

## NJ YOUTH OF THE YEAR SHARES UNIQUE MILITARY CLUB LIFE



*Jack R., 2015 NJ Military Youth of the Year with Jennifer N., 2015 NJ Youth of the Year at the National Youth Ambassadors Training.*

April is the Month of the Military Child. This awareness month was established to acknowledge the significant role military youth play in our communities. Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is proud to have Clubs on all five NJ military bases providing support, mentoring and life changing programming to NJ military youth. To celebrate and honor our military youth, we would like to share some words from our 2015 NJ Military Youth of the Year highlighting their strength and resiliency.

My name is Jack and I am the 2015 New Jersey Military Youth of the Year. I am very thankful for this opportunity to share some of the unique aspects of being a military child and how the Clubs help us.

We military children face struggles that are different from your average kid. Sometimes, one or both of our parents are deployed overseas. When my best friend, whose dad just came back from a year-long deployment in Afghanistan was stressed out from having his dad so far away, he could come to the Teen Center on Picatinny Arsenal. There he would be able to talk to me or his other friends about it. Sometimes we can't let off steam at home in front of our families because our moms are tired from taking care of everything themselves, and they've either got their hands full or they're just tired of crying about it. But

we can go to the Teen Center, and find a friend who knows just what we're going through because he/she has been through it too. He knows the hurt in your heart when your parent is gone for a year at a time. He knows how to hear you out. In the end, he can distract you from hurt, so you can have a little fun despite the pain, and hopefully, before you know it, the deployment is over and your parent is back home. Sometimes though, the deployment doesn't end well. The parent may come home with PTSD, a traumatic brain injury, an amputated leg or God forbid, doesn't come home at all. Military children are usually living far away from the extended family of cousins and grandparents that civilian children can rely on during difficult times, so the friends we make through the military become our extended families. We have to find friends right away as soon as we move to a new place because we might be gone in just a year and who knows what might happen to you in that year? It's through places like the Club Teen Centers on military installations that those kids can find comfort and support when their parents are suffering. There's also a counselor there that is close enough to your age to understand your hurt and to listen.

The friends I've made at the Teen Center have helped me through difficult times in my life these past two years. We've been able to volunteer together at many fun events on post and to give back to our community. We've played sports and games outside, learned to live a healthy lifestyle, and the staff have encouraged us to stay away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. We've worked on our homework, gotten tutoring help, and assisted other youth with their studies so that we can all be better students. We've developed socially and emotionally, by forging fast friendships that we hope will last a lifetime.

**MONTH OF THE  
MILITARY  
CHILD**

## INVEST IN NJ YOUTH THROUGH YOUR NJ TAX RETURN



Every day, thousands of youth head to NJ Clubs afterschool where they develop positive relationships, build new skills and learn how to be the leaders of tomorrow. Your support can make a difference for NJ kids. Please consider making a donation to support Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey --- through New Jersey's Income Tax Check-Off Option. Your contributions through the Income Tax Check-Off option will help fund critical youth development programs for kids who need them the most. Here's how:

- If you file your own taxes, you will find the option to donate on line 64 – #12 Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey Fund – on the NJ 1040 income tax form. Just indicate the amount you'd like to donate in the space provided.
- If you have someone who prepares your taxes for you, share this information with him/her.

Your contribution is anonymous and will be directed to our organization by the NJ State Department of the Treasury. Easy, simple and a valuable investment!

### A MESSAGE FROM 2015 NJ YOUTH OF THE YEAR

Exciting, motivating, and empowering are the words that come to mind when I think about my 2015 New Jersey Youth of the Year experience. After the glorious Youth of the Year event at Stockton University, my mission to properly represent all of the Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey began with gusto. I hold the title of 2015 NJ Youth of the Year with much honor and pride. From coming to my Club and helping out with their daily operations, to mentoring teenagers about success, the journey has been very rewarding. In addition, I've been able to help out with some major and important community service projects including the collection of hygiene items for the local Women's Shelter, as well as presenting a speech for the Keystone Club about Gun Safety and Violence Awareness. My ultimate goal for the gun safety initiative is to declare June as Gun Safety and Violence Awareness Month throughout the State.

My experience thus far has been quite memorable. In September, I began my college career. I've also continued to be part of the Boys & Girls Club of Vineland. As a counselor there, I continue to run the SMART Moves program, host the Vineland Club's "Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration" and help coordinate the upcoming "Black History Month" event. I also had the opportunity to be the President of the Cumberland County College Latin American Club. I have been able to promote diversity and unity through the club meetings. Furthermore, I've been blessed to attend various leadership conferences and workshops that have been life changing. My mission is to host a "United We Stand Day" where all the Boys & Girls Clubs of New Jersey can get together and celebrate our diverse cultures. My experience as NJ Youth of the Year has been phenomenal, and I look forward to more memorable events, and teaching other young people that, when you follow your dreams anything can happen!



