

BGCNJ CELEBRATES YOUTH LEADERS

Boys & Girls Club of America's Youth of the Year program recognizes the outstanding contributions of club members between the ages of 14-18 to their family, school, community, Boys & Girls Club, and for overcoming personal challenges. Becoming a Youth of the Year is the highest honor a club member can receive. The Youth of the Year program was generously sponsored in New Jersey by Walmart, NJEA, Cablevision, Jersey Mike's Franchise Systems and Wakefern Food Corporation.

The NJ Youth of the Year program is a six month journey beginning in January with a Future Leaders Summit where youth throughout the state attended a full day of leadership training that prepares them for the competition. Throughout the year, youth work with mentors and coaches to build on their strengths. Through generous support from Walmart,

Youth of the Year Finalists were treated to a shopping spree where they were able to purchase a new outfit for the competition.

"The Club is not just a place where you go to have fun. It is a place where you have the opportunity to expand your character, be unique and learn new things. The Club provided me with skills that will last me a lifetime."

- Ijataque McClain, 2013 Youth of the Year

In May, Finalists were honored at a Legislative Lunch where they had the opportunity to meet with state legislators and tour the Statehouse. As part of the day's festivities many of the youth were interviewed for a "Meet the Leaders" segment with their local Legislator for Cablevision. The final step of the Youth of the Year experience took place at MetLife Stadium on June 4, 2013



Douglas Eagles, Ijataque McClain & Susan Hall

where youth participated in interviews with a panel of judges that included: Caroline Cranco, Jersey Mikes; Judith Joan Sullivan; Jonathan Sobel, Sobel Family Foundation; Joan Standish; Ann Marie Burke, Wakefern Food Corp; Lucia DiNapoli Gibbons, Wells Fargo; Robert Ingato, CIT; Rica A Triggs, Solidad O'Brien Foundation; and Theresa DeLeon, PNC. The program culminated with the Celebration of Champions: Youth of the Year Gala. The high point of the evening was the announcement of Ijataque "Tay" McClain, a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monmouth County, as the NJ 2013 Youth of the Year.

Additionally, this year was the first year that a separate NJ Youth of the Year winner was proclaimed for the Military Clubs with Selena Buchanan from Fort Dix Youth Center receiving this award.



2013 Youth of the Year Finalists

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WELCOME FROM CEO

Dear Friends,

As the 2013 year comes to an end I would like to thank everyone for their patience during our leadership transition this year. We are grateful to our continued and new partners who have supported vital programming for our Clubs and sponsorships for our BGCNJ events including the Youth of the Year.



There have been many highlights this year and in this issue of NJ Connections we have provided you with a glimpse of some of the activities we have been engaged in this past year. I look forward to expanding our outreach in 2014 and working to ensure that we strengthen and grow to enable all our youth of New Jersey to reach their full potential as productive, caring responsible citizens



Lisa Gleason, Susan Hall, Jennifer Kramer, Ellen Lambert

On October 4, 2013, Jennifer Kramer was honored by PSEG for her continued volunteer support of the Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey network. She was acknowledged at the company's annual Recognizing Excellence in Volunteerism program. As part of the award, PSEG provided BGCNJ with a \$3,000 grant recognizing Jenn's commitment to the organization.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LUCIA DINAPOLI GIBBONS



Lucia DiNapoli Gibbons has been a passionate supporter of BGCNJ since 2003 when she chaired the inaugural Concert for Kids committee. She continued to serve on the committee for an additional 5 years not leaving until she had found a replacement for herself within her company. In her role as Regional President for Wachovia and then Wells Fargo, she has supported

the Concert for Kids annually since its inception. In 2008 she added to her support by providing a grant for Career Launch which is now \$60,000 annually and impacts Clubs in Clifton, Garfield, Hawthorne, Jersey City, Lodi, Newark, Paterson and Union.

