

Former D-Backs exec takes his Phoenix sports-based education company global



Jeff Golner, right, president and CEO of STEM Sports, signed a deal with Mohamed Amine Zariat, president of TIBU Maroc in Casablanca, Morocco. Provided by TIBU Morocco

By Angela Gonzales – Senior Reporter, Phoenix Business Journal

Jeff Golner, president, CEO and owner of Phoenix-based STEM Sports, recently came back from Africa with his first international deal.

STEM Sports is now partnering with Casablanca, Morocco-based TIBU Maroc to provide STEM Sports curriculum in Morocco that will present new career paths and job opportunities for nearly 100,000 students in that northern African country.

The Phoenix-based company provides turnkey educational curriculum for children five years and older that combines science, technology, engineering and math disciplines with sports.

For example, a soccer player taking a shot at the goal takes it from a math perspective, learning about angles while developing soccer skills.

“Students take shots on goals but the optics are going to be through geometry,” Golner said.

This deal makes TIBU Maroc the official authorized representative of STEM Sports in Morocco.

Golner said he met company representatives last year in New York City at a Beyond Sports event. Both companies are members of Beyond Sport, an international-based organization that brings together sport-led social innovators with influential, global leaders to address the role of sports in driving positive social change.

They met again at another Beyond Sport convention in



Jeff Golner, president and CEO of Phoenix-based STEM Sports. Provided by STEM Sports

September and picked up the conversation about how they could bring STEM Sports to Morocco, Golner said.

By Nov. 3, he was on a plane to Africa to work on the deal. And now, he’s poised to sign even more global contracts, with a pilot program scheduled for January in Japan. He’s also in talks with representatives from Egypt, Australia and Saudi Arabia.

An exclusive agreement with Skyhawks, a Spokane, Washington-based after-school and sports summer camp company, continues to grow nationwide and has the potential to expand globally, Golner said.

That exclusive deal goes through August 2020, which means Golner can’t partner with Skyhawks’ competitors until then.

“They are growing rapidly into other states in the US and also are developing programs in other countries around the world,” Golner said. “As they grow, we capture royalty fees. As more kids sign up and experience our curriculum under their umbrella, then STEM Sports benefits from the royalty agreement.”

Golner, who founded Agency G marketing and public relations firm in 2005, acquired STEM Sports in 2017. The educational company was one of his marketing clients at the time.

Before starting Agency G, Golner was senior director of game operations for the first eight seasons when the Arizona Diamondbacks came into Major League Baseball.

Before that, Golner also worked with MLB’s Colorado Rockies.

“I was a student at the University of Arizona and they were just launching their first spring training facility in Tucson,” he said. “I knocked on the door and asked how can I help.”

