

FAMILY



GOALS

PANTUOSCO'S SOCCER CAMP

BACK ROW (L-R) JOEY PANTUOSCO, JOHN PANTUOSCO,
LUCIA PANTUOSCO, GINA PANTUOSCO, CHARLIE HENSCH,
JOE PANTUOSCO, COLYNN PANTUOSCO-HENSCH
FRONT ROW (L-R) JOE ORSZULAK, RYAN ORSZULAK,
ELIZABETH ORSZULAK, DREW HENSCH, ALEX HENSCH



Since its humble beginnings, Pantuosco's Soccer Camp has always been about family.

In 1979, Hampden, Massachusetts resident Joe Pantuosco created Camp Sun and Fun off Allen Street in Hampden as a soccer and sports camp for kids. For Joe, the second oldest of seven boys, starting a camp was a no-brainer as he already had a ready-made staff of five younger brothers, all of whom were in desperate need of summer jobs.

As time went on, what was once a multi-sport camp with only 30 campers became Pantuosco's Soccer Camp, a specialty camp focused solely on soccer. Since its transition, Pantuosco's brings in an average of 100 campers per week—from the ages of 4-13.

"Back then, soccer was so new. There weren't soccer camps. There were things like Boy Scout camps. There weren't specialty sports camps so we really were one of the first," says Joe's daughter, Lynn Pantuosco-Hensch, who



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attended Pantuosco's as a camper, worked as a counselor, and now, shares the title of Camp Director with her uncle John Pantuosco and sister Gina Pantuosco.

Over the last 36 years, Pantuosco's has provided soccer players from Western Massachusetts a place to hone their skills and have a blast at the same time. The week long camp includes daily training sessions, special competition days, and tournament-style play days—all geared towards developing soccer skills and self-confidence.

With such an emphasis on creating a positive experience, Pantuosco's Soccer Camp has been one of the most well known camps in the area for young soccer players for three decades—with many campers returning summer after summer.

"We've kept a lot of the same traditions [over time] and we appreciate getting to be a part of kids' lives in that way," notes Lynn. "That's something our family and our camp does that I think is different than a lot of other programs—I think we do have that way of connecting with the kids that come to camp and really get to know them and it's something that we really look forward to."

Those who attend Pantuosco's Soccer Camp are treated like a member of the family—the huge, incredibly talented and welcoming Pantuosco family.

For them, soccer is their family business. And now, Pantuosco's Soccer Camp includes three generations of Pantuoscos—many who began as campers and are now running the show.

While Joe still owns and oversees the camp, much of the day-to-day management is left in the hands of his daughters, Lynn and Gina, and his brother, John—all of whom have incredible soccer resumes in the Western Massachusetts community.

John began working at the original Camp Sun and Fun while Lynn and Gina were campers. John's children—Nick, John, Lucia and Joey—have all attended Pantuosco's Soccer Camp as campers and eventually became counselors. Now, both Lynn's and Gina's children have begun as campers.

"We are happy to have three generations there and we are happy our kids are getting a taste of what we grew up with," says Lynn.

To the Pantuosco children, camp has always been so much more than a summer job or something to pass the time. Pantuosco's

is a place to make memories and create lasting bonds with family and friends. It's the creation of those memories that Gina Pantuosco can relate to more than anyone—she and her husband Chris met as campers nearly 25 years ago and have been together ever since. Knowing how special Pantuosco's Soccer Camp has been to her and her family—as campers, counselors and now, directors—her hope is to share what's so exceptional about Pantuosco's with her children.

“There has to be a reason why we're all teachers—I'm a teacher, Lynn's a teacher—I just always wanted to have my camp time,” Gina admits. “And I've created a situation in my life that's allowed me to keep it going until I'm 35 and I've never missed a summer, neither has Lynn.”

For both Lynn and Gina, seeing their children and nieces and nephews flourish while playing the sport they love is what brings the entire camp experience full circle for them—from their days as campers to now in the role of parents.

“It's the moments where you see your own kids thriving—or watching my nephew win a ribbon—that brings you back to how you felt when you were a kid. So I think that's the best part of it,” says Lynn, smiling at her nephew, Gina's son, Joe Orszulak who is still holding tightly to the ribbons he won that day.

The kids are already thinking about joining the family business and having the camp as their own someday—especially Joe, who is a bit nervous because his last name isn't Pantuosco. However, I think they'll make an exception for him and his siblings.

And maybe when he owns the camp, he'll be able to change the rule that Pantuosco children aren't allowed to win “Camper of the Day,” the coveted award given out by the staff to the hardest working camper each day. Until then, he'll keep hoping for a rule change.

For 36 years, Pantuosco's Soccer Camp has been more than just a place for kids to develop their soccer skills and practice their shooting. It's a place to make memories, create lasting relationships, and simply have fun. The Pantuosco family has made sure of that. And with each generation that moves fluidly through the camp—from camper, to counselor, to director, and someday, maybe to owner—the family magic of Pantuosco's grows.



BACK ROW (L-R) JOE PANTUOSCO, LUCIA PANTUOSCO
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Author's note...

When I was seven years old, I went to Pantuosco's Soccer Camp for the first time. With short brown hair held back by a Nike sweatband and my large red water thermos, I showed up to my first day of camp ready to work hard. Little did I know, it was the memories I would make that summer—and each summer after—that would stay with me always. The Pantuosco family and their camp is a huge part of my childhood, one that I will always cherish.