*Jennifer N., 2015 NJ Youth of the Year  
with Meteorologist, Amy Freeze.*

## PARTNERSHIP PROFILE: WELLS FARGO



Wells Fargo has been a long-standing supporter of the Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey. Over the course of the last five years, Wells Fargo has invested more than \$400,000 to BGCNJ through foundation grants, and sponsorships of our annual fundraising events - Youth of the Year recognition program and Concert for Kids.



*Wells Fargo's Robert "Toby" Babeuf presenting the Boys & Girls Clubs in NJ with a grant check for the Career Launch Program at the Newark Club.*

The Boys & Girls Club in New Jersey was recently awarded a \$60,000 grant from the Wells Fargo

*Back row, left to right: Cynthia Banks, Paul Sciré, Ameer Washington, Kavita Mehra.  
Front row, left to right: Iyonna Ponce, Susan Haspel, Al-Tariq Morris, Majeed Carter, Robert Babeuf, Tierra Richardson, Zyeer Jones*

Foundation to support the Career Launch program at Boys & Girls Clubs in Clifton, Jersey City, Hoboken, Newark, Paterson, Elizabeth, Plainfield, Garfield, Hawthorne and Lodi. The Career Launch program prepares young people, ages 13 – 18, 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 professionals in various fields of study, job search assistance, on the job training and internship opportunities.

Wells Fargo's Northern New Jersey Commercial Regional Vice President, Toby Babeuf, has served on BGCNJ's Corporate Advisory Board for the past several years, and graciously allows BGCNJ to host our advisory board meetings at their offices in Summit. Last December, Toby presented a grant check to BGCNJ and the local leadership team as well as Club youth, at the Boys & Girls Club of Newark's Avon Avenue location. "We're proud to support BGCNJ and its mission to build and strengthen families in our great state," said Babeuf. "The organization provides a safe and nurturing place for children to play, learn, and develop into future leaders and responsible citizens."

Wells Fargo is a nationwide, diversified, community-based financial services company with \$1.8 trillion in assets. Founded in 1852 and headquartered in San Francisco, Wells Fargo provides banking, insurance, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance through 8,700 locations, approximately 13,000 ATMs, the internet (wellsfargo.com) and mobile banking, and has offices in 36 countries to support customers who conduct business in the global economy. With approximately 265,000 team members, Wells Fargo serves one in three households in the United States. Wells Fargo & Company was ranked No. 30 on Fortune's 2015 rankings of America's largest corporations. In 2014, Wells Fargo donated \$281.2 million in grants to 17,100 nonprofits, and team members volunteered 1.74 million hours around the country. Wells Fargo's vision is to satisfy our customers' financial needs and help them succeed financially.

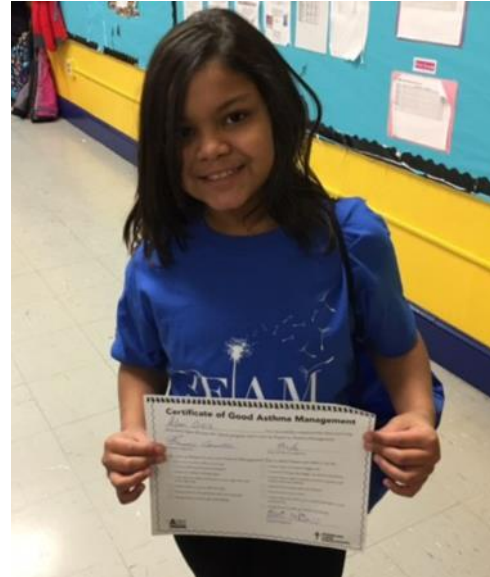


## CLUB MEMBERS BREATHE EASIER

In September 2015, Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey, with the support of The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, has expanded the Breathe Easier with Asthma Management (BEAM) program and has launched BEAM Phase II. BGCNJ has engaged 16 Clubs and over 40 sites to serve 2,500 youth in the BEAM program. BEAM will serve youth ages 5-18 years of age to provide both asthma management programming to those youth identified with asthma and asthma awareness to those youth who have not been diagnosed with asthma. For youth diagnosed with asthma, Clubs will utilize the evidence based, Open Airways for Schools Curriculum, developed by the American Lung Association. BGCNJ has worked in tandem with the American Lung Association in New Jersey to enhance and develop the Asthma Awareness Curriculum as an age-appropriate, interactive and engaging awareness curriculum for youth who have not been diagnosed with asthma.



