



# Mariya Goodbrake

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR

*Global FC*



Mariya Goodbrake is the founder and director of Global FC, a nonprofit founded in 2014 that supports Kansas City's immigrant and youth refugee youth community through sport, academic support, and mentorship. Originally from Afghanistan, Mariya's family was displaced from their home and lived as refugees in Iran and India before securing their future in Canada through the United Nation's resettlement program. She relocated to Kansas City in 2013, discovering and engaging the refugee population in the Historic Northeast community.

Her inspiration for Global FC came from her personal struggles as a young refugee youth as her family learned to adapt to a new host country. She was also motivated to support refugee youth during a trip to a Syrian refugee camp in Jordan, where she saw a vibrant, multi-cultural youth community centered around a common interest—soccer. Soccer would be a vehicle for engagement and community impact. Now, more than a decade later, Global FC is one of the region's most diverse organizations, serving refugee and immigrant youth from more than 29 countries from around the world.

Mariya has extensive experience in youth and sports development, diaspora communities, inter-faith dialogue, religious freedom, refugee resettlement, and intercultural training. She is also an active public speaker, human rights defender, intercultural trainer and researcher. Her work has received national and international awards, including the 2019 United Nations World Citizen of the Year for KC presented by Mayor Quinton Lucas.

