



US YOUTH SOCCER ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL LEAGUE MEMBERS FOR DIRECT PATHWAY TO REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Charlottesville, VA (July 19, 2019) – US Youth Soccer has recently announced that the Club Champions League (CCL), Long Island Junior Soccer League (LIJSL), National Capital Soccer League (NCSL), and the Northeast Soccer League (NSL) will be the first four leagues to compete for a direct pathway into the US Youth Soccer Eastern Regional Championships via the newly formed US Youth Soccer League Championship.

US Youth Soccer East Region General Manager, Dr. Greg Smith said, “The League Championship program creates an additional pathway into the Eastern Regional Championships while strengthening relationships with leagues and maintaining the structural integrity of existing programs, competitions and events offered by US Youth Soccer.” Dr. Smith went on to say, “The leagues that have been chosen to participate represent some of the very best, and there is a high level of excitement as the first season of this initiative begins and we look to further grow and improve together moving forward.”

Brian Kuk, CCL Executive Director added, “US Youth Soccer realizes that the youth soccer landscape has changed. The decision that US Youth Soccer has made recognizes the value of quality league management and competitive regionalized league competition within states that can reward league champions [13-19s, boys and girls] to qualify directly into the Regional Championships. The amount of time to travel, missing school, and the high cost of attending multiple competitions is done. This is the future and we are excited to participate.”

The League Championship will commence with a Semifinal and Final playoff held over one weekend in June of each year, and in 2020, the playoff will be held in one of the four geographic regions selected by US Youth Soccer: Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts, or New York. The playoff location will look to be rotated annually.

“Long Island Junior Soccer League applauds US Youth Soccer’s National and Regional management teams for recognizing the critical input of, and the need to support member leagues like LIJSL that have been essential to the foundation of USYS’s programming, platforms and overall pathway. We are extremely excited to join like-minded partners such as CCL, NCSL and NSL as a founding league of the League Championship program. The increased opportunities that the League Championship will provide to the top teams of our member clubs is very important to supporting our league’s short- and long-term objectives and goal,” stated LIJSL’s Director of Member Services, Steve Padaetz.

To qualify to advance to the Eastern Regional Championships from the League Championship, teams must participate in league play as well as their state association’s National Championship Series State Cup competition.

Ryan Rich, NCSL Executive Director stated, “NCSL is thrilled to be an inaugural member of the League Championship and partner with three other leagues committed to providing its member clubs with quality competition at a reasonable cost. We are ready to get started and excited about offering this new pathway to our membership!”

US Youth Soccer’s initiative to launch the League Championship has four key pillars: like-minded league leadership, competitive excellence, on-going collaboration between US Youth Soccer and the member leagues, and low costs.

“US Youth Soccer is the most storied and prestigious youth soccer organization in the country. They provide levels of play for all soccer players. We are excited to be *the only* league in New England to provide a pathway direct to the Regional Championships through the League Championship program. We believe this is an incredible opportunity for the clubs in New England to have additional access to compete within the National Championship Series,” commented John Barata, NSL Executive Director.

The League Championship Playoff will be hosted by the Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA), CCL, and NCSL on June 13-14, 2020 at the Publix Virginia Soccer Training Center (PVSTC) in Spotsylvania, Virginia. Home to six Bermuda grass fields and three synthetic, lighted turf fields, the PVSTC is one of the East Region’s top venues.

“VYSA and the Publix Virginia Soccer Training Center (PVSTC) are proud to be able to host the inaugural League Championship in June of 2020. PVSTC will provide some of the finest quality pitches on the East Coast for this exciting event,” stated Phil Summers, VYSA Executive Director.

“United States Youth Soccer would like to congratulate the four leagues that were chosen to be part of our pilot League Championship program for the 2019-20 season. All four leagues have consistently shown a proud history of organization, competitive teams, and providing a vehicle for players to advance to the next level. Besides the program providing an additional pathway into the NCS East Regional, it creates an opportunity to enhance both the leagues and US Youth programs and participation,” states Brad Roos, Chair of the League Championship Management Group.

The League Championship begins Fall 2019.

About Club Champions League, Inc.

Founded in 1997 as the Virginia Club Champions League (VCCL) and rebranded in 2013 as the Club Champions League (CCL), the CCL strives to activate and accelerate youth soccer development through its club-centric, technical director-driven model. The CCL provides superior competition, offers a player development pathways and club model for ages eight to over-twenty-three, and consists of the top youth soccer clubs in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. CCL member clubs have over 71,000 registered youth soccer players.

www.ClubChampionsLeague.com.

About Long Island Junior Soccer League, Inc.

Established in 1966, the Long Island Junior Soccer League (LIJSL) has grown to over 100 member clubs, 5,000+ volunteers, and over 60,000 registered youth soccer players ages 5 through 19. The League’s rich tradition and history counts eight (8) USYS National Championships, dozens of former and current US Men’s and Women’s National Team and professional players & coaches – including 2019 World Cup Champions Crystal Dunn and Allie Long – as well as thousands of players (and coaches) in the collegiate ranks. LISJL is equally as proud of being a progressive and proactive league focused on developing programming & services for the continued benefit of league member clubs, coaches, and player-families, as well as our game, all while *Building Character Through Soccer*.

www.LIJsoccer.com.

About National Capital Soccer League

National Capital Soccer League (NCSL) is the D.C. Metro area's premier promotion-relegation soccer league, serving approximately 30,000 travel soccer players every year representing many of the most successful clubs in the nation. It is a club-based league, which requires clubs to meet league standards in order to be considered for entry and must be voted in by other member clubs, and schedules games at the team-to-team level in order to provide the most appropriate and competitive game-day experience. www.NCSL-soccer.com.

About Northeast Soccer League, Inc.

Founded in 1993 as MAPLE and rebranded in 2016 as the Northeast Soccer League (NSL), the NSL is for the clubs, by the clubs and with the clubs. Our aim is to provide more than just a place to play but also to provide quality programs and events for the benefit of our membership. Furthermore, the NSL is based on merit but driven by defined club standards that all member clubs must continue to meet. More information can be found on www.NSLsoccer.org.

About the Virginia Youth Soccer Association

The Virginia Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) www.VYSA.com is a member of the US Soccer Federation and US Youth Soccer representing over 170,000 youth players, coaches and administrators in the Commonwealth of Virginia and DC. VYSA oversees programs including the Olympic Development Program (ODP), the National Championship Series (State Cup), Coaching Education and more. VYSA owns and operates the Publix Virginia Soccer Training Center (Publix VSTC) www.vysatc.com one of the finest soccer training facilities on the East Coast. Situated on 50 acres of former farmland in Spotsylvania County halfway between Washington, DC and Richmond, the facility boasts nine FIFA regulation fields and will include a stadium. The facility will be the future home of VYSA's State offices.

About the United States Youth Soccer Association (US Youth Soccer) – US Youth Soccer, the largest youth sport organization in the country, is on a mission to make soccer the preeminent youth sport in the country. US Youth Soccer registers 3 million players annually, ages 5 to 19. Through its programming, resources and leadership, US Youth Soccer is advancing the game for its 55 Member State Associations, 10,000 clubs and leagues and nearly 1 million administrators, coaches and volunteers. US Youth Soccer connects families and communities to the power of sports and its shared love of soccer. US Youth Soccer provides a path for every player, offering programs to provide a fun, safe and healthy environment for players at every level of the game. For more information, visit www.USYouthSoccer.org.