Lucia was one of the first members of the Corporate Advisory Board when it was established in 2009 and

quickly became its chair. As chair she has successfully recruited other members and supporters, provided leadership and guidance on critical issues facing Clubs and contributed both her time and treasure to as she likes to say "raise all boats". Specifically, in 2012 she rallied fellow board members around a successful South Jersey fundraiser, engaged one of the top accounting firms (Withum, Smith & Brown) in helping to promote our tax check off program and instituted a board self evaluation to re-focus members on their roles as board members. In the past, Lucia has also provided unique opportunities for NJ Youth of the Year Finalists including an internship and an opportunity to participate in the coin toss before a NY Giants game. Although she was born and raised in Jersey City, Lucia cares about all kids in New Jersey and her efforts over the past 10 years have made an important difference to every Club in the State.

Wells Fargo recently promoted Lucia to a newly created position as leader of the East Coast Business Banking segment, with the goal of doing more lending and financial services business with firms in the \$2 million to \$20 million-revenue segment from Connecticut to Florida.

NY GIANTS, STEVE WEATHERFORD PARTNERS WITH BGCNJ



his experience as a child where he was a member of his local Club in Terre Haute, Indiana. The youth were excited to get moving and do an exercise session with Steve.

Steve Weatherford, NY Giants Super Bowl Champion, has signed on with as the BGCNJ Health and Fitness Ambassador. Steve will be inspiring Boys & Girls Club youth to take part in a fitness challenge as part of the Club's Triple Play health and fitness program. Every month Steve will post a new blog and video on the

BGCNJ website (www.bgcnj.org) to inspire and challenge youth to get and stay healthy.

To kick off the partnership, Steve visited the Boys & Girls Club of Ironbound in Newark to meet with Club youth. Steve spoke to the youth about his commitment to fitness and wellness. Steve relayed



CLUBS KEEP KIDS HEALTHY

**82.2% OF CLUB
MEMBERS EXERCISE
FOR AT LEAST
30 MINUTES A DAY
WHILE AT THE BOYS &
GIRLS CLUB**

**3 OUT OF 10
KIDS ARE
OBESE OR
OVERWEIGHT**



KIDS GET FIT IN MIND, BODY & SOUL

The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey continued their annual \$50,000 grant in support of Triple Play, an evidence based health and wellness program. The funds will enable Clubs in Atlantic City, Camden, Newark and Trenton to engage 350 youth from ages 6 to 18 years old in nutrition and fitness activities to combat the growing childhood obesity epidemic. The Triple Play program strives to improve the overall health of youth by addressing the three domains of mind, body and soul. Triple Play educates boys and girls about good nutrition, making physical fitness a daily practice and developing individual strengths and good character.



Club youth at Boys & Girls Clubs in Trenton/Mercer get active.

LOCAL CLUB PROFILE: BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF HUDSON COUNTY



For 119 years, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County has actively sought to enrich the lives of girls and boys whom other youth agencies fail to reach. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County has two locations serving youth in Jersey City since 1893 and in Hoboken since 1984. 2014 is positioned to be a huge year for the Boys & Girls Clubs in Hudson County. Gary Greenberg, CEO, has been with the Club for 37 years and will be leading the Jersey City Club in their move during the spring into a new state-of-the-art, technology-forward facility, just a block away

from its current location. A unique public/private venture enabled the Club to sell the current property to real estate developers and come to terms that will ensure that the Club will remain in the Jersey City community for many years to come.

The Boys & Girls Club in Jersey City serves over 200 youth each day in the afterschool program and 450 in the summer. The new Clubhouse will be approximately 34,000 square feet and includes modern technology labs, visual and performing arts studios, a learning kitchen, a multi-use gymnasium, a cafeteria, teen center and classroom space.

