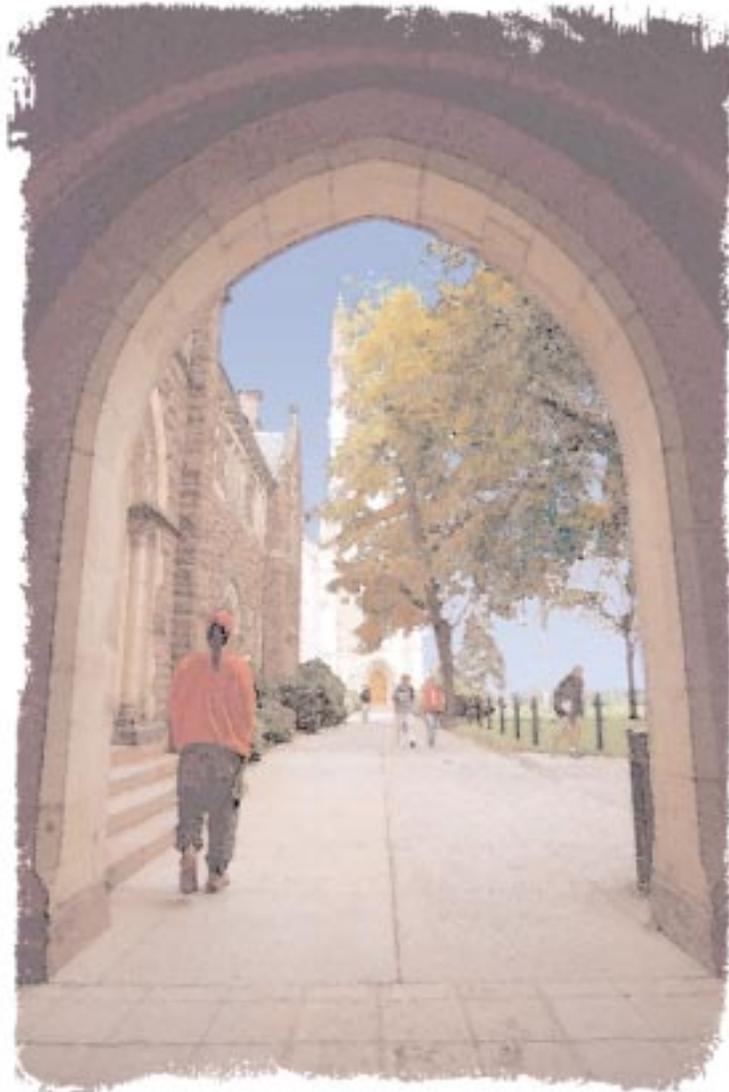


CLUBS GO TO COLLEGE



HOW 10 BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS MADE THE GRADE



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA

Spring 2001



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Opinions expressed by contributing authors do not necessarily reflect policies of Boys & Girls Clubs of America.



Making the Grade

Welcome to the premier issue of *Clubs go to College*. This magazine is published by Boys & Girls Clubs of America for Boys & Girls Club professionals already partnering with colleges, just embarking on a new relationship, and those Clubs just beginning to envision a plan.

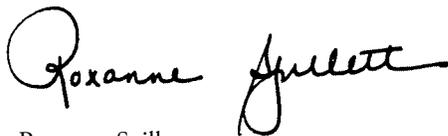
In expanding the scope of services to youth, Boys & Girls Clubs are reaching out in a variety of new directions. Collaborations with institutions of higher learning are one important way our Movement is achieving the basic goals of its strategic plan, which emphasizes planned growth, enhanced programs and increased Club capacity.

Often located in the nation's most distressed neighborhoods, as are some of our nation's college and university communities, Boys & Girls Clubs offer children and teenagers safe havens where they can explore their potential and enhance their futures. Through creative and constructive programming, Club professionals strive to develop the complete person by offering young people the leadership and guidance often lacking in their lives.

By collaborating with colleges and universities, new Clubs can be developed and existing Clubs can be strengthened. A pipeline of student volunteers can be established with a focus on community service, program development and enhancement. College and university communities are also tremendous resources for board development and financial support.

Clubs Go to College tells the stories of 10 different Clubs and how they began their partnerships with local colleges and universities. You'll read about Boys & Girls Clubs both off-campus and on-campus, how others are working with volunteers and how still other Clubs develop relationships with key college officials. Funding streams are discussed, key players identified and step-by-step plans shared.

We hope you will be inspired by their stories, and that they will help you foster your own relationships with institutions of higher learning. The results can be generation changing and profound.



Roxanne Spillet
President



Roxanne Spillet
President
Boys & Girls Clubs of
America



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Gearing UP for College

Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo has helped troubled youth for 75 years. Established in 1926 by the Rotary Club of Buffalo, our organization was charged with creating a youth agency that provides after-school programs and guidance as an alternative to juvenile delinquency. Three-quarters of a century later, we have six inner-city locations and three satellite sites located in the Buffalo suburbs serving a total of 3,200 youth, as well as a budget totaling \$1.5 million.

The One-College Relationship

The following describes our Club's progress in nurturing a three-year relationship with one local college. We hope the information helps you in growing your own partnerships with local institutions of higher learning.

Year One – 1998 Progress

Almost three years ago we initiated what became an excellent relationship with one of our local colleges – the University of Buffalo (UB). It has grown from a small partnership to a huge collaborative effort involving many campus departments.

In 1998, Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo and the UB Athletic team formed an alliance by having the athletic teams “adopt” Clubhouses. It was agreed that team members (varying from the football to the crew team) would come by and assist in tutoring, mentoring and program activity while visiting the Club on a weekly basis. The athletic teams also agreed to coach some Club teams and provide clinics for members in certain sports.

Year Two – 1999 Continues the Growth

In 1999 this relationship grew to include college interns at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo. Internships provided students with the learning experience of a lifetime while volunteering in a Club, and earned them credit hours toward a

degree. This same year we developed a relationship with UB's Business Office. This provides our Club with discounted staff training in computer use and personnel management.

1999 was also the kick-off year for our first Shadow Day. This allows Club members to attend a day of college with an assigned UB student. The day includes:

- attending classes
- lunch in the campus cafeteria
- engaging in conversation with UB professors
- visiting the dorms
- attending a team practice

Members also attend every UB football game and go “trick or treating” in the dormitories.

Year Three – The Best Ever

In 2000 we nurtured a relationship with the UB School of Social Work that has been instrumental in involving us with the Buffalo public school system. Through UB we have been invited to deliver Boys & Girls Club programming in the schools. Currently, the we are funded to deliver the Street SMARTS program in Buffalo public schools.

This past spring, two Club staff members went into Lincoln Academy and Buffalo Alternative to deliver the Street SMARTS conflict resolution session. This involved a combined budget of \$8,391. Currently, we are working to provide Street SMARTS in four additional schools.

Also in conjunction with the School of Social Work, we seek to have Boys & Girls Clubs serve



*Diane Rowe,
Executive Director*

*Boys & Girls Clubs of
Buffalo*

as training centers for UB Social Work interns. Another great connection has resulted in UB's computer department staff providing consultation in the development of Club learning centers.

Who's Who

The key players from the Boys & Girls Club include the:

- Chief Professional Officer
- Athletic Director
- Education & Career Coordinator
- Volunteer/Intern Coordinator

The University of Buffalo's key players in the relationship include the:

- Dean of the School of Social Work
- Head of the Computer Department
- Head of the Business Department
- Head of the Athletic Teams

One of the most important things to understand when working with a local college is that its individual departments do not necessarily communicate with each other. You need to approach departments individually, finding key contacts within each. We have found it most helpful to meet and share ideas with various college departments on how to collaborate, thus providing a comprehensive experience for Club members.

Best practices involved in this effort have included working with the school principal, school social worker, and our UB project liaison. Meeting topics included definition of roles, learning school rules, and open communication concerning expectations.

Overall, our relationship with the University of Buffalo has offered additional resources for our children, allowed us to expand programming, created a supply of future youth development professionals, and allowed us to have expert training and advice in helping us operate on a daily basis.

Gear UP – A Collaborative Approach

Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo has also joined in a collaboration involving seven local colleges, three youth-serving organizations, two school districts, and one health care provider. The combined effort, entitled **Gear UP**, provides a four-track series of services:

1. *Teacher Training* – provided for Buffalo and Lackawanna School Districts to keep teacher training current and reflect work with different student styles. Buffalo State College and D'Youville College provide training.
2. *Academic Achievement* – academic programs and mentors are assigned to assist both local schools and community youth-serving programs with tutoring. The mentors are college students from D'Youville, Buffalo State, and Canisius

College. A particular program, Project Flight, offers specialized reading programs at two Buffalo schools. Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo offers extension site services by providing a Club in the Lackawanna Middle School.

3. *College and Career Awareness* – Buffalo State College provides career fairs and mentoring to all organizations involved in the project. Job shadowing is provided by another youth-serving organization. Medaille College offers parents a workshop on applying for their children's college admission, tuition, etc. All seven colleges provide tours for Club members.
4. *Culture for Success* – Canisius College and our local Junior Achievement program provide student workshops. Another organization involved in the collaborative provides parenting workshops. Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo provides after-school programming in a local suburb and offers extended free memberships to all inner-city Clubs.

The **Gear UP** project has been designed to track 900 sixth and seventh graders during the next five years to see if the collaboration effort and programming has a positive impact on:

- grades
- views/opinions of college
- school attendance
- dropout rates
- passing New York State Regents exams
- improving the ability of youth to attain a postsecondary degree.

Representatives from each member organization are represented on the **Gear UP** committee. Collectively, this group oversees the project coordinator whose charge it is to report on the efforts of each partner's work and report on the overall progress of the track series. D'Youville College is fiscal agent for the entire partnership.

A total of \$97,395 is provided to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo. These funds have made it possible for our organization to fund a Club satellite in a local middle school (City of Lackawanna) that provides after-school programming from 3:00 to 6:30 p.m. for grades 6-8. Boys & Girls Club programming is offered in all of our five core program areas to provide middle school youth with a true Club experience. These same funds also provided us with funding to operate the Lackawanna Club from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, during the summer of 2000. Currently we serve some 70 youth in five classrooms, with daily use of the gym.

In addition to offering our services in the Lackawanna School District, we have recruited youth from three Buffalo public schools to participate in programming offered at our six inner-city locations. Due to the success we had in Lackawanna

Middle School last spring and summer, we are now talking with the elementary school principal to see if we can provide Club programming to fourth and fifth grade students.

The youth we work with are being tracked for:

- academic performance
- career and college readiness
- overall improvement in the Club's five core areas.

College mentors and tutors provide on-site assistance to our staff, not only in the areas of education, but also with Boys & Girls Club programming. In preparing youth for college, these new members and our "regular" members have an opportunity to attend interactive career and college fairs.

The greatest challenge we faced as an organization was in dealing with a partnership of such great size. In the beginning, roles were not clearly defined. Committee members had different expectations. Through monthly meetings and work on clarifying each of our roles, however, the coalition has been able to provide consistent, quality services throughout the past seven months. We have even hired a coordinator who specifically oversees our part of the **Gear UP** initiative. The coordinator compiles reports and oversees staffing and programming at the Lackawanna Middle School site.

Working with local colleges, public schools and other community agencies has helped our Boys & Girls Club to expand services, recruit new members and expose all our members to college-related activities. At the same time, the experience has prepared college-age youth for a successful college career.

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Key Players:

A Must for Successful Collaboration

With an operating budget of \$5.1 million, the Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley operates nine branches and its own charter school. The organization was founded in 1963 after a group of concerned citizens recognized that local boys needed a place to go. In 1980, the Boys Club and the Girls Club in Tempe merged to form one organization.

Five years later, property was donated in Chandler, Ariz., to open a new Club. It was then that the Chandler and Tempe Clubs merged under a new corporate name – Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley. The Club has grown from serving 400 youth in Tempe to its current membership of more than 11,000 members in the Arizona communities of Apache Junction, Chandler, Gilbert, Guadalupe, Mesa, Tempe, Williams Campus and the Gila River Indian Community.

As a strong organization, we have had many opportunities to enhance the quality of life for youth in surrounding communities. An excellent example is the partnership with Arizona State University (ASU), where a Club was established in October 1999 on the ASU East Campus.

