

**PRESS RELEASE**  
*For Immediate Release*

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## **Mill Neck Manor Soccer Team Reaching Goals**

Heading into the 2016 season, the Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf soccer team had its sights on the annual Eastern Schools Deaf Athletics Association (ESDAA) Soccer Tournament. The team included five starters returning from last year: Keren Guerra, Julio Reyes, Kevin Canales, Noel Rodriguez and Jose Yanes. They were joined by two newcomers, Nataly Osorio and Bianca Llorens. Two younger players, Bryan Alfaro and Jonathan Velasquez, also participated this year.

Prior to the ESDAA Tournament in late October, the team participated in the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Friendship Soccer Tournament on October 14 - 15 at New York State School for the Deaf in Rome, NY. In order to have enough players, Mill Neck Manor combined with Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. Though both games that weekend ended in losses for the Mill Neck/Pennsylvania team, the players gained valuable experience, helping them prepare for the upcoming ESDAA tournament.

On October 21 - 22, the Mill Neck players again combined with the Pennsylvania students for the annual ESDAA Division II Soccer tournament. The tournament was held at Rochester School for the Deaf, which co-hosted the event with the Pennsylvania school. Several other schools participated, including, Rhode Island, New Jersey, St. Mary's (Buffalo), Rochester and West Virginia. Mill Neck entered the tournament unsure of how they would fare due to the previous weekend's results.

The Mill Neck/Pennsylvania team opened the tournament against Rochester, the defending champions, and lost 3 - 0. In the hour before their next game, against West Virginia School for the Deaf, the team huddled together to discuss strategy and something must have clicked, because

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the Mill Neck/Pennsylvania team soundly beat West Virginia by a final score of 10 - 0. The Mill Neck students scoring goals in that game were Noel with 3, Keren getting in 2 and Julio and Kevin scoring one each. Bianca narrowly missed a goal, with the ball bouncing off the post, instead of into the net. The bench players had plenty of playing time during this game.

At the end of day one, the team was seeded number two in Pool A and was set to play against the number one seed from Pool B, New Jersey. The next day, Mill Neck/Pennsylvania came out on fire and jumped out to a 2 - 0 lead thanks to goals from Noel and Keren. Later, with the lead narrowed to 3 - 2 and with less than two minutes left in the game, Jose, of Mill Neck Manor, smashed in a goal on a free kick, giving the Mill Neck/Pennsylvania team a 4 - 2 lead. At the final whistle, players and coaches from both Mill Neck and Pennsylvania were thrilled not only with their win, but with clinching a spot in the championship game.

Mill Neck/Pennsylvania played Rochester again, this time for the championship, and at halftime, the game was deadlocked at one apiece. The second half though was all about Rochester, as the Mill Neck/Pennsylvania team could not contain Rochester's two-time tournament MVP who scored four goals. Overall, it turned out to be an excellent tournament for Mill Neck/Pennsylvania, with a runner-up finish after coming in at 5<sup>th</sup> place last year. Keren Guerra was named to the All Tournament Team in recognition for her talent and game efforts.

Congratulations to the Mill Neck Manor athletes and to coaches Larry Manning and Tony Albicocco for a great season and terrific showing at the ESDAA tournament!

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Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf, founded in 1947 by Lutheran Friends of the Deaf, is part of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, a not-for-profit group dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people who are Deaf, or who have other special needs. For more information about our programs and services, please call 516-922-4100 or visit [www.millneck.org](http://www.millneck.org)



*Caption: The soccer team at Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf competed in the October 21-22 ESDAA Tournament in Rochester. In the front, (L to R) are, Keren Guerra, Noel Rodriguez and Kevin Canales. In back (L to R) are, Coach Larry Manning, Nataly Osorio, Julio Reyes, Bianca Llorens, Jose Yanes and Coach Tony Albicocco.*

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