*Youth at Boys & Girls Clubs in Northwest NJ participate in a BEAM class using straws to simulate the feeling of breathing during an asthma attack.*



*BEAM graduation ceremony at Boys & Girls Clubs in Northwest NJ.*

## BEAM LOCAL CLUB HIGHLIGHT: ASTHMA SCREENINGS

To kick off the BEAM program at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County, representatives of the Jersey City Medical Center/Barnabas Health provided on-site asthma assessments for Club members on January 14th. 180 youth in Jersey City and Hoboken will participate in the BEAM program during 2016.

Gary Greenberg, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Hudson County, said, "We are so grateful for the support from The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, the Jersey City Medical Center/Barnabas Health and Boys & Girls Clubs in Jersey City. Asthma is still underdiagnosed in our community and is a very manageable disease. The health and welfare of our youth is paramount and BEAM is a great program to assist young people and their families with asthma management."



## CLUB PROFILE: BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF MERCER COUNTY

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County has been serving Mercer County youth since 1937. Today the organization provides key programs to 2,600 youth each year out of seven program locations in Mercer County. This past fall, the Club opened a 35,000 square foot community center in Lawrence Township with the goal of doubling the number of youth served by 2020. Before opening the new facility the organization served 1,000 youth per day during the school year, and 550 per day during the summer.



*Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County teens at the Club's Teen Gala.*

The new community center is located on the borders of Ewing, Lawrence & Trenton townships. Center programming for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> graders focuses on serving Ewing and Lawrence youth. Free transportation is provided from Ewing & Lawrence elementary schools for those students registered in the after school program.

Teen programming is more regional, like a community college for high school students. The Club provides free bus transportation at school dismissal from the three town's high schools, along with a courtesy shuttle to/from the Club until 8pm into Trenton & Ewing townships for teens. High school programming runs from 3pm to 8pm Monday through Friday with a mixture of social, recreational, educational and career focused programming. Teens attending must take a mixture of mission driven and social programs. This helps ensure the Club obtains their key outcome goal of placing alumni into post-secondary career pathways. The Club has three social entrepreneurial businesses for teens that include a Barber Shop, Bike Exchange and Computer Exchange. The facility also has a College & Career Center to support this outcome.



*Front entrance and College & Career Center at new Lawrence Township facility.*

To expand program offerings, the Club has partnered with a number of community organizations. For example Rutgers 4H of Mercer County, National Junior Tennis and Learning of Trenton, and Bucks County Fencing Academy. A number of other partners enable the Club to offer high level courses in Art, Dance, Gymnastics, TV Production, Karate, robotics, Zumba, and Yoga, among others.

Moving the organizations high school programming to the new community center, allowed the Centre Street facility to expand middle school programming after 6pm. By offering similar programming like as are offered for teens, the Club is able to engage this critical population, and provide a transition for elementary youth into the Club's teen programs. Transportation is provided from local middle schools to the Centre Street facility at 6pm. The Trenton Club also offers after school programs in five elementary schools, and provides busing from the other elementary schools to the Centre Street facility. This strategy enables the organization to enroll 800 students in structured after school programming across 6 sites in Trenton.



## CLUB NOTABLES

### Clifton

BGCC was presented with a \$70,000 check from Taco Bell in support of the Graduate for Mas—BGCC Club teen program. 250 after school program and teens were present.

### Garfield

Party City funded a gym renovation with new floors & newly painted walls.

### Perth Amboy



In February, 60 volunteers from Ethicon, part of the Johnson & Johnson family companies, helped Club youth build tower gardens, a unique vertical garden system that makes it easy to grow produce indoors. Ethicon donated 14 towers for Club youth to grow nutritious vegetables and fruits right at the Club.

### Union



15 Club teens participated in Elaine's Art Club, a 6-week pilot program provided youth with instruction from professional artists in charcoal and chalk pastels. Gallery U in Westfield featured all the artwork of Club youth in a weekend exhibition.

### Vineland

Partnering with "Art Everywhere", a public art project including a colorful mural to be wrapped around the Club building which is currently being renovated to be a new teen center. Club kids are learning about public art and its importance to communities. The project is funded through the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission/NJ State Council on the Arts.

## NJ CONNECTION

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**New Jersey  
YOUTH of the YEAR  
gala  
06.08.16**

Join us to recognize 21 of the most extraordinary  
Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey members and announce the  
2016 New Jersey Youth of the Year

*wednesday* June 8, 2016  
5:30PM Reception & 7:00PM Awards

**STOCKTON  
UNIVERSITY**

**Stockton University Campus Center**  
101 Vera King Farris Drive, Galloway, NJ 08205  
Parking Lot 3

*rsp by:* May 1, 2016

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