

Black youth matter.
Black families matter.
Black communities matter.
Black lives matter.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE TWIN CITIES

JUNE 2020 NEWSLETTER

Volume 22 | June 18, 2020

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities (BGCTC) recognizes its responsibility to support all youth and families in our communities through the challenges that continue to unfold before us. The public health crisis exacerbated by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has shone a stark light on the healthcare and economic disparities that impact our most vulnerable communities, and the tragic death of George Floyd continues to lay bare the systemic racism and injustices faced by many of our communities and people across the country.

Since our inception, Boys & Girls Clubs have always been agents of change, opportunity, and growth. We stand for safety, health, dignity, and equity for our young people. We can and must demand these long overdue changes to help cultivate an equitable society that ensures rights, safety, and the opportunity to thrive for ALL youth.

To the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) in our communities: We recognize the deep pain and fatigue over injustices you face, and we want you to know we remain committed to fighting against racism and discrimination wherever and however it exists. We see you. We support you. We're here for you.

All young people need to be heard, and our BIPOC youth deserve to know that adults will stand up for them in the face of injustice. We are committed to building a world where our young people are safe - not just at our Clubs, but everywhere.

SERVING OUR SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITIES

In response to the uprisings following the death of George Floyd as well as continuing challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic, our South Minneapolis Clubs have mobilized to address immediate needs in the surrounding communities. We are very grateful for the outpouring of volunteer inquiries, donations, and supplies we have received to support our Club youth and families!

Southside Village Club

Just one block away from the intersection of 38th and Chicago, our Southside Village Club has converted their facility into a free food and supplies co-op serving families lacking access to grocery stores and transportation. The Club opens its doors each Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 11am to 4pm. Volunteers assist each family in selecting essential food staples, personal care, and child care items.

To make an in-kind donation or inquire about [volunteer opportunities](#), please contact:

Mark Graves

Branch Director

mgraves@bgc-tc.org

612-290-2889

Tony Arnold

Program Director

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To make a monetary [donation](#), please contact:

Shannon Mattson

Vice President of Development & Communications

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Little Earth Club

While the Little Earth community center serves as a local hub for food, supplies, and support, Little Earth Club staff help ensure that the needs of each member of the community are being met. Program Director TJ Valtierra and Club staff have been busy organizing barbecues for hundreds of people each day, making meal deliveries to community elders, and sorting donated food and supplies that continue to arrive on a daily basis.



Supporting our Families During COVID-19

Our Club locations have been closed for in-person youth programming since March 27, 2020 in accordance with state guidance for

the COVID-19 response plan. This, in and of itself, posed alarming levels of challenge as evolving data shows the COVID-19 outbreak will have disproportionate health and economic impacts on the communities we serve.

In addition to COVID-19, our communities have also recently experienced the devastating death of George Floyd and a resounding call for justice be served, with an examination of how systemic racism has and continues to affect people of color in our country. As Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities, we take a stand for the future of our youth against racism, discrimination, and prejudice in all its forms. We fight for safety, health, dignity and equitable opportunity for ALL youth.



We have a responsibility during this time to continue increasing supports for our families as they now face intensified challenges with school closures, work disruptions, and potential illness and health concerns. Currently, we are working to increase these supports already in place:

- **Family wellness check-ins.** BGCTC staff members continue to connect with each one of our families on a regular basis. These calls focus on immediate needs related to shelter, food, technology needs, and medical care.
- **Connection to and distribution of food.** BGCTC has been working diligently with food distributors, grocers, and restaurants to provide weekly meal packages (10,000+ meals) for our families and connect families to additional nutrition resources.
- **Delivery of youth development programs as a distance learning model.** This includes K-12 academic support, ensuring digital connectivity and distribution of education materials and supplies to youth and families.



10,031

*total family wellness
check-ins conducted
March 18 - June 12*



111,540

*total meals served
April 1 - June 12*



1,392

*total virtual
experiences March
18 - June 12*

[Learn
More](#)

Limited Reopen Planned for Two Club Sites

The health, safety, and well-being of our Club members, families, and staff is our highest priority. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities has committed to adopting updated best practices and protocols developed in alignment with the CDC, MN Department of

Health and other experts providing guidance in the COVID-19 health and business operation space. The goal is to develop a plan to engage with a predictable group of kids with high academic needs and a commitment to consistent attendance.