Just as exciting, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County will launch the Great Futures Charter High School for the Health Sciences in collaboration with the Jersey City Medical Center in September 2014 with a freshmen class of 125 youth. The school's vision is that the program will provide students a foundation for post-secondary education or workforce readiness in certified health related professions. Students will explore core content with technology through integrated

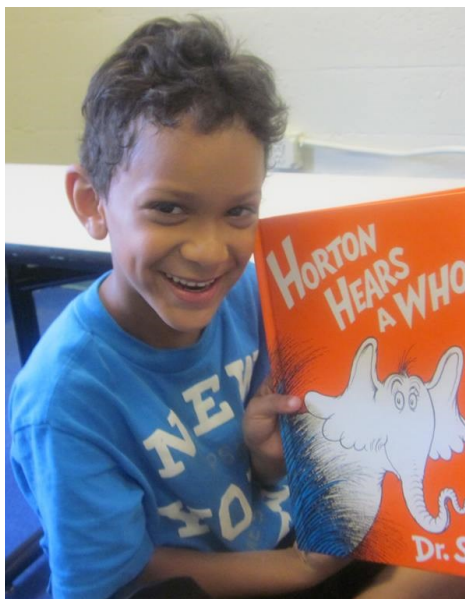
projects, case studies, online learning and focused learning experiences. Through the transformation of the students, the school will change health care in the Jersey City community.

Students enrolled in Great Futures Charter High School for the Health Sciences' four-year program will experience college preparation combined with career/workplace preparation. Youth will select a Health Sciences Career Pathway – Clinical, Technical or Administrative. They will have opportunities for hands-on career exploration from 9th grade forward culminating with



internships in their senior year.

Historically, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County has been on the cutting edge of meeting the needs of the community's youth. The Great Futures Charter High School is creating one of the most innovative programs for youth in the nation. From opportunities to receive college credit for high school coursework to taking classes on the Jersey City Medical Center campus to receiving Patient Care Technician (PCT) or EMT certificates, the Great Futures Charter High School for the Health Sciences will be meeting the needs of Jersey City youth in unique and academically challenging ways.



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF OUR YOUTH

Bank of America has continued to provide a \$135,000 grant to the BGCNJ to implement the Career Launch Program at Clubs in Atlantic City, Camden, Jersey City, Newark, Paterson and Vineland. The Career Launch program prepares young people to enter the work force, advance from “job” to “career” and become self-sufficient adults. The program works with each youth to identify the career that best fits the members’ skills and interests. Career Launch includes an interactive website, classroom instruction, guest presentations from professional in various fields of study, job search assistance, on the job training and internship opportunities. In addition to the direct support, Clubs will also host representatives of Bank of America for workshops focused on providing career advice and financial management training to their youth.

Bank of America



Bank of America also selected BGCNJ to serve as the host organization for their Student Leaders Program which is an integral piece of their Neighborhood Excellence Initiative, and stems from their commitment to support community leaders of today and tomorrow. The foundation firmly believes that investing in and cultivating future leaders is crucial to supporting and sustaining the growth of vibrant neighborhoods.

“Our student leaders will earn more than a paycheck this summer,” said Bob Doherty, NJ President Bank of America. “They’ll gain valuable real world experience, while helping one of our strongest nonprofit partners address critical community needs.”

The four winners were partnered with local Clubs in Clifton, Newark, Jersey City and Vineland where they



Susan Hall & Bob Doherty

were exposed to all facets of Club Life.

In addition to their work at the club each leader attended a week-long Student Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. During the Summit, they were exposed to all aspects of civic, social and business leadership. The goal was to provide the students with the tools and skills they will use throughout their life to create positive community change. Student Leader, Mara Kettle stated, “I’m more than grateful for this opportunity. I believe the summit, and the internship here at the Boys and Girls Club of Clifton, have made me more confident, independent, and willing to think outside the box.”

TEENS MENTOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS



Youth in Wayne participate in individual reading sessions.

From January to June 2013, State Farm provided continued support of the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Program which places youth mentors ages 14-18 with youth mentees ages 6-10 for weekly reading sessions in Camden, Clifton, Garfield, Newark, Paterson, Lodi and Wayne. Through the program, 73% of mentees showed improvement in their reading skills based on the Houghton Mifflin Reading assessment.

