Subject: Happy Holidays from CitySquash! **From:** Terence Li <terence.li@citysquash.org>

Date: 12/12/2018, 6:22 AM **To:** ted.gross@comcast.net



December 2018

Friends of CitySquash,

2018 was a year of milestones for CitySquash. We placed a record 19 students to private high schools and colleges, Caleb Boateng was the first urban squash player to become a U.S. National Champion, and Chris Fernandez was the first to be appointed Head Coach of a college varsity squash program. Our younger team members traveled over 7,000 miles and visited 14 different cities as part of our Spring Enrichment Tours, and our tally of Urban National Squash titles won reached a record of 101.

CitySquash, however, has always been about more than just squash and schoolwork. We have long believed that success is sown in the seeds of character development. This year, as part of our Growth Mindset Challenge, CitySquash team members were tasked with trying to master something new over the course of a month. Students learned to play songs on the recorder, to tie neckties, to make origami swans, and to juggle, among many other things. We believe in the importance of stretching one's mind to tackle new things, and to be able to embrace challenges as opportunities.

CitySquash is now part of a network of 50 organizations collectively serving over 150,000 students that have pledged to make Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) a priority. In a recent survey put out by the group, the results show our work is paying off. CitySquashers exhibited greater improvements than their peers in the areas of both Growth Mindset and Belonging. These results come from the intentional work our staff does with our students as well as the strong, supportive culture that has been cultivated within our program over the past 17 years. Our students so often reference their "CitySquash Family" and nothing makes us happier.

Just as our team members commit to stretching themselves to be better each day, we as an organization are committed to growing and improving. While some of our results can be easily quantified in terms of trophies won and acceptance letters earned, our most important achievements are less tangible. These milestones are seen in the way

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our team members treat each other and the way they move through the world with confidence, empathy, grit, and ambition. They make us very proud and we thank you for believing in them.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season,

Terence Li

Executive Director

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CitySquash, P.O. Box 619, Fordham Station, Bronx, NY 10458

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