



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THE TWIN CITIES

## SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



**Kayla**



**SUCCESS  
AHEAD!**



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
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Third grader Kayla\* has been a Boys & Girls Club member for the past two years. Her favorite Club programs and activities are STEM Mentoring, the annual BGCTC Spelling Bee, and dance fitness. While awaiting the Boys & Girls Clubs' reopening this fall, Kayla joined our virtual programming, online tutoring sessions, and our in-person summer Literacy Program, through which Kayla leveled up from the Low Risk to College Pathway reading test level!

Mt. Airy staff have enjoyed watching Kayla grow from being reserved and shy to being able to express herself, speak her mind, and lead a group. We are thrilled to have Kayla and other Club members back at the Clubs to participate in Academic Success programs this fall!

*\*Name changed for privacy.*

As we embark on a new school year, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities is working diligently to ensure supports are in place for Club youth and families to succeed despite the profound and ever-changing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest following the tragic death of George Floyd. These events have magnified racial and economic inequities with overwhelming ramifications.

It is BGCTC's responsibility to act **NOW** to advance equity for all youth and families, and we hope you will support our continued work this fall. **The Weinert Family believes so strongly in BGCTC's impact that they are generously offering a \$50,000 dollar-for-**

**dollar match** on contributions this back-to-school season!

Your gift to **Success Ahead** will provide BGCTC youth and families with high-quality academic programs, school supplies, at-home technology, and other resources needed to thrive in this school year. **Donations received by October 30 will be matched dollar-for-dollar for the first \$50,000 in donations, so your gift will go twice as far for the kids!**

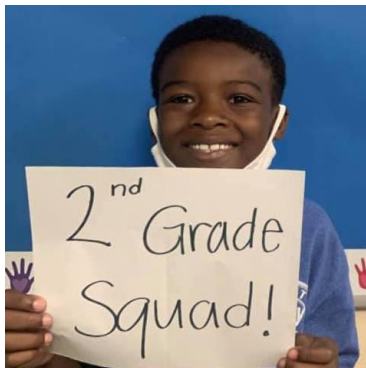
**Give Now!**

**Learn More**

## Leveling Up Through the Summer

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 over the summer!



**Kane**  
*Jerry Gamble Club*

Kane\* is a second grader at our Jerry Gamble Club. He attended our summer program 92% of the time, missing just two days. He is very respectful and fun, and he loved reading groups this summer. He is also improving his independent reading and enjoying lots of books on his own. Over the summer, Kane improved from Some Risk to the Low Risk category.



**Cyndi**  
*Jerry Gamble Club*

Cyndi\* is an outstanding third grade Club member. She had almost perfect attendance during summer program, missing just one day. She shows great leadership skills, and is willing to help others in any way she can. From fall to summer, Cyndi moved from the Some Risk to the Low Risk category.



**Natalie**  
*West Side Club*

Natalie,\* a second grader, was a member of the Mt. Airy summer program. She has a positive attitude, asks great questions, and is always willing to persevere. She has improved her spelling and reading over the summer and enjoys individual reading. Natalie leveled up during our summer program from High Risk to the Some Risk category.

*\*Names changed for privacy.*



## Club Teens Lead Social Justice Pop-Up Events

During the week of September 8, BGCTC's teen staff and teen members hosted a number of pop-up events designed to launch the organization's new Social Justice initiative. The events brought Club teens together from north Minneapolis, south Minneapolis, and St. Paul to connect them with partner organizations with strong ties in each community. These pop-ups also created opportunities for youth performers to express their experiences as BIPOC teens and for young people to meet with representatives from other Twin Cities organizations.

The north Minneapolis event, which took place outside of Patrick Henry High School on September 8, brought together Patrick Henry and Northside teens to connect with local organizations working for community growth and justice. On September 10, at Al Lenzmeier West Side Club in St. Paul, teens and Club alumni presented spoken word, music, and dance performances, in addition to networking with local businesses and community activists. Although the planned Southside event was postponed due to weather, many south Minneapolis and Little Earth teens gathered on September 14 to paint a mural at the Little Earth urban farm and participate in music, performance art, and discussion.

