

Photo by Marni Rothschild Durlach



Sam Candler and Lynn Minkowski are good sports.

In high school, Sam learned to play squash so he could compete with Lynn in her family's favorite sport. Now, the couple coordinates Chucktown Squash with Lynn as program director and Sam as executive director. They "decided to take on the challenge together" after the nonprofit was established in 2010 by Lynn's sister, modeled off of a national program "to bring urban squash and education to the Southeast." Fifth-grade students are recruited to strengthen self-motivation, self-reliance, competitiveness and self-discipline as they shuffle, swing and aim for college acceptance through middle school and into high school. The group devotes weekdays to an hour and a half of court time at College of Charleston, followed by tutoring in the classroom "where the real success happens." Saturdays are spent at the MUSC Wellness Center. Sam and Lynn hold the kids accountable with the help of college volunteers and they strive to "open up their eyes, allow the students to say, 'I belong in college.'"