The Williams Campus Branch is located on what was once Williams Air Force Base, and was renovated from a former teen center. The story of this site's development began with the need to reach our youth.

How it all Began

As Ellen Welty, ASU East reference instruction librarian, watched elementary and middle school youth frequent her place of work, she began to wonder: "Who are these children? Why do they use this library?"

She soon realized that the area offered few places for youth to go after school. This need inspired

Welty to form a group, made up of ASU East personnel, called "After School Buddies." The group began to examine the situation and brainstorm solutions addressing the lack of after school programs. One idea was to approach the Boys & Girls Clubs of the East Valley. Our organization received the call that planted the seed. We embarked on a rewarding journey: one that would offer youth development opportunities to boys and girls in the Williams Campus community.



*Ramon Elias,
President/CEO*

*Boys & Girls Club of the
East Valley*

Cultivating Partnerships

The Williams Campus Branch helps further ASU East's educational mission, while allowing our Club to serve youth and teens in need of after-school and weekend programs. The partnership with ASU was designed to develop and maintain high-quality youth development services and programs for children of residents, students, faculty and staff from ASU East, as well as other members of the broader Williams Campus community.

There were many key players in the partnership to bring the Williams Campus Branch to families in the community:

- ASU East
- Maricopa County Regional School District
- Williams Gateway Airport
- Bureau of Juvenile Justice
- Gila River Indian Community
- Chandler Gilbert Community College
- The House of Refuge East (a non-profit)

organization providing housing and educational opportunities to clients)

- Intel
- Boeing
- Post Cereals
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- Motorola

All were instrumental in bringing Boys & Girls Club services to the area. In serving as an efficient and dependable partner, our organization was able to utilize many community resources to make this exciting opportunity happen.

The foundation of these partnerships was built through the emergence of a strong auxiliary board. Dennis Marcello, a member of B&GCA Pacific regional staff, served as the national organization's liaison to the After School Buddies group. His role was to educate the board on the necessary steps to begin a new Club, and he provided workshops on board and resource development. Dedicated group members eventually took on the role of auxiliary board leaders in support of the project. Their first move was to locate an on-campus site that could serve the needs of youth. The group agreed that the former teen center on Williams AFB would meet Club requirements. However, the facility chosen for the project was in major need of rehabilitation and refurbishment. With no funding yet in hand, a decision was made to approach one of our most valued contributors.

A Day of Caring

Intel Corporation, with engineering and technology expertise as well as a commitment to bettering local communities, has been an invaluable resource for our Boys & Girls Club. The people at Intel eagerly agreed to take an active role in the rehabilitation project. All renovations to the site were done by hundreds of Intel employees who volunteered to take time off work and participate in United Way's "Day of Caring."

Under the direction of a project coordinator the volunteers painted, landscaped, installed plumbing, wired electrical components, installed a fire alarm and flooring, and brought the building up to standards. Through an agreement with ASU East, the monetary value of these renovations will cover rent on the building for the next five years. Without the generous help of Intel and its employees, this project might not have been affordable.

Multi-Funding

The Williams Campus Branch was funded by many sources. More than \$122,000 was received by our organization for the new site. This included:

- \$50,000 from Post Cereals
- \$25,000 from Intel Corporation

- \$25,000 from Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- \$17,000 from United Way for outreach programs
- \$5,000 from Boeing for implementation of the SMART Moves program.

Establishing the Need, Providing Solutions

The Williams Campus Branch houses core programs that directly focus on the needs of area children. In a survey conducted among Williams Campus families, the Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley found that there are more than 500 children ages 6-18 living on campus or nearby, with no after school programs available.

ASU East has many families living on campus, and the House of Refuge East owns 88 homes on ASU East property. Many of these clients have children, with little stability in their lives and in serious need of Club services. East Valley School (K-12), located on campus, has more than 100 students who are considered homeless. The families of these students live out of their vehicles or camp in the desert. Youth and teens among them lack the self-esteem and guidance required for academic success. The need for an emphasis on education is great.

B&GCA's national program, POWER HOUR, has been the focus of programming at the Williams Campus Branch. Children receive homework help from Club staff and trained volunteers. The unique aspect of the Williams Campus Branch POWER HOUR is that every member participates daily from 3 to 4 p.m. Local teachers have bought into the program and often provide individualized homework packets for students.

Our Power UP computer lab will also have an impact at the Williams Campus Branch. The Power UP program is a collaboration funded by the federal government, AOL, and many other partners, in which our Club will receive 10-15 computers, software, Internet access and staff who will teach computer technology to members. Our computer labs are valuable at all of our locations, but the Williams Campus Branch has special significance, since most members have no access to computers in school or at home.

Other activities offered by the Williams Campus Branch include:

- sports
- gamesroom
- cultural enrichment
- teen programs
- peer leadership
- career preparation

Residents in this isolated area, where the nearest bus stop is four miles away, welcome these programs with great enthusiasm. Before there was nothing for local youth to do after school. Now, as part of the Boys & Girls Club of the East

Valley, the Williams Campus Branch is embraced as it opens up opportunities for struggling families and their children.

Facility Design and Staffing

The 5,500-sq. ft. facility includes:

- a full-size kitchen
- teen area
- computer area
- gamesroom
- homework lab
- large multi-purpose area
- outside court

Current Club personnel include a full-time site director, four part-time program directors and more than 100 trained volunteers conducting programs and services.

There has been an outpouring of community volunteer help for the Williams Campus Branch. Chandler Gilbert Community College offers a course, “Creating Community through Global Outreach,” in which students must earn credit by volunteering. Community college volunteers visit the Club on a daily basis and conduct activities with members. These students come prepared with a planned curriculum for the day, and offer fun and learning activities for youth that include art, sports, educational projects, dance classes, festivals and much more. Many clients from the House of Refuge East have also offered their time and talent to help with programming.

The Kick-Off Event

The branch’s kick-off event was particularly meaningful as the host, Post Cereals, is a major contributor to our Williams Campus facility. Through an association with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Post Cereals is committing \$3 million over the next three years to found 30 Clubs nationwide. The Williams Campus Branch was selected as one of these locations and Post Cereals hosted a founding ceremony there on October 9, 2000.

The event was centered on Post’s commitment to the betterment of youth in the community. A giant pyramid of Post Cereal boxes was displayed and tables were set up with fun activities for the Boys & Girls Club children attending the event. The most noteworthy youth activity was creation of a beautiful mosaic representing the vision, hopes and effort that went into establishing the Club. The mosaic is made of individual tiles and each child was given a tile in advance to decorate and color in their own way. During the ceremony the children assembled the mosaic, one tile at a time. This moving activity symbolized the intricate part each child plays in our effort to build brighter futures.

The Post Cereals founding ceremony had great attendance and

received generous media coverage. Three news networks, the Hispanic media as well as several regional and local papers covered the event. Corporate and auxiliary board members, local dignitaries, parents, educators, ASU East and local government officials were all in attendance to celebrate the welcome addition to their community.

Prevention Programming

The foundation of Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley programming has been our strategy and approach to prevention. We have addressed the need for drug, gang and teen pregnancy prevention through our best practice programs. These programs utilize science-based research and evaluation to assess the overall need for different types of prevention.

Our most significant best practice involves SMART Moves, a program designed to confront alcohol and drug use, violence and teenage pregnancy in a uniquely positive way – with extraordinary results. SMART Moves is the centerpiece of a profound national offensive to reach thousands more at-risk youth. Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s national SMART Moves effort equips children with basic life skills, problem-solving and decision-making abilities, and communication skills, all designed to boost their self-confidence, self-esteem and sense of security.

The Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley utilizes community representatives, parents and teen leaders as an organized prevention team. This team, trained by B&GCA, conducts four components of SMART Moves. These components have helped members focus on self-awareness and good decision making, identifying and resisting peer pressure, stress reduction techniques, assertiveness and life training. Each component is addressed to a different age group, focusing on the specific needs of each.

This prevention program supports our mission at the Williams Campus Branch, empowering “at-risk” members to become tomorrow’s leaders and have a positive impact on their community. If we focus on the immediate needs of our new members, our future goals become evident. By implementing powerful programs such as POWER HOUR and SMART Moves, the Williams Campus Branch provides Club members with the tools to build a successful future.

“This is Awesome!”

There has been overwhelming support for the Club from the Williams Campus community, including local schools that want to use SMART Moves in their classrooms. With these partnerships in progress, we will continue to evaluate advancement with benchmarks set through our participation in B&GCA’s Commitment to Quality initiative. As our Boys

& Girls Club Branch grows, both the local on-campus church as well as the school district will make space in their facilities for Club outreach services.

No worthwhile project is achieved without overcoming obstacles. Finding the resources to renovate our existing building was a barrier overcome by utilizing contacts, developing strong partnerships and creating belief in our work throughout the community. Not only did local residents offer us this opportunity to help, they also assisted in choosing a site that would be suitable for Boys & Girls Club purposes. It was hard work getting the building up to standards, but what made it all worthwhile were the words of Billy, our very first Club member. “Wow,” he said, as he walked in. “This is *awesome!*”

Establishing an affiliation with a university will have long-lasting results in our mission to encourage higher education and increase our volunteer base. The Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley is fortunate to have this partnership with ASU East. The collaboration will allow our organization to offer services to many more community youth, while also providing them with positive role models. The mere presence of ASU East volunteers and staff encourages Club members to further their education and work hard to achieve.

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A Winning Streak

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas started as the “Boys Club” in the basement of the Silver Nugget Casino in 1961, with a membership of 50. Today, we serve more than 12,000 youngsters ages 6-18 in 12 facilities with a budget of over \$3.5 million.

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas is to inspire and empower all young people, with special concern for those from disadvantaged circumstances, to develop the skills, self-esteem and self-reliance necessary to become productive, responsible and caring citizens.

As a non-profit organization we depend on community support for our continued success. The cost to support programs and services offered by the Clubs exceeds \$3 million each year. A large portion of the funding required to offer our critical youth services comes from individuals and corporations in the Las Vegas community. Historically, this community has been extremely supportive, enabling us to greatly expand facilities and programs throughout our 39 years of service.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas is proud of the partnership we have formed with the Community College of Southern Nevada. We offer programs on two local college campuses, Cheyenne and West Charleston.

“Boys & Girls Clubs Go to College” is a youth development program, which was initiated on Community College of Southern Nevada campuses. The program allows community college students to attend night classes on the campuses, creating a safe and positive environment for their children.

The partnership was formed in 1995 when a Boys & Girls Club was opened on the Cheyenne campus. A program agreement was formulated

to establish a pilot, three-year partnership between Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas and Community College of Southern Nevada. The second Club was opened on the West Charleston campus in 1996.

Key players in forming the partnership were the president of the

Community College of Southern Nevada, the board of directors and executive director for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas.

Funding for the Clubs comes from community college contributions and the Student Government Association, as well as private funding. The overall budget to operate the two campus Clubs is \$90,860. The Community College of Southern Nevada contributes \$25,000, the Student Government Association contributes \$25,000 and the balance of the budget is made up of private funding.

West Charleston Unit

The West Charleston Campus unit is located on the CCSN West Charleston campus in building B. There are four rooms – a computer lab, library, gamesroom, and art/snack room. It does not have its own access. One must enter Building B and walk down the hallway to our door to enter the Boys & Girls Club. There are no classes nearby so we do not disturb anyone. This Club is run just like any other except it is free and only for CCSN students’ children ages 6-18 years. Parents must fill out the membership application, and then the child is given a membership card that he/she must bring to



*Deborah Verges,
Executive Director
Boys & Girls Clubs
of Las Vegas*

participate in all programs and activities. The hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., with two part-time professional staff (one is the site director) to create and implement programs and activities and supervise the members. As stated earlier, the West Charleston unit runs the same programs and activities in each of the five core program areas as the other Clubs do. Here are a few:

- KAPE (Kids Aware of Protecting the Environment)
- REACH (Reading Enhances a Child's Horizon)
- SMART Moves
- Field Trips
- Technology
- Kids in Control
- POWER HOUR
- Fine Arts
- Photography
- Gamesroom events
- Torch Club
- Keystone Club

Cheyenne Unit

The Cheyenne Campus unit is located on the CCSN Cheyenne campus in the gymnasium. There are four rooms – gym, the Learning Zone, art room and gamesroom. This unit is unique because the rooms are on different levels. The Learning Zone is located in the basement, the art room and gym are located on the main floor, and the gamesroom is located on the second floor. To prevent wandering and disturbances (adult classes are being held in the gym during Club hours), the members are in rotations. There are certain times for bathroom breaks in order to minimize wandering. We try to limit exposure between the members and students. This Club is also free to the students' children ages

6-18. Students/parents must show that they are enrolled at the college and fill out a membership application. At this Club, too, members must bring their card to participate. The hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Professional staff consist of two part-time employees and one full-time site director who create and implement the activities and programs. The Cheyenne Unit also runs programs and activities in each of the five core program areas.

