



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE TWIN CITIES

FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER



Celebrating Black History Month at Jerry Gamble

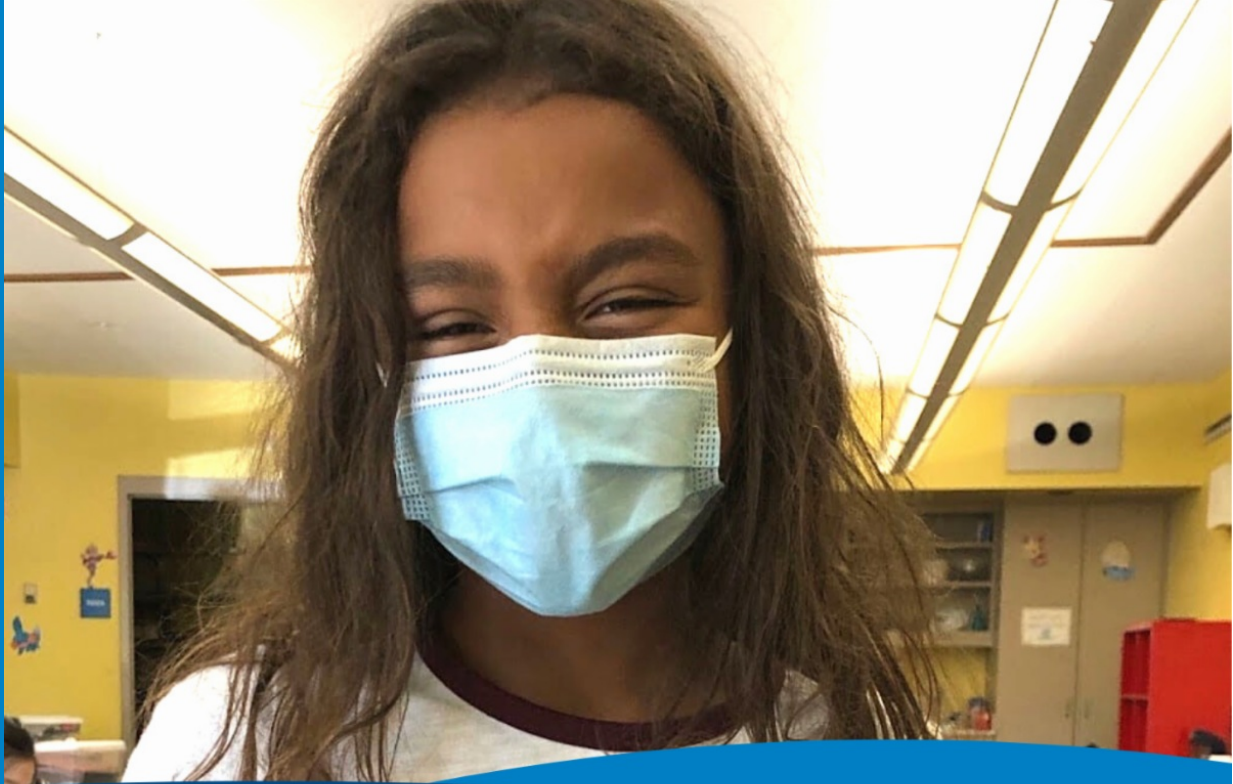
On February 15, youth at our Jerry Gamble Club had the opportunity to participate in an immersive art project honoring Black History Month, in partnership with the Minnesota Timberwolves and Lynx! Led virtually by local artist [Lissa Karpeh](#), each youth used paper, photos, magazine clippings, paint, and fabric to create an interpretive self-portrait.



We were also excited to receive a fun surprise visit from mascots Crunch and Prowl, who brought some great swag for Club members! We're very grateful to the Timberwolves and Lynx for facilitating a great event, and to Lissa Karpeh for leading this beautiful project - we had a blast!



During Black History Month, BGCTC celebrates the achievements and contributions of Black individuals and communities in the United States and around the world. We remain committed to inclusivity, equity, and opportunity for ALL young people, as well as championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, and equitable organization. Cultural equity embodies the values, policies, and practices that ensure that all people—including but not limited to those who have been historically under-represented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion—are represented in the development and implementation of youth programs; the fair financial and supervisory support of staff; and the leadership of the organization.



THANK YOU!

Thank You for Giving in Gratitude!

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters during **Give in Gratitude**, we are so excited to announce that we **EXCEEDED** the \$50,000 match put forth by Al & Kathy Lenzmeier! Throughout December and January, we raised over **\$400,000** from more than **350** individual donors, empowering bright futures for our young people in 2021.

Although 2020 presented many unanticipated challenges for our Club community, we still have so much to be thankful for! We are open for in-person youth programming, our staff is as dedicated as ever to ensuring a fun and safe Club experience, and our kids are growing and thriving. We are so grateful for your steadfast support of our organization, youth, and families!

