



'UDC Men's Soccer – A Platform for the Future'

Interview with former UDC Soccer Player and Graduate, Michel Egbame, '21

***Q1. Where are you originally from?***

My mother was originally from Togo, but I grew up in NW DC. I went to school in the Takoma area with my high school being Columbia Heights.

***Q2. What attracted you to UDC to become a student - athlete?***

The main attraction was the location of the school – it was very close to home for me and I was able to go to a university where I could be close to family and UDC also had my major (Business Management). The combination of both along with having the opportunity to play soccer made it a perfect fit.

***Q3. What did you study / major?***

I majored in Business Management.

***Q4. What did UDC, and men's soccer provide to prepare you for life after college?***

UDC and the soccer program was a big support system for me. It provided an environment to be a good student and be able to prioritize a schedule and expectations – teaching me to balance life and work alongside the busy soccer schedule – this prepared me to manage my time and day to day life so I could set myself up for success.

***Q5. Best memory/ memories from UDC?***

I have a lot! But it would be making the NCAA tournament in 2017. I was actually at work when the 1<sup>st</sup> round selection show was on and my teammates called me when we found out. It was such amazing news to get and was one of the best days ever! Another special memory for me was my senior year – graduation and senior day! My mother was about to come to my senior day soccer game. For her it was always so tough to make my games because of her work schedule, so to have her there was amazing. I had a really good year on the field also (and the team) and was given more responsibility as a player to step up in scoring and assisting, which I did. I scored on senior day also which was great to think back to.

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**Q6. You had the opportunity to play soccer in Spain after you graduated - What was the team's name and level? Can you explain how this came about? How did you enjoy the experience? What was the big difference between soccer in the USA and Spain?**

The connection came from a teammate that I practiced with in my local training group I was part of. He was able to put me in contact with the director of the International Development Academy. The first opportunity came in June 2022 where I went over to Spain for a camp. They liked me as a player, so I was asked to go back for their season in the upcoming August 2022. However, because of the short turnaround it was a lot to get things sorted. So, I came back to DC and then prepared to go back out to Spain in the new year (January 2023).

The club is called CF Albuixech and is located near Valencia in the 6<sup>th</sup> tier. The experience has been good, and I have been exposed to different training methods and environments, which has really helped me all round. My room mate on the team is from Minnesota so it was nice to have someone from the states who had similar experiences. The club is really family orientated also so that has made things feel like a home from home. I will be returning in July 2023 (returned to US for a short time post season) and will be with them the whole of the 2023-2024 season.



**Q7. If you have any advice for future or current UDC student athletes what would this be?**

My advice would be to enjoy every experience you come across and be the best version of yourself each day. I try and be someone that can make a mark and be a positive influence each day. One thing I had the chance to do was coach at St. Albans HS when I graduated UDC – this was great to be able to inspire young players and be a role model. Sometimes there are tough moments, but you make the most of each situation.