Since the Cheyenne Unit was our first campus Club, for our kick-off event we had early registration in the CCSN Cheyenne Campus main lobby where students registered for classes. Many officials from CCSN and staff from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Las Vegas helped register and inform students about the Club. Then, a few weeks later, we had Siegfried & Roy come out and perform for the kids. We also had carnival

booths at the celebration. This was a wonderful recruitment tool and a great way to learn about the Club. There were refreshments, and once again, many officials from CCSN and Boys & Girls Club staff participated. The refreshments were donated by the student government and Siegfried & Roy donated their time. Students and their children enjoyed the events and are grateful to have the Club on campus.

For the West Charleston Unit, we were low-key. We had early registration, once again, with the Boys & Girls Club banner and refreshments, which were donated. Once classes started, staff went to classrooms to promote the Club.

Our best practices were to keep our mission in mind at all times and have a healthy, open communication line with the college. We followed the same policy and procedures as our other Clubs, but we also had to follow the policy and procedures of CCSN. We run programs and activities in all of our five core program areas. The students/parents were very relieved that they could leave their children in capable hands. They were also pleased that we made sure members did their homework. We were visible but yet had to be invisible at the college; students needed to know we were there providing different programs and activities, but we could not disrupt any classes held in our area. We had to make certain our members were not roaming the halls on the way to another room or bathroom. We would have rotations and bathroom breaks for the members to keep the flow of traffic down. If we needed anything or if there were any concerns or issues, we would meet with the designated college official. We would stop by or have monthly meetings with CCSN officials to keep informed about events and issues CCSN had, and keep them informed regarding our events and concerns. One event that the student government held for our members for the first three years was the Haunted House at Halloween. Our members loved it. And it was free! Also, upon request, we had access to the college planetarium, photography lab, fine arts room, technology center, and many more areas. This was great for our members.

Open Communication is Key

One important piece of advice for Clubs working with colleges: from the very beginning have clear and open communication. Also, there should be a written contract between both parties and guidelines for the Club and college. Issues about the division of responsibility and what can or cannot be done should be addressed.

There have not been any major challenges. We have always communicated. When a small issue crops up, we deal with it immediately. For example, when kids are wandering through the campus, we have a security check to see if they are members of the Club. If so, we deal with them and talk to the parents. If the situation continues, the campus dean talks to

the parents. If the children are not Club members and their parents do not go to college there, they are escorted off the premises. Although we would like to have them become members of our campus Clubs, they are only for the children of students. CCSN prefers it this way because of security reasons. We try to recommend one of our other facilities to those youngsters.

Our relationship with the Community College of Southern Nevada has been very rewarding. We have helped many college students with children. In addition, the partnership has allowed us to introduce Boys & Girls Club programs to more youth in our community, expanding our services and fulfilling our mission.

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Tale of Two Teens

A brief history of an educational collaboration in progress

As a staff member at a Boys & Girls Club, you may have heard the story before. It is almost universal. It happens all over the country. It goes like this.

“Tami was in the 10th grade. She didn’t think that she would go to college. No one in her family had ever gone. Several of her family members hadn’t even finished high school, much less get a college degree. So how could anyone expect her to go to college? She made decent grades in high school. She was smart enough. But she just wasn’t college material. At least not in the minds of most people. Tami might finish high school, but without some form of intervention she will go no further. Her education will come to an end.”

How often have Club staff members known young people like Tami? Most Club professionals can probably tell you about several Tamis they have known.

Now Michael’s story.

“Michael’s family was poor. They were constantly struggling to make ends meet. Most months were really tough. They were doing good just to survive. No one in Michael’s family was considered well educated.

“But Michael’s case was different. The staff at his Boys & Girls Club believed in him. At first he didn’t think that he could go to college. But the staff at the Club told him all about college. They visited campuses. They helped him get ready for life after high school. Michael went to college.”

Two contrasting stories – one about lost opportunities, the other about hope and a bright future.

In part to address problems like Tami’s, a new focus on educational collaborations between

local Boys & Girls Clubs and colleges and universities has emerged. The “win-win” nature of these collaborations is going to foster more and more stories like the one about Michael.

The name of the new B&GCA initiative is Clubs Go To College.

Can Clubs Go To College work for you? Can you locate a Boys & Girls Club on or near a college campus to help the next Michael from your Club? The answer is yes. The program is already working at a number of Clubs nationwide. This is our story.



Stephen Hannum,
Executive Director

Boys & Girls Clubs of
Tuscaloosa County

Our Setting

We have had our share of Tami’s and Michaels in the 35 years since our Club was formed in Tuscaloosa, Ala. With nearly 1,000 children last year (\$389,295 budget), it was inevitable that we would have youth from both categories – children who make it in spite of distressing circumstances, and young people who can’t seem to climb the ladder to success.

We enjoy relating success stories like Michael’s. They can truly showcase a local Boys & Girls Club. Board members love to hear about them. Funding sources respond. Individual triumphs such as Michael’s contribute to the overall success of the Club. But it is distressing when we see kids like Tami having to struggle. They deserve better. Surely there is a way for them to break the cycle and reach higher goals. Could a program like Clubs Go To College help provide an answer?

We looked to Stillman College, a small liberal

arts school just a few miles from one of our Club facilities. Until recently we had never provided any regular programs for children living near the Stillman campus. The college was founded in 1876 and has a predominately African-American student body. It has a proud heritage and a promising future, but we really hadn't taken advantage of all that was available there.

One of our longtime board members, Dr. Eddie B. Thomas, is assistant vice president for community outreach programs at Stillman, a key leadership position. He has been active with our Club's board for many years and has a genuine concern for children.

Across the street from Stillman's football field lies Creekwood Village, a federally subsidized apartment complex. Among the residents are 130 minority children. Over 40% of weapons violations in Tuscaloosa during 1999 took place within a one-mile radius of Creekwood Village.

In the fall of that year, the manager of Creekwood Village, Vonda Christian, contacted our Boys & Girls Club with some very exciting news. She had included our organization in a grant funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The HUD funds were designated to provide programs for children who lived at Creekwood Village. We were elated to be included in the grant!

After receiving her telephone call we realized that we had all the ingredients for a new venture: a committed board member who holds a key position at Stillman College, a federally subsidized apartment complex in an area of great need, HUD funds to get us started, and an apartment manager who wanted to improve the quality of life for residents at Creekwood Village.

But we were also very aware that such a partnership cannot be hastily undertaken.

Proceed With Caution

As any experienced Boys & Girls Club administrator knows, forming a partnership takes several ingredients:

- careful thought and planning
- consensus building
- awareness of each party's expectations
- financial support
- preparing for the future.

Expansion of Boys & Girls Club organizations should only come after each of these components is carefully considered and thoroughly discussed, in detail, by everyone who will play a role in the new venture. Even though there seemed to be an opportunity at Creekwood Village that was too good to be true, we realized that we should proceed cautiously. We had

learned the hard way from a couple of previous efforts.

Several years ago, in a hasty rush to expand our organization, we had advanced too quickly. We joined a collaboration without paying close enough attention to the other parties involved in the effort. After the collaboration had been in force for a few years it fell apart. Although we had fulfilled our role and met the expectations agreed to, the entire collaborative effort folded when another party failed to meet the funding source's requirements. Although we had done our job, the program ended. In retrospect, we had not given enough thought to the arrangement before rushing ahead.

Another time we had a funding source withdraw financial support in a collaborative effort, primarily due to lack of proper communication. They didn't think our Club was meeting their needs. In retrospect, it appears that we never had a clear vision of what our funding source expected from our Club. We thought we were doing a great job. We had produced a runner-up for the state Youth of the Year. We had an excellent staff. We were consistently increasing our daily attendance. But we had failed to look at our Club's operation through the funder's eyes. We learned that in future efforts, we must develop clear expectations, and that these expectations should be shared and regularly communicated from the very beginning.

First Steps

Shortly after receiving the telephone call from Creekwood Village announcing the HUD grant, we determined the steps necessary to create a new Club. There were several discussions with key parties to determine what role each would play.

We met several times with Dr. Thomas to see what Stillman could offer. He was very cooperative and offered some use of facilities, transportation, and possible access to a large pool of volunteers. Many students at Stillman had backgrounds similar to Tami's. With mentoring assistance, perhaps we could help change the educational future of our Club members.

We wrote a BJA grant and received funding for the project to supplement our HUD grant. We met with HUD officials interested in establishing a successful program. We got programming ideas from other Clubs that received BJA funding. We met several times with Ms. Christian and others from the Creekwood Village management team. We defined our financial responsibilities.

We reassigned a staff member, Sandra Latham, to Creekwood Village as Club director. Sandra starred on the University of Alabama track team and graduated with a degree in communications. Her strong work ethic makes it easy to understand why she was an All-American sprinter in school. We put together a membership recruitment plan that featured

door-to-door visits by Sandra over a three-week period. We registered over 40 members in no time!

In a relatively short period, a very special program was assembled by a team of organizations: Stillman College, Creekwood Village, HUD, the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Boys & Girls Club. We are working together to help the next Tami find the way to a better future.

Through all our conversations, we listened closely to others and determined the expectations and goals of each participating group.

Where We Are

At last count, we now have over 100 members at the Creekwood Village Boys & Girls Club. Management there renovated an apartment that serves as the location for our new Club and we moved in during fall 2000. Through joint funding from HUD and BJA we have comfortably furnished the Club.

Our staff takes pride in building a new program in a new area. We are satisfied with daily attendance at Creekwood Village and look forward to continually expanding our program of activities. From a volunteer leadership standpoint we are currently recruiting members for an advisory board to oversee our operation.

We will continue to improve relationships with others in this collaboration, especially Stillman College. As we learned from previous efforts, we cannot afford to overlook any partners in a joint venture.

Our funding is secure for at least the next 18 months, and we are already building bridges to allow for longer-term Club operation. We must secure a funding base that will insure a dependable financial future for this important effort.

Today there will be hundreds of Tami's and Michaels entering the doors at Boys & Girls Clubs all over America, young people who need our support. Through innovative programs like Clubs Go To College, our local organizations can forge alliances that provide new opportunities for these youth. Michael will thank you and Tami needs your help.

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We Couldn't do it Without You

The Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club first opened its doors in 1968, in the heart of the Champaign- Urbana community, thanks to the dedication and energy of a small group of people who saw a need and acted upon it. In a proverbial smoke-filled room, checks were thrown on a table and a Club was started. First located in an old church, the Club was a home away from home to many children in the “north end,” the largely African-American residential area of the city.

In the 1990s, a major period of expansion resulted in the doubling of the main Boys & Girls Club to its current size of 17,000 square feet. Three additional units were added as well: a Club based in an expanded ranch house in the nearby town of Mahomet; a good-sized Club in the Lakeside Terrace Apartments, the largest public housing complex in the area; and a small Club at the Joann Dorsey Homes in Champaign, the second largest local public housing site. With a \$1 million budget, the Club serves 1,400 local youth members.

The twin cities of Champaign and Urbana, with a combined population of 100,000, are home to the University of Illinois, the largest campus of the university system, with 36,000 students and extensive grounds and facilities. It is a highly rated university, especially known for its programs in engineering, agriculture, computer science, and music, among other fields. The faculty is considered “world class,” and the university encourages their involvement in the local, national and world community.

While there is much more the Club could do – and will do – to fully take advantage of the university’s presence, we have historically worked together in a number of ways. The Club has reaped important benefits of this relationship, as has the university. There are also experiences that

indicate a need for caution in relation to working with universities and colleges. While we have not had any major joint projects, I will describe some of the ways our Club has worked with the University of Illinois that may be useful to other organizations.