If you would like to make an additional gift to support innovative and impactful programming that is leading young people to success in school and life, please visit the link below.

[Make a Donation](#)



Cooking with the Clubs

Even though we're not able to get together in person right now, we're having a wonderful time creating amazing dishes at home as part of our **Cooking with the Clubs** virtual event! Last Friday, February 12, we enjoyed participating in our special live cooking demonstration with Miss Minnesota Kathryn Kueppers. The apple donuts were truly delicious!

[View Event Recording](#)

Remember, you can still join **Cooking with the Clubs** - tickets start at just **\$25!** Cooking with the Clubs features popular local chefs, mixologists, brewers, and sommeliers. Attendees can choose from a selection of cocktail, beer, and wine pairings, as well as several delicious meal options to be cooked in the comfort of your own home **throughout the remaining month of February**. You will receive a video and ingredient list to prepare the meals once you've made your selection.

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities' **Healthy Lifestyles** strategy develops young people's capacity to live healthfully by educating youth about fitness, nutrition, and good health decision making. Our Kids Feeding Kids Program is just one example of how BCGTC works to ensure that all BCGTC members receive the essential nutrients, as well as the nutrition education, to grow into healthy and productive members of society. Support BCGTC and our **Healthy Lifestyles** youth programming by joining us for **Cooking with the Clubs!**

[Learn More](#)

Leveling Up in the Clubs

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities' **Literacy Program** embeds positive youth development, social and emotional learning techniques, and family engagement within literacy instruction. The model is a holistic approach that takes into account the whole student's needs and experiences from home, school, and community. Our overarching

goal is to ensure that all members are reading at their appropriate grade level and mastering the skills necessary to transition from **learning to read** to **reading to learn**.

Meet some of our **Level Up** members who have made huge improvements in their reading scores and moved up at least one level during the Fall to Winter session!

Joseph*

Al Lenzmeier West Side Club

Joseph*, a second grader at our West Side Club, loves playing basketball and reading comic books like Captain Underpants, his favorite. He says that reading has taught him about things that are real and not real in the world. From Fall to Winter, Joseph leveled up from Some Risk to the College Pathway category.



Dominic*

Southside Village Club

Dominic,* a second grader at Southside Village, was reading one level behind when he started in the Fall session. By the time of testing for our Winter session, he has leveled up from Some Risk to Low Risk and has raised his cumulative score by 48 points, and he is on track with reading at a second grade level.



Laura*

Al Lenzmeier West Side Club

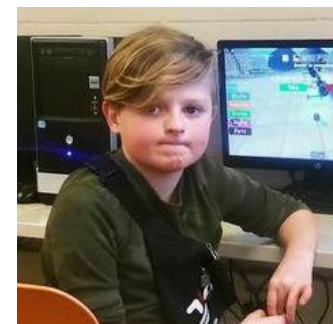
Laura*, a fourth grader, attends the West Side Club for support with her school distance learning. Laura's favorite subject in school is English, and she loves to write. At the Club, she likes to participate in activities such as Torch Club and Homework Help. From Fall to Winter, Laura has leveled up from High Risk to the Low Risk category and improved her reading score by 22 points.



Grant*

Al Lenzmeier West Side Club

Grant is a fifth grader who attends the Al Lenzmeier West Side Club for support with his school distance learning. His hobbies are fishing, computer and video games, and his favorite subjects in school are math and science. From Fall to Winter, he has leveled up from High Risk to the Low Risk category and raised his reading score by 44 points.



**** All names changed for privacy.**

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

Stevan Jackson

Volunteer Coach

Jerry Gamble Club & Northside

This month, we recognize and honor Coach Stevan Jackson, a veteran BGCTC volunteer and a tremendous influence on our north Minneapolis

youth! By his reckoning, Coach Jackson has spent 33 years and over 35,000 hours coaching youth sports on the Northside. He started as a youth outreach worker at the Glenwood-Lyndale Community Center in north Minneapolis in the 1980s. Following the closure of the community center due to reconstruction of the surrounding neighborhoods, Coach Jackson reached out to the Jerry Gamble Club in 1995 and established the Lady Gambles, the Club's first traveling girls basketball team.



Coach Jackson's philosophy centers on using basketball and sports to teach youth how to manage negative thoughts and emotions, and redirecting them to create positive action. Every youth in his program learns about A.N.T.'s - Automatic Negative Thoughts - and how to shift them. Coach Jackson teaches his youth that although we can't control what thoughts come into our heads, we can choose what thoughts we continue to think about – and we can choose to let go of the negative ones.

