



Same Skills, Global Stage: Ahold Delhaize USA Associate Supports World Cup Media Operations

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Chances are, you caught at least part of the World Cup this summer. But did you know one of your Ahold Delhaize USA colleagues helped run it? Stephen Hartin, a Quincy-based member of the Executive Support team, was one of roughly 50,000 volunteers chosen from more than 1.1 million applicants worldwide. As part of the FIFA World Cup's Media Operations and Services crew, he was close enough to the action to feel the players thunder past as they came on and off the field.

The opportunity nearly passed Stephen by. The tip came secondhand during a golf outing, when a friend mentioned an open call in passing. Stephen threw his name in, and a few months later, he was standing on the turf.

The Media Operations and Services team connected the event to the world by providing the infrastructure, services and access needed to broadcast every match across the globe. Stephen helped with credentials, player interviews, camera feeds and even the connectivity setups that allowed dozens of media outlets to go live all at once. It wasn't far from what he does at Ahold Delhaize USA, only this time, the whole world was watching.

"I was working directly with global news outlets from around the world, including Sports Illustrated," Stephen said. "I had to make sure everyone had what they needed, and that anyone without credentials stayed well clear."

Volunteers could pick their shifts, and Stephen chose his strategically: four games, each from a different vantage point. "I was on the pitch for the Morocco-Scotland game, which was pretty amazing. The pitch is the field, for anybody not familiar," he said. "I was in the Mix Zone where they did the interviews for all the players. And for the France-Norway game and the quarterfinals for the France-Morocco game, I was up in the press box. I had some pretty amazing views the entire time."

What struck Stephen most was the unity around the event. The World Cup crowd did not feel divided in the way some sporting events can. Instead, teams and fans from around the world seemed connected by the experience.

"It was a very unique and dynamic experience," he said. "One you don't get from watching on television."

Watch Stephen's World Cup experience in the video below.