*Elisabeth Barnett,
Executive Director*

*Don Moyer Boys & Girls
Club*

Human Resources

Even if you are fortunate enough to have a well-staffed organization, **volunteers** are needed to play certain roles, as well as to give children the individual attention that will enable them to succeed. Homework assistance is more effectively provided when small groups of children work with an adult. Mentors and tutors can be valuable assets. Volunteer coaches who see and build on each child’s potential can make a huge difference in the lives of Club members.

The University of Illinois is, by far, our largest single source of volunteer labor. Students are eager to make a difference in the lives of others, and many enjoy the opportunity to work with Boys & Girls Club members. All volunteers fill out an application, are run through a local background check, and provided with an orientation. We work to match volunteers with both our needs and their interests. We have been pleased with the impact on children, in terms of individualized attention, and in giving them the chance to interact with a variety of different people. Many of the volunteers are reliable, dedicated, caring, and creative. In addition, they have proven to be a valuable pool of talent from which to recruit regular staff members.

However, problems can occur in certain circumstances. Poor planning on our part or inconsistency among volunteers can lead to too many or too few volunteers on any given day. As the semester gets closer to the end, even fairly dedicated volunteers begin to miss their scheduled times because of term paper deadlines or final exams. If they do not continue at the Club, the time taken to recruit and orient them may seem like a waste. Further, when children form bonds with volunteers, especially if they are in the role of mentors, more harm than good may result if the volunteer does not follow through. Research shows that mentoring relationships of less than six months may actually have a negative impact on children.

Nevertheless, volunteers can play a key role in a Boys & Girls Club. They can be recruited through contact with college volunteer placement offices, existing student groups, and directly by speaking to classes. Try to get students at the beginning of the semester before their classwork becomes too heavy. Don't call them before 10 a.m. Make sure they are always working directly under the guidance of a Club staff member.

Interns are another excellent resource. Like volunteers, they do not need to be paid. Unlike volunteers, because they receive course credit for their work, they are usually very reliable and productive. Internships are best for the individual student and the organization when they are highly structured. An intern provides significant amounts of free labor, and in exchange, deserves an opportunity to participate in a meaningful project with a clear beginning and end.

Internship contracts should be written which allow the intern to plan, implement, and evaluate a project of real benefit to the organization and its members. They should receive the same kind of supervision and direction provided to Club staff, and held to clear expectations. I have had interns run training sessions for staff, coordinate the state Youth of the Year program, conduct a needs assessment for youth, write marketing materials for the Club, and offer programs for members.

University departments will often be able to tell you who coordinates their internships (when they have them). Likely departments would be social work, community health, marketing, and recreation management. Generally a certain amount of paperwork is required, most of which can be done by the student. Keep a personnel file on the intern, and expect to be used as a job reference later.

Finally, university **researchers** may be a real resource for your Boys & Girls Club. They are often looking for research opportunities close to home. The trick here is to make sure that your children and your organization will benefit in

proportion to the time and energy expended. In a previous job, I had a disagreeable experience with a researcher who was supposed to help us evaluate a program, and ended up involving youth in long discussions of little value to them or our organization.

However, researchers may be very helpful to you in several ways. They often have a good overview of theories, trends and best practices relevant to Boys & Girls Clubs. A University of Illinois professor recently made an appointment to find out more about Boys & Girls Club methods to incorporate them into a study of best practices in youth development work. He then gave me a number of articles that have been useful to us in understanding how to work with some of our kids.

Research projects can be structured around your needs for evaluation of programs, or they may enable you to better children's lives through greater understanding of how they learn, grow, etc. In addition, researchers may be able to provide value not directly related to their project. We are becoming involved in a research project that will "teach" computers how to respond to children's facial expressions as young people learn tasks related to science and robotics. We are discussing ways in which this highly knowledgeable research group can help us develop strong computer labs and related programming.

On the other hand, research projects can also be a waste of time for all concerned, except perhaps the person who will get the degree or write the scholarly article. Carefully evaluate the costs and benefits. Make sure that parents agree to anything their children will be involved in, but also remember that parents trust the Club to propose only positive experiences for their kids. Make sure that the children involved will be adequately supervised and not exposed to harm. Think about whether the project contributes to your mission.

Program Resources

The presence of a college or university in your community means that a higher level of resources is available. In our case, the University of Illinois lifts Champaign-Urbana from its status as "just another Midwest town" to a place with some of the best resources and talent in the world. Gaining access to these resources is the trick.

Several types of resources may be of interest. Obviously, university **facilities** are often wonderful: state of the art swimming pools, gyms, weight training rooms, playing fields, computer labs, skating rinks, performance halls, etc. Parkland College, our local community college, has a wonderful planetarium, theater, and sports facilities. These tend to be closely guarded – with good reason. There are two major avenues of access. Student organizations are generally able to

use university facilities, and may be interested in working with you to sponsor an activity or event. Forming a close relationship with one or more student organizations can be very helpful for these reasons, as well as for their ability to help in the Club. Another way to gain access to university facilities may be through the involvement of a professor or administrator with your organization, as a board member, researcher, or interested person.

Club-based programming can also be arranged. We have had a university class that offers Project Search/ Science, a weekly “class” at the club for older elementary school members, providing fun, hands-on science lessons. An education class came regularly for a period of time to offer homework help during certain hours. In both cases, the students receive course credit and work under the supervision of a professor. In other cases, members of sports teams have offered special clinics or workshops at the Club.

Access to **cultural programs, sports events, etc.** may be facilitated by relationships that your Boys & Girls Club establishes. Free tickets, especially when we get enough notice to organize a field trip, are a great resource for our members. Even on short notice, some of our kids are able to go on their own or with parents. Again, personal connections make all the difference.

Finally, **collaborative programs** can be considered. One of our Clubs was first located in a public housing development that closed a year ago for demolition and remodeling. The on-site manager of the apartment complex in 1993 saw an acute need for more resources directed to local children who were often unsupervised. She worked with a university group, the Center for Prevention Research and Development, to initiate a place for kids originally called Kasey’s Klubhouse.

The center was especially interested in community organizing and in empowerment of public housing residents. They also had access to resources at the state and local level. A number of local organizations, including the Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club, became involved in this unique project, which resulted in a multi-dimensional dynamic after-school program for children. Many years later, most of the original partners have faded away, and the Club has been moved to another public housing site, but its roots are based in the community/university partnership that is still fondly remembered by many people.

Related Opportunities

The more you know about the local university, the more opportunities will emerge for your Club members and your organization. For example, many colleges offer programs that

ease the transition from high school to college, with a special interest in minority students. Locally, the Principal Scholars program and Upward Bound have provided **enrichment opportunities** to many struggling high school students, including some Club kids. With an awareness about the menu of offerings and personal connections, you may be able to help Club members take advantage of these programs.

Universities often **spin-off** related business enterprises. In Champaign-Urbana, a burgeoning high tech community is emerging from university initiated research and funding opportunities. Over the past 10 years a large number of small and large businesses have formed which develop software, train computer technicians, offer marketing services, etc. They have formed an association called TechCommunity to advance their common interests. While a number of such businesses are interested in working with us to reduce the impact of the “digital divide,” there are others specifically concerned with finding employees likely to remain in the area (unlike most students who come to Champaign-Urbana for their studies). We are beginning to develop a relationship that we hope will lead to improved computer education opportunities within our Club, as well as possible career options for our members.

Boys & Girls Clubs always need to be concerned with **fundraising**, for obvious reasons. Universities and colleges have important resources in this regard. Possibilities include:

- 1) writing joint proposals in which the university provides expertise, while the Club provides a “laboratory” setting;
- 2) involvement with student groups who have interest in, or a requirement for, community support – either in terms of contributing money or human resources;
- 3) maintaining a high profile in United Way or other fund drives, especially when large numbers of donors designate their dollars to specific organizations;
- 4) establishing linkages between university groups and Boys & Girls Club organizations, such as Keystone Clubs, scouts, sports teams, or art groups in which Club members are helped to fundraise on campus;
- 5) selling stuff on campus;
- 6) access to foundations or individual philanthropists with university linkages.

In summary, universities and colleges can be wonderful resources for Boys & Girls Clubs. As with any collaborative effort, Clubs should always take measures to insure that the interests of both parties are served, with the ultimate focus on creating opportunities for the children we are here to serve.

University resources of interest to Boys & Girls Clubs

- 1) **Volunteers (or staff)** – College students are full of energy, skills, enthusiasm, and have flexible time. They are often willing and able to make a commitment for at least a year, and truly want to make a difference in the lives of others.

- 2) **Interns** – When students receive course credit for their work with a Club, it is clearly a win-win situation. The Club has an employee with much more motivation for consistency and reliability because students are likely to treat the internship as they would a class.
- 3) **Researchers** – Professors and graduate students working in the field of psychology, social work, community health, education, recreation and/or leisure studies, marketing, non-profit management, computer education, etc. are often looking for research opportunities close to home. Some of their findings can benefit the Club.
- 4) **Program evaluation** – Outside evaluations are often the most convincing to funders. Most colleges will have people with the skills to conduct an evaluation, or at least provide technical assistance on how to do it.
- 5) **Facilities** – These institutions are likely to have state of the art: gyms, pools, weight training rooms, computer labs, performance venues, tracks, skating rinks... you name it.
- 6) **Knowledge** – Need to know how to do something? Set up a pottery studio? Train coaches? Help children to read better? Look in the university library, or find an expert in the area of interest.
- 7) **Collaborative programs** – A joint project with a college or university may be beneficial to both parties. The university gets a “laboratory” to try out some ideas; the Club gets the opportunity to try out best practices as shown through research efforts.
- 8) **Cultural programs** – Universities and colleges can afford world-class performers, and will often be able to provide discounted tickets to shows.
- 9) **Transitional opportunities** – A number of colleges are interested in increasing access to traditionally under-represented groups. Club members may be able to take advantage of programs that prepare them for college success.
- 10) **Club-based programming** – Professors may be interested in having their students teach a class or workshop at the Club as a part of their training.
- 11) **Student organizations** – There are a wide variety of student organizations, many of which are interested in philanthropic activities. These can range from raising money to running activities for kids, and serving as mentors. Investigate the Greek (sorority/fraternity) system.
- 12) **Spin-offs** – Universities may spin off local business enterprises, such as the high tech companies emerging as a powerful force in Champaign-Urbana. They may be interested in developing stronger local roots and becoming involved with an organization such as a Boys & Girls Club.

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Two Communities - One Goal

The Roanoke Valley

The formation of a Boys & Girls Club organization or Unit of an existing organization can be daunting at times. Those who work in new organizations can attest to the daily struggle involving board development, facility management, fundraising and the myriad of other tasks initiated and maintained by an organization striving for name recognition.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America has recently begun pairing new start-up sites with existing organizations wherever possible to insure that our Movements' phenomenal growth is also sustainable. This was the case in southwest Virginia recently.

Roanoke is the largest urban center in that part of the state. Located between the Appalachian, Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains, its economy forms the retail, medical, financial, cultural, and recreational hub for nearly 1 million people who live within a 50-mile radius. There had been several attempts over the years to form a Boys & Girls Club organization here in the Roanoke Valley by Southeast regional service directors. Until 1997, Roanoke was the largest city east of the Mississippi River without a Boys & Girls Club.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Roanoke Valley has been incorporated since 1997. A group of highly committed individuals banded together to address the need for providing a quality, after-school and summer program to area youth. The efforts of the Club's original board of directors have been very fruitful. The organization currently operates three Units in Roanoke that serve over 450 youth.

A capital campaign is also being conducted to purchase and renovate a 12,000 sq.ft. building that was originally secured by the personal

collateral of three board members. The annual operating budget has risen from \$60,000 to \$400,000 in just two years.

The board here has totally bought into the Boys & Girls Club Movement. There was very little hesitation on our part to become involved with starting a Unit in the New River Valley.



*Floyd A. Johnson,
Executive Director
Boys & Girls Clubs of
Roanoke Valley*

The New River Valley

Shortly after formation of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Roanoke Valley, a group of individuals in the New River Valley asked B&GCA's Southeast Service Center about starting an organization in Montgomery County, VA. The largest concentrations of people in Montgomery County are located in the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, and the city of Radford. Montgomery County is home to two universities: Radford University in Radford and Virginia Tech in Blacksburg.

