

FIFA WORLD CUP 26

PRESS RELEASE



North Texas FWC Organizing Committee Announces the North Texas Sports Foundation as Partner to Create a Lasting Legacy Beyond FIFA World Cup 2026™ with Texan Golden Boot Sculpture

*Permanent Public Art Landmark and Fundraising Campaign to Support
Youth, Community, and Values-Driven Programs Across the Region*

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ARLINGTON, Texas (Feb. 12, 2026) - The North Texas FWC Organizing Committee announced the formation of the North Texas Sports Foundation, established to leverage the FIFA World Cup 2026™ and drive long-term, positive regional impact through sports-driven community transformation. The North Texas Sports Foundation will be designated as the Official Dallas World Cup 2026 Legacy Supporter.



Together, the organizations launched a flagship community initiative that transforms a historic global moment into a lasting public legacy—the Texan Golden Boot sculpture and the accompanying “Buy a Brick” campaign.

The Texan Golden Boot will be located in Arlington’s vibrant Entertainment District and will serve as a permanent public art landmark that symbolizes the connection between global sport and Texas heritage. Forged from locally sourced reclaimed metal, the Texan Golden Boot was created by internationally recognized sculptor Steve Ekpenisi and curated and produced by Street Art for Mankind.

The sculpture will honor North Texas not only as a host region, but as a place where tradition and ambition meet- where the world is welcomed while proudly affirming what makes Texas, Texas.

“This is how North Texas turns a global moment into something permanent,” said Monica Paul, President of the North Texas FWC Organizing Committee. “The Golden Boot creates a physical place where leadership and community come together. When the World Cup leaves, this legacy will remain and tell the story of a region that invested in its people and its future.”



Inclusive by Design: Leadership and Community Side by Side

The Buy a Brick Campaign, launching today, invites organizations, individuals, and families to take part in the World Cup legacy by purchasing engraved bricks ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. Each donor's name will be featured on a brick placed around the Texan Golden Boot sculpture, ensuring their contribution remains permanently connected to a piece of history honoring the World Cup event.

Major contributors who donate \$50,000 or more will receive permanent recognition on the base of the sculpture, celebrating the organizations, foundations and individuals who helped make the legacy project possible.

"This summer, the eyes of the world will be on North Texas, and it is a profound honor to welcome the global community to Arlington. While the tournament brings us together for a moment, the Texan Golden Boot ensures that its spirit remains a permanent part of our landscape. Public art does more than beautify a space; it reflects who we are," Arlington Jim Ross said. "And by supporting the Buy a Brick campaign and the North Texas Sports Foundation, you aren't just commemorating the World Cup. You are investing in the very things that make our region a great place to live - vibrant open spaces, a thriving arts scene, and safe, accessible sports opportunities for our youth."

What the North Texas Sports Foundation Supports

All funds raised through the Texan Golden Boot and Buy a Brick Campaign are stewarded by the North Texas Sports Foundation and invested in initiatives focused on long-term community impact, sustainability and ethical development.

North Texas Sports Foundation World Cup Legacy investments will support:

- Youth access to sport, including mini-pitches and inflatable soccer fields in underresourced communities, delivered with safety and inclusion at the core
- Healthy public spaces, through park cleanups, tree planting, and outdoor activation
- Community art and placemaking, including murals and public art that reflect neighborhood identity and pride
- Education rooted in values, embedding human rights education and ethical sportsmanship into sport-based programming
- Ticket access for community benefit, including the distribution of World Cup-related tickets and experiences to local nonprofit organizations, ensuring youth and families can directly experience the event they helped make possible

"This legacy is about more than recognition - it's about stewardship," said Jaime Cabrera, Director of Donor Relations of the North Texas FWC Organizing Committee. "The Texan Golden Boot is the symbol people will see, but the real impact is what it unlocks: youth access to sport, healthier public spaces, community art, and education grounded in

values. Together, these efforts create a funding engine that supports North Texas well beyond 2026.”

A Legacy That Travels the World

The Texan Golden Boot is expected to become one of the most photographed and recognized public artworks associated with a United States World Cup Host City, positioning North Texas as a place where sport, culture, sustainability and community investment come together. Additional details to be announced in the coming months include:

- Final site location and unveiling
- Documentation of the sculpture’s creation and installation
- Community participation milestones for the Buy a Brick Campaign

Visit <https://northtexassportsfoundation.org/> to learn more.

About Steve Ekpenisi

Steve Ekpenisi is an internationally recognized sculptor known for his powerful contemporary works created from reclaimed metal. Often referred to as “The Iron Sculptor,” he transforms industrial materials into expressive, large-scale sculptures that explore themes of resilience, movement, and human connection. His exceptional craftsmanship and distinctive artistic language give new meaning and presence to these materials. Exhibited internationally and resonating strongly with public audiences, Ekpenisi’s work is particularly well suited for projects that will welcome and inspire both local communities and the millions of visitors expected during the 2026 World Cup and in the years that follow.

About the North Texas Sports Foundation

The North Texas Sports Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to leveraging major sporting events to drive long-term community impact. As the philanthropic entity supporting FIFA World Cup 2026 legacy initiatives in North Texas, the Foundation stewards and distributes resources to programs that expand access to sport, promote health and wellness, support public art, and strengthen communities across the region. The mission is to remove barriers, counter community decline, and build healthy, secure, environments where everyone can thrive. The Foundation’s commitment extends far beyond any single sporting event. The North Texas Sports Foundation is grateful to its early supporters - EcoHash, Cabrera Capital, Dee Dee and F. Thaddeus Arroyo Family, Dell Technologies, Bioworld, Lyda Hill, Patti and Rick Baker, and the Texas Rangers Baseball Foundation - for their early commitment to helping launch the Foundation’s mission.

About The North Texas FWC Organizing Committee

The North Texas FWC Organizing Committee is the official entity responsible for planning and delivering the FIFA World Cup 2026™ experience in North Texas. As one of the tournament’s key host cities, Dallas will welcome teams and fans from around the world, hosting nine matches at Dallas Stadium in Arlington, the International Broadcast Center at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, and a multi-week Fan Festival at Fair Park. The Official World Cup 2026™ Dallas Host City Supporters are Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages and Choctaw Casinos & Resorts - who will both play key roles in supporting community and Legacy initiatives aligned with the North Texas FWC Organizing Committee.

CONTACT

Joe Trahan | North Texas FWC Organizing Committee | 985-778-9896 | media@dallasfwc26.com

Marcus Carr | Tony Fay Public Relations | 817-773-1514 | marcus@tonyfaypr.com



   @FWC26DALLAS | DALLASFWC26.COM
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North Texas FWC Organizing Committee | 900 Jackson Street #380 | Dallas, TX 75202 US

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