



Coach David “Free” Gutierrez

Coach David “Free” Gutierrez is a New York-based soccer coach, player, and referee whose journey through the game has been built on perseverance, continuous learning, and a deep commitment to developing the next generation of players.

David began playing soccer later than many of his peers, but quickly developed a passion for the game and a determination to compete at the highest level possible. Raised in Long Island and New York City, he grew up playing in the local soccer community and gained firsthand experience navigating the competitive youth soccer landscape.

David spent much of his early playing career with Islas Malvinas Soccer Club before continuing his development with several clubs throughout New York City. His experiences in CJSL, EDP, and other competitive environments helped shape him into a creative, aggressive, and technically-minded midfielder.

During high school, David played two seasons for Eleanor Roosevelt High School on Manhattan's Upper East Side under Coach Mr. G. During his senior year, he was named captain and became a leader both on and off the field. His time at Eleanor Roosevelt helped establish the leadership qualities that would later become a major part of his coaching philosophy.



After high school, David continued his development with the Borussia Dortmund Academy in New York City, where he trained under Coach Javier Martinez Haedo. The experience exposed him to a different level of technical and tactical development and further strengthened his understanding of the modern game.

David currently competes as a Division III student-athlete at St. Joseph's University, Brooklyn. During the 2024 season, he was part of a historic team that advanced to the Skyline Conference Semifinals, competing under the guidance of Coach Adam Brunengo, Steward Naula, and Alejandro Oliveros.



As his playing career continued, David began transitioning his knowledge and experience into coaching. He earned his USSF National D License through NYCFC before progressing to and completing his USSF National C License. Through his coaching education, David has had the opportunity to learn from experienced USSF, MLS NEXT, and professional-level coaches, expanding his understanding of player development, tactical principles, game management, and player-centered coaching.

Today, David is dedicated to creating meaningful opportunities for young players. His coaching philosophy focuses on developing technically confident, creative, intelligent, and resilient players while helping each athlete understand the game rather than simply teaching them what to do. He believes that every player develops differently and that coaches have a responsibility to create an environment where players can learn, make decisions, take risks, and grow.



Refereeing Experience

In addition to playing and coaching, David is an Eastern New York State referee with extensive experience officiating competitive youth soccer throughout the Tri-State Area.

David has officiated matches involving high-level MLS NEXT, ECNL, and USL youth programs, gaining a unique perspective of the game from the referee's point of view. His experience includes officiating high-profile matches such as the NYCFC vs. New York Red Bulls derby, as well as the ECNL final between ENY #1 SUSAN and ENY #2 NYCFC.

He has also traveled outside New York to officiate MLS NEXT tournaments, including competitions in Texas and Utah. During one spring and summer season, David officiated an impressive 76 matches, including two major tournaments.

His experience as a referee has become an important part of his development as a coach. It has given him a deeper understanding of the Laws of the Game, player behavior, tactical situations, match management, and the small details that can influence a game.



Education

David attended Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Manhattan's Upper East Side before continuing his education at St. Joseph's University, Brooklyn, where he is a Division III student-athlete.

His academic and athletic experiences have helped him develop the discipline, leadership, communication skills, and work ethic that he brings into his coaching.

A Family Built Around Soccer

Soccer has become more than a sport within the Gutierrez family. It has become a shared passion and a way for the brothers to challenge and support one another.

David is the oldest of three brothers.

Kevin Gutierrez, the second oldest, attended Queens Gateway High School, where he became one of the school's standout soccer players. During his high school career, Kevin helped lead the program to its first two playoff appearances, recording 13 goals and 10 assists while serving as captain during his senior year.

Mateo Gutierrez, the youngest brother, has continued the family's soccer tradition as a key player for the DV7 B2014 team. Mateo helped his team achieve multiple victories, including an EDP Division 2 championship in 2024, and competed in the NY Champions Cup against some of the strongest 2014 teams in the region.

Before that, Mateo spent three years playing for the PS 160Q soccer team, serving as captain during his final year.

A special part of the family's soccer story is that David was a co-founder of the PS 160Q soccer team. What began as an opportunity for students to play and compete has grown into a program competing against schools throughout District 28 during the fall and winter seasons.

Building the Next Generation

David's journey from a young player in New York to a college athlete, licensed coach, and competitive referee has given him a unique understanding of the game from multiple perspectives.

He understands what it is like to be a young player trying to find an opportunity. He understands the demands of competing at the collegiate level. He understands the expectations placed on coaches and players in high-level youth soccer. And, through refereeing, he has developed an appreciation for the details and standards required to compete at the highest levels of the game.

David now brings all of those experiences together through coaching.

His goal is simple: to help young players become better soccer players, better teammates, and better people while giving them the opportunities, guidance, and confidence to reach their potential.

For David, coaching is more than teaching soccer. It is about creating opportunities, building confidence, developing leaders, and helping the next generation fall in love with the game.