The driving economic force in the New River Valley centers on both college campuses. A combined student population of over 35,000 adds immensely to the local economy. Numerous technology related companies initiated there are thriving. This community is capable of supporting a Boys & Girls Club.

Our Southeast Service Center saw potential for expansion in the New River Valley. People there displayed enthusiasm and a willingness to roll up their sleeves and get a Club started. The issue of sustainability and viability quickly arose though, so the Roanoke Club board was contacted and

asked by Southeast regional staff to assist in development of a Club unit in the New River Valley, rather than develop a separate organization. B&GCA's Virginia service director facilitated several meetings between Roanoke Valley and New River Valley representatives. A mutual decision was made to develop a Unit in the New River Valley, with a plan that called for developing a Unit board that would fall under support of the corporate board in Roanoke. An agreement was developed outlining the duties and responsibilities of each. Both boards voted to accept the conditions outlined and the agreement was mutually accepted in March 2000.

With the agreement formalized, it was time to begin planning. The Unit had been approved for a BJA 2000 grant that focused on starting a Club "on or near a college campus or university." The first location selected was Blacksburg, home of Virginia Tech.

Virginia Tech

Virginia Tech is the largest state university in Virginia, with a student population of 25,000. Virginia Tech offers numerous degree programs and has been nationally recognized as having one of the top engineering programs in the country.

We sought out board representation and developmental support from the very beginning from the college. In May 2000, a group of Virginia Tech students presented the findings of a site feasibility study. The students had been contacted earlier in the semester with this request for assistance.

The recommendations presented were insightful. The group highlighted areas in need of service and areas where resources were present to help make a Boys & Girls Club program successful. This group confirmed Blacksburg as the number one location for available resources.

The New River Valley (NRV) Unit board used this

information to begin mapping out a strategy for future expansion.

Another way that Virginia Tech has become involved is through student volunteers. This effort is coordinated through the Service-Learning Center on Tech's campus. The concept of service-learning involves an entire class participating in several group projects for class credits. Perry Martin, assistant director of the center, likes the entire Boys & Girls Club model in placing students for class projects. "We have over 500 students per semester and must find meaningful projects for them to conduct," says Martin. "Boys & Girls Clubs can offer many experiences from – program to marketing – all under one roof."

The NRV Unit board also sought assistance when it was preparing to embark upon its Founder's Club fundraising campaign. Virginia Tech women's basketball coach Bonnie Hendrickson and men's basketball coach Ricky Stokes served as honorary chairs for this event. Their early support and endorsement has been a great asset to this effort.

This endeavor would not have been possible without the foresight of two groups working to better the lives of our youth. The efforts of both the NRV Unit board and the Roanoke corporate board are to be commended. Their willingness to work together will benefit an estimated 300 youth in Blacksburg this year.

The following is an example of the agreement in use between the NRV Unit board and Roanoke corporate board. We sincerely hope it may be of benefit to those considering a similar concept elsewhere.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Roanoke Valley

Memorandum of Understanding

New River Valley Unit

This document sets forth the understanding of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Roanoke Valley (B&GCRV) with respect to creation of a unit of the B&GCRV in New River Valley, VA. The B&GCRV agrees to establish this unit under the following conditions:

- (1) Unit name: The New River Valley Unit of the B&GCRV shall be named "Boys & Girls Clubs of New River Valley (B&GCNRV) or any such other name as shall be recommended by the B&GCNRV Unit board and approved by the corporate board.
- (2) Unit board: (a) Initial board: After consideration of the recommendations of the B&GCNRV steering committee, the corporate board shall approve the initial unit board members; (b) after (2) two years from the date of formation the B&GCNRV shall have exclusive power to appoint directors, subject to the right of the corporate board to remove any board member pursuant to Virginia law; (c) the unit board rotation policy of the B&GCRV.
- (3) Interrelationship of boards: There shall be (3) three unit board member representatives from B&GCNRV who serve as voting board members on the corporate board of directors. There shall also be (3) three (other) corporate board representatives from B&GCRV who serve as voting members on the unit board of the B&GCNRV.

- (4) Executive director and employees: The recommendations of the unit board of directors and established unit personnel committee shall be considered in all employ related matters; however, the executive director of the B&GCRV shall make all final hiring decisions. The staff of the B&GCNRV shall include a unit director. This position will operate under the direction of and report directly to the executive director of the B&GCRV.
- (5) Final responsibilities: The unit board of the B&GCNRV shall be responsible for: (a) formulating an annual capital and operational budget for the B&GCNRV and submitting said budgets prior to November 1 of each year for review and approval by the corporate board; (b) developing and carrying out plans for annual capital and operational fundraising campaigns. These plans are subject to review and revision by the corporate board; (c) providing all operational and capital funds necessary to operate the B&GCNRV. All fundraising activities shall be conducted in the name of the B&GCNRV and in a manner that does not compete with the B&GCRV, though the two entities may where appropriate conduct joint or cooperative fundraising activities. The B&GCRV may, in its sole discretion, contribute financially to the B&GCNRV; however, there is no obligation on behalf of the B&GCRV to do so unless outlined in the legal requirements of certain grants or other forms of designated funding in accordance with federal and state accounting requirements. The B&GCNRV shall establish, under the approval of the corporate board, a banking account (and any other financial accounts deemed necessary by the corporate board). There shall be monthly financial reports showing at a minimum all items of income, expense, bank account balances, and pledges to the B&GCNRV at each corporate board meeting. Payroll for the B&GCNRV shall originate (either electronically or otherwise) from the corporate office of the B&GCRV. All financial reporting, including state, federal, and B&GCA required reporting shall originate from the corporate office on behalf of the B&GCNRV as a unit of the B&GCRV. The financial reports of the B&GCNRV shall stay separate from those of the B&GCRV unless otherwise approved by the corporate board.
- (6) Initial fundraising obligation: Under the direction of the executive director the B&GCNRV shall develop an annual operational budget for the first year of operations and submit said budget for corporate board approval. Once this annual budget is approved, the B&GCNRV shall be obligated to raise two-thirds of this budget before the corporate board can consider opening the B&GCNRV for business to members. Prior to two-thirds of the first annual budget being raised, only the unit director of B&GCNRV shall be employed unless otherwise decided by the corporate board.
- (7) Administrative fee: The B&GCNRV shall pay 6% of the annual budget to the B&GCRV for administrative services rendered. This amount shall be reviewed after the first year and the percentage may be reset by a unanimous corporate board decision if administrative costs exceed the 6% allotted.
- (8) Program and policies: The programs to be conducted in, and the membership, operating, and public relations policies and procedures to be followed by the B&GCNRV shall be consistent with the policies of Boys & Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA) and consistent with the policies of B&GCRV. The personnel policy of the B&GCRV shall be the personnel policy of the B&GCNRV.
- (9) Insurance: The B&GCNRV shall participate in all insurance policies of the B&GCRV. Any additional insurance deemed necessary by the corporate board shall also be listed under the B&GCRV. All insurance records shall be held in the corporate office and annual reviews and updates shall be the responsibility of the corporate board.
- (10) Legal contracts: The B&GCNRV shall have no power to enter into any contracts, agreements, or transactions binding any person or entity without corporate board approval. Furthermore, the B&GCNRV shall not borrow money or place liens on its properties without corporate board approval.
- (11) Grounds for dissolution of the B&GCNRV: The corporate board shall retain the right, pursuant to Virginia law, to dissolve the B&GCNRV at any time it determines that the B&GCNRV (a) is not financially viable; (b) is consistently not abiding by the provisions set forth in this memorandum of understanding; (c) is consistently not adhering to the policies of and otherwise not meeting the standards of the B&GCA and/or the B&GCRV; and (d) for other good cause deemed necessary by the corporate board.

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The Importance of Being on Campus

The Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley is located in Twin Falls, Idaho, fourth largest city in the state and the largest city in south central Idaho. Twin Falls acts as the cultural and economic center for the Magic Valley area, comprised of some 63,000 people in the city itself and surrounded by rural, predominately agricultural, communities. For a city of its size, Twin Falls offers a wide variety of community associations. They range from the usual civic organizations to free summer concerts played weekly in the city park, to Fourth of July fireworks held on the campus of the College of Southern Idaho and the Hispanic Heritage Fiesta held annually in August.

Twin Falls also has a diverse population, including Hispanics, arrivals from Eastern Europe and Asian immigrants. In a mostly agricultural area without a large amount of economic diversity, the city tends to be on the lower end of the economic scale compared with larger cities in the state. Because of these factors, among others, Twin Falls in particular, and the Magic Valley at large has a high percentage of at-risk youth. The Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley was founded in 1993, as a way to identify these young people and respond to their needs.

With generous support from local businesses and the city of Twin Falls, the first building for the Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley was established in 1994. The Club quickly outgrew this tiny facility and again the city of Twin Falls came to the rescue and relocated us to a larger building. This was an older, warehouse type facility and needed major renovations. With generous donations of money, construction expertise and physical labor from Cliff and Ione Smallwood and many other individuals, the Club building was opened. Even then it became

clear that the needs of Magic Valley youth and community response quickly exceeded the facility's capacity.

Building on Campus

In stepped Cliff and Ione Smallwood again, with a substantial donation for

construction of an entirely new Club facility. The next step in making the dream reality was to find a place where the Club could be built. Board members considered several locations, but the consensus was that our local College of Southern Idaho campus offered the best spot. Board members then contacted the college's president, Gerald R. Meyerhoeffer, and presented the idea to him. The president then brought the concept to the college's board of trustees, who heard a presentation from our Club's board members. College trustees then decided to have the Club built on campus.

The college of Southern Idaho (CSI) is a two-year liberal arts junior college. It enjoys enormous community support and offers degrees in a variety of programs ranging from nursing to culinary arts and auto repair. Four-year degrees can also be obtained through collaborative efforts with colleges and universities around the state.

CSI is located on the north side of Twin Falls, on a campus consisting of 240 acres, 120 of which are presently undeveloped and being held for future expansion. The sports teams are consistently regional and national champions, in



*Don Hall, Chief Professional Officer
Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley*

men's and women's basketball, women's volleyball, men's baseball, and men's and women's rodeo.

The college opened a 15,000-sq. ft. expansion to its teacher education and health services facility in December 2000. Other expansions include a \$6 million addition to the fine arts building, and a 30,000-sq. ft. student union building now in the planning stages. The college also has an exposition center, heavily used by community organizations for activities as diverse as craft shows, car sales and indoor rodeos. Tennis courts and playing fields are used by the local recreation district for sports teams, and the two-mile walking trail is used extensively by the public.

The physical location of the Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley is of primary importance. Located on the periphery of CSI, the Club is fronted by a road that runs directly through the campus and is used extensively by the public. The Club building, however, is not mixed in with the college's academic buildings or dormitories. We are located directly across the street from the playing fields, tennis courts and playgrounds used by the public and just down the street from the expo center, areas of the campus popular with local residents. This gives the Club great visibility to anyone passing by, while at the same time providing a quiet setting. With these facilities at our disposal, we are better prepared to meet the sports and recreational needs of children. With a budget of \$300,000 we serve over 400 youth members in our community.

Challenges and Solutions

Physical Location – While the Club site offers many advantages to our organization and its members, there are some drawbacks. Having a pleasant, modern building set on the college campus, the Club is perceived by many in the community as being a part of CSI, even though we are a separate and independent entity. This creates a great deal of public confusion and can be detrimental when it comes to fundraising. We have started an extensive public relations drive to inform the community about our programs and needs.

Transportation – CSI is located on the north end of the city, placing it some distance from most residential areas and schools – particularly those used by our targeted, at-risk youth. This presents another disadvantage. To counteract the problem, we began busing children to the Club from area schools after we moved to this location. The local public transportation provider works with us to bus children to the Club after school. They are picked up at various elementary and junior high schools and taken to a central location, where they transfer to another bus which brings them directly to the Club. The cost for this service is \$20 per child, billed monthly to parents. The busing option is totally optional, but we have found it instrumental in expanding our membership. As with

all our services, the ability of our members to pay is not a deterrent to coming to the Club.

