huge success in San Jose, but its implementation and success is still a work in progress in Washington. “While our main focus is staying active, when we were in San Jose, we noticed that the program was not only teaching children a new sport and providing a new way to stay active, but it was giving children a new medium to learn important life skills such as teamwork and goal-setting,” said Brea Kernan, Sticks-2-Schools Director.

With close to 70 students per period, assisting in drills and helping the students learn involved even the teachers. Kristin, a Physical Education teacher at Gateway was part of the special day. “I think Sticks-2-Schools is a great program. I learned the sport from my dad when he played and it is growing faster than ever now. It is excellent that we can incorporate this into our school system and receive updated training on the sport. Lacrosse is something different than traditional sports and today, the kids got to see what it can be.”

The students and their teachers were not the only ones who got something out of the day. They were even able to teach Duch a few things. “I love when the kids come up to me after class and ask questions and want to talk about the sport. Lacrosse is a growing sport but it could never grow fast enough for me.”

If the laughter and smiles on student’s faces when they finally scooped the ball was any indication of the success of the program, Sticks-2-Schools will have a long and successful tenure in Washington. “I like using the lacrosse stick and playing as a team to work toward a common goal,” said Jacob, a student at Gateway. “I have played lacrosse before but I liked being divided into teams and playing a fun game while learning more about the sport.”

The Washington Stealth and Sticks-2-Schools hope to reach at least 20 to 30 schools this year, but would like to reach more. Fundraising is ongoing and businesses and individuals with an interest in partnering with Sticks-2-Schools and the fight against childhood obesity should contact Sticks-2-Schools Director Breanna Kernan at (425)322-2623 or at bkernan@stealthlax.com. For more information on the Sticks-2-Schools program, visit www.sticks2schools.org.