



Keystone FC and North Union United Announce Strategic Academy Player Pathway Partnership

MECHANICSBURG & LEWISBURG, PA – February 12, 2026 – Keystone FC and North Union United (NUU) are proud to announce the launch of a Strategic Academy Player Pathway partnership designed to enhance elite player development across Central Pennsylvania. This collaboration establishes a formalized bridge for NUU's top-performing boys and girls to access the highest tiers of youth soccer in the United States.

Through this partnership, Keystone FC and NUU will collaborate to provide a direct link to the Girls Academy (GA) and MLS Next Homegrown Division (HD). Starting in April 2026, the clubs will implement a synchronized scouting and identification process, allowing NUU's Academy-level players to transition seamlessly into national-level competition.

"We have long admired the standards of excellence at North Union United. Their staff consistently develops players who are technically gifted and possess the elite character required to thrive in a national-level environment," said **Sean Cochran, Executive Director of Keystone FC**. "NUU has built an incredible reputation for foundational development. By formalizing this partnership, we are bridging the gap between that strong foundation and the Girls Academy and MLS Next platforms. We are excited to work alongside NUU to ensure the most talented players in Central PA have a direct, supportive, and clear pathway to the highest levels of youth soccer."

Key Highlights of the Partnership:

- **Direct Academy Access:** NUU players gain access to Keystone FC's GA and MLS Next HD tryouts and ID clinics.
- **Technical Integration:** Keystone FC and NUU technical staffs will collaborate through a formal feedback loop, including supplemental training opportunities for NUU players at Keystone FC Academy sessions.
- **Coaching Development:** NUU coaching staff will have open access to Keystone FC technical sessions, coaching clinics, and internal professional development workshops.
- **Reciprocal Recognition:** Both clubs will share in the historical credit for player success. Players moving through the pathway will be recognized as both NUU Alumni and Keystone FC Academy players, celebrating their full developmental journey.

"We're incredibly thrilled to announce Keystone FC as our Official Academy Pathway Partner" said **Jeremy Payne, Director of Coaching at North Union United**. "To be able to formalize a relationship with a club—and people—that we trust makes this even more meaningful. This partnership is a huge win for players in our area, creating more opportunities while aligning us with a club that truly values what we do at North Union United. Just as importantly, it allows us to maintain our own identity while continuing to focus on what matters most to us: growing the game of soccer in our community, expanding pathways for our players, and always putting each individual player's development first."

Effective immediately, both clubs will begin co-branded marketing efforts and technical evaluations in preparation for the Spring 2026 tryout cycle. For more information on the Academy Player Pathway, please visit www.keystonefc.com or www.nuunited.com.

About Keystone FC: Founded in 1982, Keystone FC is a youth soccer organization in Central Pennsylvania dedicated to player development. Serving over 1,800 players, the club provides a comprehensive developmental pyramid ranging from grassroots programs to the nation's highest competitive platforms, including the Girls Academy and MLS Next. With a proven track record of regional success and over 100 collegiate commitments since 2017, Keystone FC is committed to developing high quality players through a professional environment and a culture of excellence.

About North Union United (NUU): North Union United SC was founded in 1998 by Alan Ziegler, beginning as a single youth team and growing over the years into a large and active soccer club serving players across Union, Snyder, Lycoming, Northumberland, and surrounding counties in Pennsylvania. Since its founding, the club has expanded to include nearly 30 teams and over 400 players, providing competitive opportunities from youth through high-school levels, while also offering programming for college players in the area. NUU has a strong history of state, regional, and national success through USYS and places numerous players in college every year while focusing on player development and the growth of the game of soccer in their area.