The hours for the Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley run from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. every day after school. We are also open from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on those weekdays when school is not in session, and from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays during the summer months. Presently we have an average of 100 members who attend the after school program daily. This number of students, along with the square footage of our building, causes us to be creative in organizing activities. As much as possible, weather permitting, we take the children outside and make use of campus grounds for sports, classes, and assemblies.

Teens Only

We recently opened the Club for teens on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., and again on Saturdays from 8:00 p.m. to midnight. Teens respond favorably to these hours, set aside just for them. An additional advantage to these "teen only" nights is that high school-age teens can interact in a positive manner with college-age advisors, who can then encourage Club teens to pursue higher education.

Building Solid Relationships

Our Club's on-campus location has enabled us to forge a wonderful relationship with many college staff members. The most notable of these has been with the Director of Student Information, Graydon Stanley. Graydon invited my program director and I to speak at a luncheon for the college's Interclub Council. Since our meeting with this group the Boys & Girls Club has put on several events and recruited numerous volunteers from among college staff.

On several occasions, we have had students from CSI's early childhood development program come to the Club, where they gain practical experience in spending time with our members. Recently over 20 college students worked with Club youth on social interaction skills and taught some fun, educational activities. We also have CSI students from other areas of study come and intern at the Club. Again, this helps supplement our own staffing and gives our members the most up-to-date teaching and counseling help. On one recent afternoon, students from the college's theatrical department presented a theater program to the members, acting out a skit and painting children's faces with stage paint. Along with its many other positive attributes, the college environment is conducive with helping children have a positive perception of their future.

We are also fortunate to have Jeff Duggan, CSI's athletic director, serving on our board. A notable advantage of this

relationship is that all our members have free admission into any CSI game, just by showing their Club membership card.

When the college's Interclub Council held its annual Halloween Carnival, different student organizations set up booths in the Boys & Girls Club gymnasium, providing games for the children and handing out candy. The carnival was open to Club members and the public alike, and costumes were encouraged.

The College of Southern Idaho also boasts an excellent planetarium and museum, with ever-changing exhibits. Administrators of these facilities have been generous in allowing our members to take advantage of their programs at various times throughout the year, for a reduced fee or at no charge. Such activities allow our Club to offer more expanded and well-rounded activities to members.

We have also been very fortunate in working with CSI to raise funds for Club programs. Last spring, in conjunction with Graydon Stanley, the college hosted a boys basketball tournament. Teams came in to play from as far away as Oregon, and we were able to raise a substantial sum of money for the Club. The event also gave the players an opportunity to visit our Club and enjoy the facility. Next year, we plan to expand to a boys and girls basketball tournament. CSI has also held student dances that benefited the Club.

Staffing Opportunities

Many Boys & Girls Club staff members are college students. The majority of our program aides work from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, on an alternating schedule. Most are between the ages of 18 and 25. Because we are

located right on campus, it is easier for student staff members to arrange their classes with their work schedules. They gain valuable work experience through employment with the Club at the same time they are engaged in related areas of study, such as child development.

Being the chief professional officer of a Boys & Girls Club located directly on a college campus, I have opportunities to work closely with many college staff members and the administration. Working with college administrators has benefited the Club in a variety of ways, including financial opportunities, name recognition, and potential for future expansion.

There has been some discussion within the Twin Falls community about creating a multi-purpose community center, consisting of a senior center, recreation building, and youth center, on land held by CSI that is currently undeveloped. Such a community center would be extremely beneficial to the Club, and as we are already located on campus we have an opportunity to be part of this development, if and when it should occur.

Although there have been some minor drawbacks related to being on a college campus (distance from targeted youth, the perception of being college affiliated) these problems can be easily overcome with a little planning and community education. The benefits and resources that come with being located on the College of Southern Idaho campus clearly overshadow any disadvantages, and have been extremely beneficial to the Boys & Girls Club of Magic Valley, and to the college as a whole.

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A Gold Mine of Opportunities

Situated in the heart of magnificent Big Sky Country, Bozeman, Montana holds a world of opportunity for its approximately 30,000 residents. This quaint town offers breathtaking scenery, high employment rates, higher education, nationally known ski resorts, and the attraction of life in the Rocky Mountains. The population has continuously grown over the years as families regularly move to the area to raise their children. Bozeman is an ideal community, but one thing was missing from what it had to offer. Although there were a number of seasonal youth programs and school organizations, there was little for children in the community after the school doors closed. Like many young people nationwide, the youth of Bozeman were missing a safe place to go... a Boys & Girls Club.

B&GC of Southwest Montana

The need for a safe, growing environment for Bozeman's youth came to be viewed as an overwhelming necessity. With 30 years of success behind the Boys & Girls Club of Yellowstone County, over 200 miles away in Billings, Montana, Bozeman was certain a Club would be welcomed into the area. Since its founding in January 1996, the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana has offered a positive environment and lifelong opportunities for the youth of Bozeman. Although it has been a successful and growing youth organization, programs and opportunities have been limited due to the lack of a Boys & Girls Club youth center.

The Club operates two local units for serving youth members on property provided by Bozeman Public Schools. Irving Elementary School provides space for the after-school program site, serving elementary age children in Club programs. Members ages 6-11 are bused to the Club site from surrounding schools to



*Jeanne Quinn-Bucher,
Executive Director*



*Hillary Haren, Public
Relations Coordinator*

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Montana

participate in Club activities Monday through Friday. The Campus Club, located on the property of Chief Joseph Middle School and Bozeman Senior High School, represents the second unit serving middle school age youth and contains the newly developed PowerUP Technology Center. During the summer, the Campus Club offers the site for the Club's summer day camp, serving youth ages 6-11. The camp also provides leadership opportunities for middle school-age youth wanting to serve as youth counselors, or interns, in camp activities. The local Boys & Girls Club serves additional youth through an extension Club in the Alternative High School, which provides carpentry and wood/metal work skills to youth.

Since 1996, the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana has reached a growing number of youth in these Club areas. With a \$210,000 annual budget, the Club currently serves 250 local youth members in a variety of program areas. The organization also provides 276 Club memberships to youth at Irving Elementary School because of the low income among families sending children to this school. As a young Club with limited resources for the members, we knew the challenges ahead. Building a Boys & Girls Club that could meet the needs of Bozeman's youth and provide

positive, valuable experiences for the members has not been easy. It wasn't until fall of 1997 when the local Boys & Girls Club found a partnership that would hold one of the true keys to its success. A youth-driven connection with Montana State University proves to be the significant factor in building the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana into a successfully growing youth organization.

MSU Partnership

Founded in 1893, Montana State University (MSU) has provided outstanding educational opportunities for students through a variety of academic options. Known nationwide for its engineering, agricultural and architectural focuses, Montana State's current enrollment has reached nearly 12,000 students, with 10,542 undergraduates and 1211 graduate students in 1999. After the first year of building the local organization, the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana saw MSU as a vital resource in developing the Club through students attending the university. What the Club found was a goldmine of opportunity through a lasting partnership.

Possibly the most powerful aspect of the Club's partnership with Montana State is how it is structured. The Club believes in a two-way approach, one that offers experience and opportunity for both sides. When MSU students get involved with the Boys & Girls Club, whether as a volunteer or as staff, they are making a significant connection – a connection that benefits both the student and the youth members. Undergraduate and graduate students seeking degrees in areas such as elementary education, child development, and family sciences are able to gain skills and experiences in youth development that could never be learned by sitting in a classroom. As a result of this connection, Club members gain skills, knowledge, mentors, and, most importantly, friends to look up to who know what it's like to be a child in today's society. The significant idea of the partnership is to benefit all participants involved with the Club.

Volunteers

Nationwide, volunteers have been critical to the success of Boys & Girls Clubs. In 1997, Ted Turner's donation to develop a national volunteer program for Clubs around the country created a window of opportunity for the Southwest Montana Club. As a result, the organization was able to develop a volunteer program that actively seeks volunteers through Montana State University. Montana State's Office for Community Involvement has been the connecting resource to reach volunteers for the Club. They communicate regularly with the Club to update volunteer opportunities and promote Club projects for publication in their monthly volunteer letter. The OCI displays Boys & Girls Club brochures and refers student drop-in to the Club for volunteer interests. Each

semester, hundreds of students gather on campus for the "Into the Streets" community service fair to seek out volunteer opportunities for community projects. Many students are looking for volunteer experience to fulfill a class requirement while others search to fulfill their own individual needs. The Boys & Girls Club has been an active participant in the fair for the past four years, offering volunteers the opportunity to participate in Club programs or help with Club renovations. What the Club found each year is the incredible amount of interest students have in working with youth programs. Many volunteers approach the Club with valuable past experience in other youth programs, or have familiarity with Boys & Girls Clubs from their home communities.

Volunteers

Year after year, individuals and teams of volunteers donate their time at the Club with art projects, POWER HOUR homework help, NIKE sports programs, and in many other Club areas. Montana State University varsity athletes consistently volunteer at the Club, working with youth members in sports programs and acting as role models for aspiring Club athletes. They are able to communicate the importance of involvement and dedication to both sports and academic performance. Volunteers have also donated hours of time outside Club programs. After gaining access through the local school district to the building that holds the Campus Club, volunteers have given hours of hard work making renovations to the facility. They have worked with staff and parent volunteers to help create a positive place for Club members... a place young people can finally call their own.

Staffing

Another critical component to the Club's growing success has been part-time and full-time staff. Montana State has been the key source for recruiting enthusiastic, dedicated individuals to work toward fulfilling the Boys & Girls Club mission. MSU offers employment opportunities and financial assistance through their work-study program. Through this employment opportunity, our Public Relations Coordinator (Hillary Haren) was able to join the Boys & Girls Club in 1997. As a key resource in building the Club's connection to Montana State University, she has been successful in promoting the Club on Montana State University's campus and among students and organizations. She developed the Club's volunteer program to recruit students from all areas of the university and acts as primary liaison to the university for this partnership.

In the last few years, work-study college students continue to seek employment and experience through the Boys & Girls Club. Many have interest due to the position's relation to their field of study while others are looking for a valuable opportunity – the chance to make a difference for Bozeman's

youth. Graduate students have also taken advantage of the work experience offered by the Club. The Club attracts a great amount of interest from graduate students to fill site director and unit director positions. One Club goal is to provide opportunities for work-study and graduate students to gain valuable experience in their position and potentially develop interest in a career with Boys & Girls Clubs after graduation.

Valuable Youth Connections

When the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana established the partnership with Montana State University, we found the connection went far beyond meeting the needs of students in the classroom. A key player in the partnership developed through the Club's connection to Montana State is MSU's fraternities and sororities. Each year, these groups dedicate hours of time to service projects on both local and national levels. The organizations at Montana State regularly host food drives, community races and walk-a-thons for diabetes, volunteer in local school literacy programs, ski race to raise funds for multiple sclerosis, host a community haunted house for local youth...the list goes on. What the Boys & Girls Club found was that members of the 12 Greek-affiliated national organizations shared a common interest with the local Club – providing opportunities for local youth to grow as individuals and enabling them to follow their dreams. Dedicating nearly 15,000 hours to community service projects for 55 local groups in one year, the fraternities and sororities found the Boys & Girls Club to be a beneficial way for their members to make a difference in the community. Haren, also a member of Pi Beta Phi women's fraternity on MSU campus, looked at the organizations as a vital resource and a link in the Club-college partnership. Realizing the benefit of this connection, the Club wanted to join its youth with participants in these fraternal organizations, which instill leadership skills, high academic standards, and service to others among their members. The outcome of this relationship with fraternities and sororities has provided valuable experience and outstanding success.

These organizations have volunteered their time in a number of Club projects. They have held annual Halloween gatherings at a local sorority with the Club's female members and families. Fraternities and sorority organizations have joined Club members to participate in an art and community service project. The students helped Club members make "Alphabet Books" for donation to local elementary school students to promote literacy among young children. Club members were given a chance to learn the importance of helping others in their community and realized the impact they can have. As a result of this connection, volunteers from these organizations have been able to pass on leadership skills to Club members.