Our Jerry Gamble and Mt. Airy Clubs will open on **Monday, July 6**, following mandatory family orientations and youth assessments to be conducted from June 29 to July 2. These Clubs will be opened to kids in grades 1-4 with high academic needs, and each site will have a limited number of spots available. Please contact the Branch Director at either site for more information.

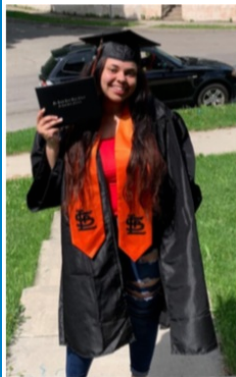


Marcus Zackery

Jerry Gamble Branch Director
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Andrew Jones

Mt. Airy Branch Director
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Congratulations to our Graduating Seniors!

We wish a heartfelt congratulations to our graduating Club seniors and the entire class of 2020! Although this year has brought unprecedented challenges that none of us could have expected, we are so proud of every one of these amazing young people for their perseverance and hard work. We're grateful to have been a part of their journey, and we are looking forward to seeing what's next for each of them!

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Becky Rea

Food Program Manager

Becky Rea has cooked professionally for 25 years. As a mother and grandmother, she especially loves cooking for kids! When a cafeteria cook position with Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities became available six years ago, Becky jumped at the opportunity to work with youth.

Becky now works as BGCTC's Food Program Manager. While her work usually centers on creating balanced menus for each Club, her focus has shifted to coordinating our weekly Family Meal Kits food distribution as part of



BGCTC's COVID-19 response. She helps organize food donations, works to build relationships with grocers and food distributors, and ensures that every family has access to nutritious food during these times.

Although Becky's role is on the administrative side, she loves going to the Clubs whenever she has the chance and is looking forward to our re-opening! "The kids can always turn your day around," she says. "They're always there to give you a smile or a hug when you need one."

Double your dollars today!

Thanks to a generous **\$80,000** match put forth by the [Sonance Foundation](#) in support of our work to serve youth, families, and communities affected by COVID-19 and the tragic murder of George Floyd, the dollars you give to support emergency relief efforts for our Minneapolis Clubs will be **doubled**.

These funds will be used to help us increase support for immediate needs across our five Minneapolis Clubs: Southside Village, Little Earth, Jerry Gamble, Patrick Henry High School and Olson Middle School. For every dollar raised, Sonance Foundation will provide a dollar-for-dollar match up to **\$80,000!**

Your gift will help us provide food support, virtual education programming, and additional resources for youth and families in our Minneapolis communities. Give today and double your impact!

**Give
Now!**

Take the #HalfMyDAF Challenge!

Do you have a Donor Advised Fund (DAF)? Join the **#HalfMyDAF Challenge** and request a grant to Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities today!

If you make a grant to BGCTC and commit to putting half your DAF to work by September 30, we'll be eligible to receive up to \$10,000 in matching funds! Every grant from a DAF, together with a commitment to **#HalfMyDAF**, increases our chances for an additional \$10,000 grant. Your money will go further now than ever!

Learn more: halfmydaf.com



UPCOMING EVENT

Tailgate in a Box

Although we are unable to gather in person this summer, we ask you to join us as we take two of our signature events – Kids in the City and Grand Slam Dinner – and turn them into one large ((virtual)) celebration: **Tailgate in a Box!** This month-long fundraising event is being supported by FOX Sports North and the Minnesota Twins to help us further our mission to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.



Tailgate in a Box brings the fun to you!

- Tailgate box full of food and fun!
- Q&A and virtual games with Minnesota Twins Alumni
- Silent & Live Auction
- Highlight segments with BGCTC staff and youth ...and more!

All proceeds raised will support BGCTC's virtual youth education programming and Family Meal Kit food distribution. [Visit our website](#) for more information and dates coming soon!

How You Can Help

While social distancing measures are currently limiting volunteer engagement at the 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
- 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.

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.



Give
Now!

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities | 651-726-2582 | info@bgc-tc.org | boysandgirls.org

STAY CONNECTED