"I am trying to teach every youth that they have the ability to feel good as a human being," Coach Jackson says. "I give them the tools to make it through the moment by being aware of their thoughts. I can't tell you the number of youth who grow up and come back and thank me for teaching them about A.N.T.'s and how to manage mentally through life."

Due to COVID-19 health concerns for himself and his wife, Coach Jackson retired from volunteer service at the end of 2020. We are so grateful to Coach Jackson for over 25 years of service to the Jerry Gamble Club and the Northside – his legacy will endure in generations of our Club youth for years to come!

Weekend Family Meals Program

Thanks to generous support from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, we are extending our Weekend Family Meals program to continue providing nutrition support to families during the weekends. Following feedback from our families, we are making a shift to sourcing meals from BIPOC-owned restaurants and caterers local to each of our communities, including La Tejana, Soul to Soul Smokehouse, and Qoya Cooks.



UPCOMING EVENT

Twin Cities Youth of the Year

Thursday, March 11
5 p.m. (Virtual)

Please join us ((virtually)) as we celebrate BGCTC's **Youth of the Year!** Each Club in the Twin Cities will nominate an outstanding teen member as their own Youth of the Year. Following their nomination, a panel of judges will select one youth as BGCTC's Youth of the Year who will go on to compete for the title of Minnesota Youth of the Year.

Every year, thousands of Club teens participate in local, state and regional [Youth of the Year](#) events. Six teens,



including five regional winners and a national military youth winner, advance to the National Youth of the Year Celebration, where one outstanding young person is named Boys & Girls Clubs of America's national teen spokesperson. The National Youth of the Year is a role model, leader and advocate for over 4.6 million youth served by Boys & Girls Clubs each year, and all of America's young people.

Please stay tuned for more details on this virtual event!

SAVE THE DATE

For the Kids!

Thursday, May 6 (Virtual)

For the Kids is our premier annual benefit celebrating BGCTC members and their successes. Auctions, youth performances, and games make for an exciting and engaging evening that highlights our young people and how the Clubs are changing lives daily.



Due to safety concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic, this event will be held in a virtual format. Please watch for event details and ticket information coming soon!

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Minnesota Wild

Our Voyageur Environmental Center recently welcomed a brand-new ice rink to their winter outdoor offerings! Our new rink from EZ Ice was donated in partnership with the Minnesota Wild and NHL as part of their "Hockey is for Everyone" initiative, which seeks to drive positive social change and foster more inclusive communities. Former Wild player Wes Walz, Nordy the mascot, and other NHL representatives joined us to assemble the rink. Voyageur will be able to use the rink to enhance their winter program selection by adding skating, hockey, and broomball.



Wild University also had a very successful launch last month with members of the Minnesota Wild Ticket Sales and Service Retention team, who spoke with BGCTC youth about their job responsibilities and the importance of their roles in the success of a professional sports team. This month's session will take place on February 24 and will feature the Wild's Media Relations, Communications, and Digital Media departments. Wild University will run through June and seeks to give BGCTC teens a unique perspective of the work behind the scenes of professional sports.

PhRMA

PhRMA, representing the leading innovative biopharmaceutical research companies, has recently invested in Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities' STEM initiatives. BGCTC's partnership with PhRMA will kick off with a virtual grant presentation and career day on Friday, February 19. Medical professionals affiliated with PhRMA will discuss their careers and the numerous opportunities that exist for the next generation of professionals interested in STEM.



Travelers Insurance

Travelers Insurance will host two career days with BGCTC teens. Travelers Insurance team members from across the country will meet virtually with teens on March 2-3 to share their career and educational experiences as well as the scope of employment opportunities within the insurance industry.



How You Can Help

While social distancing measures are currently limiting the types of volunteer opportunities available at our Clubs, please consider supporting BGCTC in the following ways:

- Donate non-perishable food items, hygiene and cleaning supplies, school supplies, games, and activities for Club kids and families
- Sew or donate masks for Club staff
- Promote our organization on social media to build awareness
- Share employment resources for families
- Write encouraging notes to our kids or Club staff
- Make a monetary donation [online](#), by mail, or by texting **OURKIDS** to **243725**



To make an in-kind donation of any of the items listed above within the coming weeks and months, please contact Molly Hemes at mhemes@bgc-tc.org to arrange a drop-off time at one of our Clubs.

Share Your Club Story

Do you have a story to tell about our Clubs? We'd love to hear about your experiences as a member, alumni, volunteer, or partner. Your story could even be featured in an upcoming newsletter or social media spotlight!

We appreciate opportunities to share the stories of our BGCTC family. Please send your stories to jprewett@bgc-tc.org, and we will reach out to you soon. Thank you!



You Can Change a Child's Life

With your support, we can continue to provide life-changing academic, leadership, and healthy lifestyles programming to youth across the Twin Cities.

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Now!**

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Thank You to our Corporate Partners!

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