In April 2000, Montana State University fraternities and sororities joined together once again to put on a community event that would raise funds and awareness for the Boys & Girls Club. An All-Greek Yard Sale was held over a weekend last spring to raise funds for Club programs and the Clubhouse. MSU students, faculty, and community members participated in the fundraising event, resulting in a donation of \$1000. The donation went toward purchasing new equipment to develop a cooking club program in the Campus Clubhouse. Members over the summer and during the school year have been able to learn culinary skills and use the Clubhouse to host family functions, such as the summer camp family barbecue kickoff. The Saturday afternoon fundraising sale provided positive awareness for the fraternal organizations, MSU, and the Boys & Girls Club.

Building the Partnership

For the past two years, the Boys & Girls Club has had an ongoing relationship with Montana State's Family Graduate Housing community. A residential area provided for married and/or graduate students and families, Family Graduate Housing offers an excellent opportunity for the Boys & Girls Club to reach out to families and youth in need. Since the Club's founding, more and more members are finding the After-School Program Club site as a positive place to go after a day of school. Located only a block away from Montana State University's campus, the Boys & Girls Club site serves a large number of members from student families. Parents of these members are approaching the Club with a similar need – a positive and safe place for their child to go to after school while they attend class or work.

Understanding the growing need for a Club environment to serve this community, the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana wanted to provide more for its youth. Establishing a new Club unit in the housing area was the best place to begin. The "Warm Hands Club" began operating out of a small housing unit in the neighborhood, providing a place in the morning for parents with early class or work schedules to drop off their children before they were transported to school. Boys & Girls Club staff offered a healthy breakfast snack, quiet reading time, and games for members before the public school bus system transported them to school. Unfortunately, due to the high cost of transportation, the Warm Hands Club was not able to continue serving youth in Family Graduate Housing.

Although the first attempt to meet the needs of families in Montana State's housing community was unsuccessful, this did not end the partnership. Faced with this challenge, we explored additional options to reach the children in this area. The Club unit is currently being developed into a new programming area for families in graduate housing. The Boys

& Girls Club is once again joining forces with MSU to reopen the unit in the recreation barn on campus for prevention programming, such as SMART Moves, and leadership programming. This Club will reach out to serve youth ages 12-15 in the Family and Graduate Housing district. The Club will serve over 120 youth that reside in this community. The Club will be able to provide a constructive and encouraging learning environment in an area where after-school opportunities are limited. The unit's program site area is also significantly larger than the previous Club site for the Warm Hands Club. This will open more opportunity for expanded program possibilities. The Club MSU location will also be beneficial for members to use educational and recreational resources available through the university. It will give members in this area a chance to grow outside the classroom.

In addition to the positive development opportunity this unit will provide for youth in the area, the possibilities for learning experiences are also expanded to MSU graduate students. Over the years, Boys & Girls Club's connection with the university has opened educational relationships with graduate students in related youth development course study. Graduate students interested in prevention programming will be able to work directly with Club programs. These students will become assets to Club programs and mentors to members by dedicating their knowledge and time to the Club.

A Collaboration of Caring

A Boys & Girls Club can come a long way in only four years of operation. In a short amount of time, a Club can change many young lives in a small community. But this effort to create better experiences, enhance life skills, and offer opportunities cannot be done by a Club itself. The Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana has found the key to continued growth and success through collaborations with individuals, organizations and educational institutions such as Montana State University.

One of the most significant challenges the Club has been faced with is running an effective organization without a standard Club facility. Problems of limited space have caused the Club to do something it should never have to do – turn away potential members who need the Club the most; a problem that the organization had faced since it began service in Bozeman. Fortunately, dedicated board members found a solution for this setback.

Three years ago, the Club lost a dedicated and highly respected board member. William deRham was a founding board member of Bozeman's Boys & Girls Club and served the organization for a year before he passed away. Thoroughly committed to the Club, he saw the positive influence the organization had on the growing number of youth in

Bozeman and was determined to provide a permanent Club facility. Mr. DeRham, therefore, gave a generous gift to the Club members. He donated a piece of land near Montana State University for future construction by the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana. A memorial fund in his honor was established to raise funds for such a facility.

Another Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana board member saw an outstanding need to further serve Bozeman's youth. In the summer of 2000, Carroll Henderson presented Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana with a five-acre land donation. The land, located on the east side of Bozeman, is the future site for a much-needed Boys & Girls Club youth center in the area.

A recent collaboration with the state of Montana has provided a window of opportunity for Clubs there. A statewide Boys & Girls Club alliance was formed in October 2000 among 16 Club organizations that allowed them to pursue state funding.

Another key collaboration has surfaced with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Gallatin County. The relationship will involve members of this organization in a shared volunteer experience. Big Brothers and Big Sisters will be able to volunteer with youth in the newly developed Boys & Girls Club Power UP Technology Center.

Staying Connected

The Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana's success is coupled with a broad vision. Forming new relationships with various organizations and Montana State University has been key for moving the Club in a positive direction. In only four years it has provided many more opportunities for members, staff and volunteers in Bozeman than it could have provided if the Club stood alone. Reaching out to the resources within the community is crucial for improving programs and fulfilling the Club mission. For the Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Montana, it has been important to not lose sight of the vision the Club started with four years ago. Clubs must remember where they came from in order to look ahead. In Bozeman, the Club will continue to grow and serve every youth in need. Our vision is as limitless as Big Sky Country.

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The Vision: Neighborhood Revitalization

The Boys & Girls Club of Worcester opened its first Clubhouse on September 21, 1889 and in fact, was one of the very first Clubs established in our Movement's history. It consisted of four rooms, sparsely furnished on the third floor of a laundry building in downtown Worcester. Boys (originally a Club for boys only) came in large numbers, membership grew rapidly and the accommodations were soon overcrowded. The Club moved to larger facilities in 1894 and again in 1907, each time in need of more space. Finally, in 1914, a campaign was conducted to raise money for a new Boys Club building. The campaign goal was \$150,000 and \$162,000 was raised. To the delight of thousands of boys, the Ionic Avenue Clubhouse was opened on November 1, 1915. This is the same facility used by the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester today. Back in 1915, this 33,000-sq. ft. building was considered a model Boys Club.

The Ionic Avenue Club was well over capacity within five years, so a branch was opened in the city's north end in 1922. In 1928, Club officials recognized the need for another new branch, and embarked on another capital campaign to build an additional Club. The campaign was successful beyond expectation. Local citizens, recognizing the value of the Boys Club, generously responded by contributing a total of \$475,000 – \$150,000 over goal. On October 10, 1930, a new 35,000-sq. ft. facility was opened. The Club flourished, but the industrial climate in Worcester diminished starting in the 1960s along with the available resources of support. In 1992, the board of directors of the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester resolved to come to grips with its growing deficit, which had reached six figure proportions. The decision was made to close the Club's Lincoln Square facility. Unfortunately, in an attempt to thwart deficit spending during the 1970s, the organization had

sold the facility to the city through a lease/purchase program and there was little financial gain.

The Strategic Plan

With the 1992 closing of the Lincoln Square Clubhouse, the Boys & Girls Club of

Worcester had to put itself in financial order. Over a three-year period, the board of directors accomplished this through hard work, determination and diligence.

Together, the chief professional officer and board balanced the budget, stabilized the staff and redefined programs. We now are operating with an annual budget of over \$900,000 and serving 2,100 local members. The Club's relationship with the United Way and other funders improved significantly. Recognizing that even more was required to prepare the agency for the 21st century, the board voted to develop a strategic plan. After an intensive eight-month process, three key goals were determined:

- I.) To strengthen the Boys & Girls Club organization so it can meet challenges in the years to come.
- II.) To offer opportunities for youth to interact with others their own age and with concerned adults, and to participate in organized activities to develop their skills, attitudes and knowledge, and increase their sense of self-esteem and belonging.
- III.) To provide a safe, accessible and adequate facility in the Main South community to meet the needs of a growing at-risk population.



*Vincent J. Del Monte,
Executive Director*

*Boys & Girls Club of
Worcester*

To achieve these goals, a new Clubhouse had to be built. The existing structure, once considered state-of-the-art, was in dire need of replacement. The building was indeed showing its age. The heating system was straining, the plumbing (including the pool) was incurring expensive leaks, the electrical system was not conducive to today's demands, the roof was questionable and the facility not ADA compliant. Four stories but actually seven levels high, it was very difficult to supervise and had no outdoor green space. Club officials also realized that the neighborhood had shifted south over the past 80 years, and that the facility needed to be in the heart of things. It was further determined that the Club needed to build a 40,000 sq. ft. facility and should be located close to Clark University.

The Announcement

At the 1995 annual meeting of the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester, the strategic plan was unveiled. Not long after, in early 1996, the city of Worcester began plans to build a 27-acre vocational high school campus in the very neighborhood the Club sought to serve. Club officials approached the city manager and the director of the Office for Planning and Community Development to discuss including the Club on this campus. This action solved two major items for the Club: land acquisition for its new facility and the need for open green space. In return, the Club could allot time to the school for use of the Club's new swimming pool; after all, the city "owed" the Club, through the favorable sale to the city of the former Lincoln Square Clubhouse.

The city manager thought the partnership was a great idea. The plan was announced through the newspaper and *there* came the problem. The city forgot to tell the neighborhood about their plan, most notably, that it was going to take their neighborhood, (all 27 acres) by eminent domain. This would not only displace many long-time residents of the neighborhood, but also destroy many neighborhood businesses located along the Main Street corridor.

Facing intense opposition from residents, businesses and churches, city officials decided to scrap that proposal. So much for "Plan A."

The Club was still intent on locating the new facility in the center of the neighborhood and began to explore new property possibilities. During the holiday season of 1996, local reporters (one newspaper and one radio) thought it would be a great gift to the Club to do some reporting on the progress of the new Clubhouse. Perhaps a possible benefactor would read or hear about the project and make a sizable contribution or donate the land. Headline news, what great publicity, a cover story for a radio talk show. What better coverage could the Club get at this key stage of the process? Congratulations were in abundance but no benefactor.

The Confession

Clark University, founded in 1887 and located in the heart of Main South, in partnership with other constituencies that urgently wanted to see the neighborhood revitalized, developed a comprehensive neighborhood planning strategy. The university and its neighborhood, like many neighborhoods, had seen a dramatic erosion in the quality of life over the past 40 years. Increased levels of absentee home ownership, lack of investment, growing dropout rates and the proliferation of crime and violence had turned a once very desirable middle-income neighborhood into an area of transition.

In 1985, Clark University was one of the original institutions funded under Seedco Non-Profit Assistance Corporation's Urban Institution Program, an effort aimed at bringing urban institutions to the table with neighborhood residents to establish common goals and trust – and to act upon those goals as they revitalize their neighborhood. The organization that arose from this partnership is the Main South Community Development Corporation, a board governed, neighborhood driven entity and a model of Seedco's efforts, with a true partnership formed between Clark and the neighborhood. The Main South organization developed a strategic plan targeting the need for quality affordable housing, and has been very successful in the acquisition, rehabilitation and management of more than 200 housing units.

But even as Clark and Main South reviewed the success of their housing programs, they were disturbed by the neighborhood's continued decline.

At this time, Clark reviewed options available to the institution, such as moving the campus or erecting large walls at the campus perimeter, as other urban universities have done. But the university rejected those concepts as being contrary to its philosophy. Clark, therefore, made a conscious decision to be more aggressive in its efforts to restore the neighborhood and be more pro-active in targeting concerns expressed by neighborhood residents and members of the Clark community. Clark and the Main South organization announced a strategic plan that was a bold, comprehensive approach to urban neighborhood revitalization. Recognizing that improvements in housing alone will not restore an area, this plan addressed all areas of urban decay: housing and the need for more owner occupied homes; public safety and the tremendous value of increased police presence through community oriented policing; the critical importance of education opportunities that foster learning and academic achievement for all children; economic development as an engine of growth for the neighborhood and jobs for local residents; recreation and after school programs for youth; and

the essential element of community that can only be developed through a broad-based partnership.

In January 1997, the executive director and board president of the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester received phone calls inviting them to a very special board meeting of the Main South Community Development Corporation. The executive director of Main South was a good friend to the Boys & Girls Club, but at this point he was the messenger from a very irritated board. They wanted an explanation of the Club's plan, and the Club officials faced neighborhood representatives. After two hours of explanation and apologies, the Club's plans and intentions to improve the quality of life for children in Main South and beyond was gratefully embraced. As they were still reeling over the effects of the vocational school plan, the community group asked only that we keep them informed of our progress – no surprises. That was guaranteed.