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## Welcoming Our Youth Back to Southside Village

On Friday, September 18, our Southside Village Club hosted a Welcome Back party to celebrate our young people returning to the Clubs! Many of our valued community partners - including the Minnesota Vikings, Twins, Timberwolves, Lynx, FOX Sports North, and Caribou Coffee - came together to help welcome kindergarten through fifth grade kids back to the Club.

"What we wanted to do was create a special opportunity to let the kids know how excited we were to have them back," said Tim Schober, our Senior Director of Corporate and Public Relations. "This time has really shaken up the world as they know it. So we wanted to make sure that we could, as clearly as possible, let them know how much support they have in the community."



Kids in attendance were surprised with swag from the Vikings, Twins, Timberwolves, and Lynx. The Vikings donated 15 laptops and tablets, as well as backpacks and reusable face masks for youth. In addition, Vikings fullback and Minnesota native CJ Ham delivered a virtual message prior to the event expressing his love for the Clubs and appreciation for our young people during these challenging times. This was a wonderful opportunity for us to celebrate our kids - a big thank you to our supporters and partners who made it happen!

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## STAFF HIGHLIGHT

### Crystal Bieter Director of Academics

Crystal Bieter currently serves as BGCTC's Director of Academics. Prior to her current role, she worked as a Program Director and Educational Director with the Clubs, providing education curriculum and training to Club staff and designing vocational and leadership programs for Club members of all ages. When our Clubs closed in March due to COVID, Crystal took on the tremendous role of designing and organizing virtual curriculum for our Club members who were missing the opportunity to attend in person.



Before joining the Boys and Girls Clubs, Crystal was a licensed English teacher for middle and high school students in the Twin Cities. In addition to this experience, she had the opportunity to spend three years in Switzerland teaching at the International School of Lucerne and Zug, as well as serve as Headmaster for the Beehive International School.

Crystal lives in Saint Paul with her husband, 20 year old daughter, 13 year old son, and beloved senior cockapoo Charlie. Her favorite sports are hockey and football, and she especially loves hiking, nature, knitting, and reading. We are very thankful to have Crystal on our team throughout the changes and challenges of 2020!

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### Thanks for Supporting Tailgate in a Box 2020!

In August, we were very excited to present our first VIRTUAL fundraising event: **Tailgate in a Box!** This month-long virtual celebration highlighted the many ways our Clubs continue to support youth and families in our communities through the COVID-19 pandemic and the civil unrest following the death of George Floyd.



With their ticket purchase, attendees received an exciting Tailgate Box filled with grill bundles, beer and vodka, and other great items provided by our sponsors. Attendees also enjoyed a virtual program each Tuesday to coincide with that day's Twins game. Programs featured BGCTC program highlights, Club youth and staff appearances, and exclusive interviews from Twins alumni LaTroy Hawkins, Roy Smalley, Glen Perkins, and Michael Cuddyer.

We're thrilled to announce that we raised **\$130,000** for our Clubs and welcomed many enthusiastic attendees to our virtual programs! Thank You to everyone who helped make our **Tailgate in a Box** a great success!

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### Recognizing a New Partnership

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities is honored to be a recipient of [a recent grant](#) from the Katz Amsterdam Foundation, led by Vail Resorts CEO Rob Katz and wife Elana Amsterdam.



"We're honored to be partnering with these organizations now and look forward to our future efforts to enhance access to winter sports for underserved kids," Katz said. "As

youth of color and their families have been especially hard hit by the pandemic, it's essential that the nonprofits receiving grants this year are able to determine the best use for their community. All of these organizations have had to pivot their services due to COVID-19, and, additionally, many are helping the youth they serve find their voice to be part of the national dialogue on systemic racism.”

## Take the #HalfMyDAF Challenge!

Do you have a Donor Advised Fund (DAF)? It's not too late to 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 DAF can have greater impact now than ever!

Learn more: [halfmydaf.com](http://halfmydaf.com)



## 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
- 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](mailto: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](mailto:jprewett@bgc-tc.org), and we will reach out to you soon. Thank you!



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## 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](mailto:info@bgc-tc.org) | [boysandgirls.org](http://boysandgirls.org)

STAY CONNECTED

