



**Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation**  
Engaging Students' Minds and Bodies

# Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation

58-12 Queens Boulevard, Suite 1  
Woodside, NY 11377  
718.786.7110  
Fax: 718.205.1098  
www.sasfny.org

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## SASF PARTNERSHIP WITH NEW YORK KNICKS KICKS OFF WITH BASKETBALL SKILLS CHALLENGE AND POETRY SLAM COMPETITION FOR NYC STUDENTS

### KNICKS LEGEND JOHN STARKS SPEAKS TO HUNDREDS OF PARTICIPANTS; TOP SASF PERFORMERS TO BE RECOGNIZED AT KNICKS GAME IN FEBRUARY

**Woodside, Queens** – The Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation™ (SASF™), a leading provider of after-school and summer programming for NYC public school students, recently began an exciting new partnership with the New York Knicks and Madison Square Garden with participation in two competitions for city students: the NBA Fit Challenge and the Knicks Poetry Slam. Both competitions featured large kick-off events with hundreds of SASF after-school program participants, and top SASF performers from both competitions will be going on to compete at various events in January.

The SASF/Knicks NBA Fit Challenge partnership launched with “Knicks Day” at Kappa VII Middle School in Brooklyn on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>. More than 500 participants of SASF’s after-school programs across the city came together to compete in age-specific basketball skills challenges, as well as hear from a former Knicks star about the importance of physical fitness in their young lives.



John Starks, a Knicks legend, spoke to the group about staying fit through sports and exercise, as well as the importance of working hard in school and focusing on positive influences in life. Starks stuck around to sign autographs and take pictures with the students.



The top 130 performers from Knicks Day are going on to the next round of competition on the floor of Madison Square Garden after the Knicks game on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>. They will also have the opportunity to join a pre-game “shoot-around” with Knicks ballplayers. Moving forward, the top 6 performers from Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> will be recognized with their families and school principals during halftime of the Knicks game on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

SASF’s partnership with the Knicks Poetry Slam spoken word competition brought over 1,000 of SASF’s high schoolers to the Hammerstein Ballroom in Manhattan on November 7<sup>th</sup> for the Poetry Slam open auditions, as well as a college fair and college readiness workshops that were open to all attendees. Many SASF students gave it their all in the auditions, and three – Jasmine Cates, Shevette Ceasar and Lynelle Johnson – made it into the top 150 performers of the day; they will compete in the next round of the Poetry Slam competition at the Nuyorican Café in Manhattan on the weekend of January 9<sup>th</sup>.



Jasmine, Shevette and Lynelle will also be recognized with SASF’s top NBA Fit performers at Madison Square Garden on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>.