The Vision

In April 1997, at the invitation of the Main South organization, officials of Clark University and the Boys & Girls Club took a trip to near by Boston and visited the Dudley Square Neighborhood Revitalization Project. This once desolate area was transformed from decrepit urban blight, to a model neighborhood, through the rehabilitation of good quality existing housing, complimented with new fill-in housing. This was further enhanced with new street-scape areas and new lighting. The institutional representatives gazed in amazement of this renewed (versus removal) neighborhood. This concept could be brought down the Massachusetts Turnpike to Worcester and renew the neighborhood across Main Street from Clark, (site of the vocational school proposal) but would be even better. It would be anchored by the new 40,000 sq. ft. Boys & Girls Club facility with two adjacent athletic fields owned by Clark University, which was trying to expand its participation in the National Collegiate Athletic Association. New housing, a new Club with green space and available athletic fields, and a first-class outdoor athletic complex – the partnership was born.

The M.O.U.

After months of negotiations among the partners that later included the city, a Memorandum of Understanding was developed. This M.O.U. established a public-private partnership, and the commitments and responsibilities to undertake the Kilby, Gardner, Hammond Streets Neighborhood Revitalization Project (K.G.H. Project). Within the scope of the project, the Main South Community Development Corporation will act as agent for the Boys & Girls Club and Clark University during the predevelopment

phase until such time as a limited liability Corporation (L.L.C.) is formed for the purpose of acquiring, remediation and subsequent conveyance of properties within the project area to the Boys & Girls Club and Clark University. The C.D.C. is the managing partner of the L.L.C. The C.D.C. will assume responsibility for fundraising for predevelopment work, project oversight, administrative support, community out-reach and overseeing development of the housing component (80 units) of the project. In concert with city, the C.D.C. will secure \$6.5 million in H.U.D. federal funding for site acquisition and clean-up.

Besides working with the C.D.C. in securing federal funding through H.U.D, a very detailed process, the city is responsible for the oversight of infrastructure improvements, including road repairs and reconstruction, water and sewer improvements and the reconfiguration and termination of public roads. The city would also evoke the power of eminent domain if (and only if) unreasonable obstacles were placed in front of the project.

Clark University would acquire 5.22 of the 7.8 acres designated for the Clark University/Boys & Girls Club project. University trustees already have \$2.5 million to finance construction of the athletic/recreation fields. Subject to compliance with H.U.D. regulations, the property will be conveyed to Clark University for a nominal consideration. Otherwise, Clark must pay full fair market value for the property. The university will manage and maintain the fields and give the Boys & Girls Club the first option of use during non-Clark University activities. Clark will also commit community service work/ study students to help staff and Club. The Boys & Girls Club and Clark University also have an M.O.U. between the two institutions which details usage availability.

Following the acquisition of properties comprising the 7.8 acres, a 2.58-acre portion will be conveyed to the Boys & Girls Club for the development of the new facility. The Club will engage in a \$6 million capital campaign to finance their portion of the project.

The Feasibility Study

As all this progressed, the Boys & Girls Club commissioned local fundraising consultants to conduct a feasibility study that would confirm the goal was attainable. It would be unreasonable and embarrassing if all the organizations involved embarked on such a lofty campaign goal and could not reach it. Thirty-five interviews were conducted, with a special emphasis on individuals connected to foundations and wealth. Results came back with overwhelming support due to the dynamics of the partnership. It was further determined that the collaboration between Clark University and the Boys &

Girls Club would open venues to “new “ money from Clark University alumni and other supporters who probably would not have given such support for any other reason.

The Business Plan

The building plan looks great. The Club will grow from a less effective 33,000 sq. ft. facility to a most efficient 40,000 sq. ft., single-story facility that will double its capacity to serve. But how will the Club support the increased operating budget that would have to grow from \$820,000 to \$1.5 million? To answer this monster of a question, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), located on the campus of Clark University, was engaged. A crack team of eight MBA graduate students from Clark were assigned to assist the Club executive to develop a business plan that will be the blueprint for the Club’s business and financial success. The main component was obvious: raise more money. But how? The Club will stay with the philosophy of a low membership fee and little in the way of program fees. Contributions from the public, and especially from local business, will have to increase significantly, as well as special events. Bingo, provided the gaming climate is conducive, will be reintroduced. Grants continue to increase and an aggressive planned giving program will be instituted.

This business plan process was developed as a free service to the Club and has been extremely beneficial. It is not only a great tool for the Club, it demonstrates the business approach of the Club, and the further involvement of Clark University.

Congressional Action

Although this project is still in its early stages, it is steadily moving forward. Congressman James McGovern (D-Mass.) has worked diligently with H.U.D. and other government agencies to garner financial support for the land acquisition for the Clark-Boys & Girls Club of Worcester portion of the project. To date, \$1.2 million in federal funding has been designated and the local congressional delegation continues to lobby for new funding. Major funding announcements have been made at the Ionic Avenue Clubhouse and at the site of the new facility on two occasions by both Congressman McGovern and Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Congressman McGovern and the city manager publicly announced that they have staked their political futures on the success of the project. Congressman McGovern also hosted a two-day whirlwind tour by the partners in Washington, D.C. to visit eight key federal agencies and make presentations to lobby their support.

Conclusion

At this writing, the Main South Community Development Corporation has made generous offers to all the landowners for the Clark-Boys & Girls Club of Worcester site. Most have replied favorably, but a few are trying to hold out. Unfortunately, eminent domain may have to be used, but should not hamper the process. As soon as site control is sufficiently insured, the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester will embark on its \$6 million capital campaign, one that will take 12-18 months. Occupancy is planned within three years.

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Renovation and Rebirth

With more than 25 percent of its population age 18 and younger, Edinburg, Texas, reflects its slogan as being “Gateway to the Future.” Located 25 miles north of the U.S.-Mexican boarder in deep South Texas, the community of 50,000 is dedicated to improving the quality of life for all residents, but especially its young people.

A key player in this effort is the Boys & Girls Clubs of Edinburg Rio Grande Valley, with a tradition of service dating back more than a generation. The Club received its national charter in 1970 with a single unit. Since then, with strong community support, it has grown to serve over 6,000 youth and has an annual budget of \$550,000. The Club has eight units or extensions. Four sites are school-based, one is in public housing, three others are in county or city owned facilities.

But the most recent addition to our Boys & Girls Club family is the North Learning Center Unit. Its creation included a variety of community partners, ranging from local government to local businesses, working through a special committee, organized by Edinburg Mayor Joe Ochoa. This group, the 2020 Edinburg Public Safety Committee, developed a strategic plan that identified community needs well into the future.

In identifying the needs of young people, the committee determined that a lack of recreational facilities was a major deterrent in curbing youth violence and delinquency.

There was a particular need for such a facility on the northwest side of town, where an abandoned junior high school blighted the landscape.

Because the Boys & Girls Club of Edinburg had always been a recognized leader in providing recreation activities, education programs, and

sports leagues for thousands of youth, it was decided that the junior high locale would make an ideal Club site. What’s more, the school was adjacent to the University of Texas-Pan America (UTPA), one of the top 10 largest public universities in the Lone Star State. The Club project came to the attention of UTPA through college staff and faculty members who were already involved as Boys & Girls Club volunteers and board members. And so our Club-college collaboration commenced.



Mary Flores, Executive Director

Boys & Girls Clubs of Edinburg

The Collaboration

At first glance the school site, literally falling apart from neglect, was not an ideal candidate for renovation. In inspecting its gymnasium, we looked across a gutted room filled with debris, broken glass and wall-to-wall graffiti. Many of us remembered when this facility provided for community needs, and marveled at the rich memories the school still held for alumni.

The old school was in such disarray that restoration seemed a hopeless cause. The facility had no working plumbing, heating or electricity. It was difficult to see potential in this dilapidated environment. However, as we walked through the former school, the dream of revitalizing it filled everyone with hope. We vowed to pursue its rebirth.

We worked with the Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District to attain a 10- year lease. With this in hand, the city of Edinburg led the community in creating an agreement to fund

facility renovation.

UTPA was a leading player in this arrangement, providing in-kind services and drafting a cost estimate for facility renovation. They determined that a minimum of \$66,000 would be needed, and agreed to manage the project. They also pledged \$16,500 toward its fulfillment, along with in-kind labor. City and county government, as well as the school district and private businesses provided the additional resources.

Could this become a reality? Could we serve hundreds of youth at this site? Yes we could.

The Rebirth

Renovation work included installation of electrical wiring, plumbing, air conditioning and handicap accessible ramps, as well as interior and exterior painting. At the same time we applied for, and received, a \$45,000 Bureau of Justice Assistance grant that would fund the new unit's first year of operation. A unit director and program staff could be hired, and program materials and equipment budgeted. UTPA's athletic department agreed to provide volunteers who could get sports camps and special programs up and running.

North Junior High alumni are proud of the renovations and now bring their children to a Boys & Girls Club facility that has a spirit of pride, teamwork, and community support, a legacy that children will enjoy for years to come.

Over 900 youth attended the new Club in January. Ninety volunteers and over 1,800 parents and family members attended special events to inaugurate the new facility. We look forward to soliciting grants to add a technology center to this site in 2001.

At the same time, we are excited about the opportunity to continue expanding our relationship with the University of Texas-Pan American, extending it to other Club units. Club kids will be guests of UTPA sports events throughout the year, and we will work with campus sororities and fraternities.

Benefits for the Club include:

- University sports camps for Club members.
- University students serve as tutors and mentors for our kids.
- University students serve as sports league coaches and Club staff.
- Job opportunities for teens.

Benefits for the university include:

- Internship placements and community service for college students at the Club.
- Job opportunities for college students.

And the most important outcome of this project? It will be that Boys & Girls Club members and college students truly benefit from a wonderful "win-win" situation.

We look forward to the time when former Club members revisit our facility as university scholars.

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Resources

The following resources have been chosen to assist you in partnership building with local colleges and universities. All are available from B&GCA Supply Services.

Manuals/Toolkits

- *CLUBS GO TO COLLEGE: A Guide to Getting Started Toolkit*
This publication provides information on how to begin researching for opportunities in your local community and specifically how to prepare for initial conversations with key college contacts.
- *Community Collaboration Manual*
This is a guide to establishing working relationships with local community organizations, businesses and agencies. It offers Boys & Girls Club professionals the tools, ideas and strategies needed for relationship building with local colleges and universities.
- *Establishing Clubs in Non-Traditional Settings*
A section in this manual discusses how to begin working with local schools, the key community players involved, and the policies that need to be addressed as Clubs establish new extensions.
- *Marketing & Communications Handbook*
A “must” for every Club, this manual provides first-rate guidance to develop an effective marketing and communications plan for your Club-college relationship.

Additional Publications

- Where All Kids Are Welcome (Reader’s Digest Reprint)
- Parade Magazine Article (Reprint)
- Investing in America’s Future (Brochure)
- Saving Lives Kit (Harris Survey of Club Alumni)
- Saving Lives (Brochure)

Video/Radio

- Investment in the Future
- Promise of a Future
- America’s Talking
- 1999 Video Highlights (Oprah, Gen. Powell, Major League Baseball, and more)
- Marketing the Movement 2000 (Denzel PSAs, MLB PSAs and 6-minute Movement overview)
- “Somebody Cares” (One-hour documentary on Boys & Girls Clubs)
- Denzel’s “School’s Out” (TV PSA Broadcast format)
- Denzel’s “School’s Out (Radio PSA)

Web Sites

For strategic information about establishing relationships with colleges and universities, check out these B&GCA partner sites:

American Humanics: www.humanics.org

Campus Compact: www.compact.net

Gamma Beta Phi Society:
www.gammabetaphi.org

You can also find up-to-date information on B&GCA’s intranet site: www.BGCA.net

Boys & Girls Clubs of America is committed to assisting local Clubs as they strive to establish and strengthen partnerships with local colleges and universities through ongoing technical assistance and pass-through funding as available. For further information regarding B&GCA’s Clubs Go To College initiative, please contact your respective regional service director.