

## Development News

### *Volunteers Install New Field At Academy Prep, Tampa*

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#### TAMPA

Students, graduates, faculty and community volunteers joined forces earlier this month, installing a new state-of-the-art synthetic turf at Tampa's Academy Prep Center.

The second of its kind in Florida, the particular type of turf laid at the middle school, courtesy of Ultra Base Systems, was previously installed at the Tampa Bay Rays training field and requires no maintenance, potentially lasting up to 15 years.

"The constant use of the previous field required constant maintenance and the re-installation of grass. The field would get so beat up throughout the year, most of it turning into dirt, making conditions and unsafe and unusable after rainy days," says Academy Prep Development Manager Maggie McClelland. The installation of the new turf "is something we've wanted to do for a really long time. We can now ensure that our students are enjoying themselves safely, while at the same time, we're saving money."

Costing a little more than \$85,000, funds for the field came from a group of anonymous donors, while Innovative Base Technologies, LLC donated labor costs. Volunteers began work on the project on July 5, removing all of the old grass and leveling the field. In charge of installing the base system for the project, volunteers placed and connected the interlocking panels of the system, which made up the under layer of the synthetic turf, before the turf and filler were placed.

"This new field is a beautiful, sustained, green space," says McClelland. "We always stress to our students the importance, value and need to give back to the community and this was the perfect opportunity to do so. The group of volunteers who helped install parts of the field should feel a sense of pride in knowing that they helped build something that will mean so much to all Academy Prep students for years to come. They've helped create a legacy."

Currently, Academy Prep has a number of renovations underway. This summer, the school's library will face renovation with an official ribbon cutting ceremony planned for late August. The school will also install SMART Boards whiteboards into each of its academic classrooms over the summer. For more information on upcoming projects at Academy Prep, visit the school's official website.

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Source: Maggie McClelland, Academy Prep Center