

NJ Youth SoccerBoard of Directors – **Questions for the Candidate**  
Annual General Meeting

Candidate: Daniel Ali

Club: JCIFA/EDP

**A) Why do you wish to become a member of the NJYS Board of Directors?**

I believe that youth athletics is vital the proper development of a young person and futbol, soccer is by far one of the best outlets available. While I understand business and the need for professionals to be compensated for their expertise, I feel too much emphasis is placed on money in the beautiful game today and many young people are suffering because of it. I would like to be in a position to help those who make decisions that may impact our young people and the direction of youth soccer in our state.

**B) What is your relevant experience (e.g. experience with youth soccer, non-profit, other Board positions held)?**

I have loved the game of soccer all my life. I played as a boy, in the youth leagues in NJ and spent four years as a varsity player at Division I Georgia State University in the 1980's. I have been coaching youth players for nearly twenty years. I am currently the president of CIFA, City International Football Academy, a non-profit that I started in 2008. Our focus is and has been providing inner city youth the opportunity to benefit from professional coaching and compete at the highest level without the BIG club price tag. Our moto is "Player Development" above winning. I am also the Coordinating Program Director of Youth Soccer for the Jersey City Department of Recreation, holding that position since 2014. I would be extremely honored to serve as a member of the NJYS Board.

**C) What is your vision for soccer in New Jersey during the next three years?**

With the DA disbanding, I would hope to see more of the high level players in our state returning to the smaller clubs and competing in the high school leagues, restoring some of the competitive play that existed there in past years. I would like to see the focus switch from the "pay to play" mentality that many clubs now operate under and out our players before profits. I would also hope to see the state increase its efforts to encourage and sponsor more coaching education opportunities so that "volunteer" coaches can gain a deeper understanding of the game and how best to support the proper development of our youth players.

**D) What is your perception of New Jersey Youth Soccer?**

Over the past twenty years, I have been blessed to know many fine people within NJYS, from guys with their boots on the ground like Rick Meana and Alex Lalaoui , to administrators and back office people like Ernie Cerone and Lori Hynes who aren't in the lime light but are essential to the organization of youth soccer in New Jersey. I think the correct spirit, will and talent exists in NJYS which is why I am excited about the possibility of becoming a part of the organization.