BGCNJ CELEBRATES YOUTH LEADERS (continued)



Selena Buchanan, NJ 2013 Military Youth of the Year & Deputy Commissioner of Veteran's Affairs, Raymond L. Zawacki

Ijataque graduated from Red Bank Catholic High School where she was President of the Multicultural Club, a member of the Life Club and Minority Leadership Society. She raised money for the Haitian earthquake victims, the homeless, cancer victims and social justice programs. Ijataque volunteered at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, was an Intern at the Jersey Shore University Medical Center Pediatric Ward, and a Club Lifeguard. In September she began her freshman year at Georgian College. She plans to pursue a career in nursing.

Selena, the 2013 NJ Military Youth of the Year, is a senior at Northern

Burlington Regional High School where she has been on the Principal's Honor Roll every year, and participates in softball and cheerleading. Selena volunteers with Save Africa's children, Run for Cancer, 5k Walk for HIV/AIDS, Special Olympics and is the Keystone Club President. She plans to pursue a career in mechanical engineering.

Ijataque and Selena were each presented with \$20,000 scholarships. The runner ups each received \$5,000 in scholarship funds. The runner ups were Joshua Bishop-Mbachu from Boys & Girls Club of Perth Amboy; Alvin McRae, Jr. from Boys & Girls Club of Trenton & Mercer County; Nicole Verduin from Boys & Girls Clubs of Lodi/Hackensack. The military runner up was Kailee Walsh, from McGuire Youth Programs. The remaining 14 candidates were each awarded a \$1,500 scholarship.



CLUB NOTABLES

Ironbound



Program Director Zelia "Zee" Oliveira was selected among 34 other leaders in the nation as a Maytag Dependable Leader. Zee was awarded a \$20,000 grant to put towards the programming of her choice at the club. The award celebrated her dedication to the members, staff & families of Newark Ironbound community.

Lodi/Hackensack

Club Executive, Mike Nardino was honored at the Northeast Regional Conference as the Regional Executive of the Year for his leadership at the Lodi Club and ongoing commitment to the Boys & Girls Club movement.

Mercer County

Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation provided the Trenton Club with a \$28,000 grant and the hard work of 13 volunteers from the Lowe's store in Hamilton, to replace their gym floor. During the month of August, Lowe's "Heroes" volunteered their time and labor, along with nine teen Keystone Club members, to demolish the old gym floor and repaint the gym walls.

Newark

On September 25th, the Club opened the BGCN's Children's Dental Clinic, a free pediatric dental clinic housed in the Central Ward Clubhouse which will provide dental services to Club members.

Paterson

Gio Restrepo received the Herman Prescott Award for His belief in the principles of diversity, equality and empowerment in his work with youth at the Paterson Boys & Girls Club.

Union



Launched a new golf program at their Union Clubhouse where professional golfers organized through the New Jersey Golf Foundation, the charitable arm of the state PGA, teach lessons to students in third grade through fifth grade broadening the reach of the game.

Vineland

Cumberland County awarded two grants to the Club. A \$30,000 grant for Project Learn programming and and a \$32,000 grant for job readiness grant titled P.R.I.M.E (Prepare Restore Inspire Maintain Engage) to work with 10 high seniors to make sure they graduate from high school and obtain employment.



NJ CONNECTION

Published by the
Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey
822 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07013
973-773-0966 ext. 151

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shall@bgcnj.org

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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS IN NEW JERSEY

822 Clifton Avenue
Clifton, New Jersey 07013

GREAT FUTURES START [HERE](#).

AMERICORPS MEMBERS LEAD YOUTH IN SERVICE PROJECTS

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey's Youth Engaged in Service (YES) AmeriCorps members serve at Clubs across the state by creating service learning groups. Members lead youth in service projects that address local community needs such as food drives, park clean-ups, tree plantings and recycling projects. Over the course of the year, members engaged over 480 youth in service projects.



AmeriCorps member ,Kimberly Jordon works with youth at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County



AmeriCorps Member, Rebecca Horowitz, serving at the Boys & Girls Club of Clifton launched a "Saving Clifton, NJ One Bottle At A Time" campaign with her YES Club.