

Windy City Soldiers are coming

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The area will get a dose of professional basketball in March when the **Windy City Soldiers**, a member of the International Basketball League, will begin its inaugural season.

The Kankakee Community Resource Center will be the home of the **Soldiers**. On Friday, IBL commissioner Mikal Duilio toured the community and the Resource Center. Duilio approved the Resource Center, with a few minor improvements.

"It's our home," said teams spokesman and player Barry Bradford. "There are a few things like paint and lighting, but we hope to get it ready, not just for us, but for the children of the community."

The **Soldiers** have more than just basketball on their minds. The team is also taking on a mentorship program with King Middle School.

Bradford is excited to be in the area and so far is pleased with what he has seen.

"On the basketball side, things are going well," Bradford said. "It's great to get some many good players so early. Getting to know Kankakee and introduce ourselves has been a big part of the process."

The **Soldiers** have 15 men on their roster, but will cut down to 12 in the spring. Two former Olivet Nazarene University players, Zach Birkey and Stan Chismark, are on the team, giving it a local favor.

For international taste, the league has two Chinese national teams that will play IBL teams, including the team that Houston Rockets' Yao Ming and Milwaukee Bucks' Yi Jianlian played for in their days in their homeland,