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A Place to Belong

What does it take for kids to succeed today? For us, it means doing **whatever it takes** to help them reach their great futures. This means staying mission strong and focusing on the social and emotional well-being of our youth. While we know that children are resilient, even the most optimistic child needs a boost at this time as we seek to find a silver lining to hang onto. At Boys & Girls Club of Benton County we strive to provide that boost to our children and their families.



Our focus on emotional well-being starts with the simple belief that everyone, no matter their age, desires a sense of belonging. Indeed, we all want to feel that we are part of something bigger than ourselves and to connect with people who care. At the Club, we let our children know they are valued members of our community. We give children who are experiencing stress and anxiety a source of emotional well-being and security, letting them know that they are not alone and that we are going through this together. We provide mentorship, guidance, and opportunities for kids to develop meaningful connections.

Just as important, we remind our kids how important it is to have fun! To keep doing the simple things they love like running and playing, being creative, and laughing with friends. It is certainly natural to feel sad and disappointed because of changes to basic routines, events and activities that have been cancelled or postponed, or not being able to see loved ones as often as we'd like. But it is also okay to be happy and to enjoy each day. At Boys & Girls Club of Benton County we provide a safe place for kids to belong and we let them know each day how happy we are to see them. In this way, we are working to create a new normal.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Pancake Breakfast
at Big Whiskey's



8:30 - 10:30 AM



**Boys &
Girls &
Safe Places &
Guidance &
Opportunities**



**Whatever
It Takes to
Build Great
Futures.**



MISSION

To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

VISION

To ensure all kids who need us the most have access to a world-class Club experience, which ensures that success is in their reach, they graduate high school on time & they become productive members of the community.

CORE VALUES

- FUN
- SAFETY
- RESPECT
- BELONGING
- STEWARDSHIP
- HONEST COMMUNICATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Malo, *President*

Nick Flint, *Immediate Past President*

Scott Duhamel, *Vice President*

Louis Martin, *Vice President*

Jeff Evans, *Treasurer*

Amy Elliott, *Secretary*

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Stephen Beringer | Shannon Letts |
| Tregg Brown | Dick Levin |
| Drew Collom | Tim Meyer |
| Jon Davis | John Mauck |
| Ted Fox | Mike Moore |
| Thomas Harris | Prathiba Rajashekhar |
| Mark Huffman | Stephanie Riffle |
| Jerry Kihn | Karen Stuckey |
| Eugene Kublanov | |

As I reflect on the last several months, it dawns on me that we have all been focusing on the physical toll that COVID-19 is taking on us. In all of our communications, we ask and pray that everyone stays safe. However, few of us are talking about the emotional and psychological impact of this disease, especially on children. Here at the Club, we recognize that these children desperately need social interaction and more importantly, they need a fun, safe place to hang out and just be kids. Our mission is to help the kids who need it the most and right now, I would venture to say that all of them need us! Every child's situation is different but we are doing **whatever it takes** for each one, every day, to provide a sense of normalcy, let them have fun all the while keeping them on track in school - and we love what we do. But we couldn't do what we do without the amazing support of everyone in the community - our donors, sponsors, volunteers and staff. We serve the kids because of your generosity and unwavering support. Thank you! They say it takes a village to raise a child and this is testament to that. Great futures definitely start here!



Take care and please stay safe,

Matt Saliaferro



Club Highlights

That's a Wrap!

Last year, Boys & Girls Club of Benton County (BGCBC) was awarded a grant through the Walmart Foundation to help improve and expand access to our after school and summer programs. One of the main focuses of the grant was to expand teen services through transportation support. With this generous funding, BGCBC was able to purchase not one, but two 15-passenger vans to safely transport teens in Bentonville and Rogers from school to our Clubs.



Transportation is always a concern when it comes to after school programs, because many families have limited transportation options and can't leave work to pick their children up once school lets out for the day. In order to ensure youth get to our Clubs, we provide daily transportation at no extra cost to students from over 30 different schools across Benton County. This requires a lot of coordination, time, and resources. But we are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure equitable access to our programs for all youth and are thankful for our many community partners who help create opportunities for more kids and teens to have great futures.

Now, with a unique wrap donated by United Federal Credit Union and installed by Arkansas Sign & Banner, everyone who sees the Boys & Girls Club of the Benton County's vans will instantly recognize them. We want to express our sincerest thanks to United Federal Credit Union for also providing funding to support youth transportation costs. This helps BGCBC to continue and expand on vital programs and services to the over 2,500 youth we serve each year.



CLUB MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Bentley, 10 years old, Bella Vista Unit

How long have you been coming to the Club?

6 months

What is your favorite thing to do at the Club?

Going mountain biking!

What is one way the Club has helped you?

Coming to the Club has really helped to improve my mental health. Being around everyone makes me happy!

What do you like doing when you're not at the Club?

Making TikTok videos!

What is something unique about you?

I have 6 siblings.



"My favorite thing about Bentley is her perseverance and determination! Before Bentley came to the Club she had never been on a bike trail before. She fell off her bike countless times, but every time she got back up on her bike and finished the ride. By the end of summer, she was riding like a pro. I am very proud of her progress she made. I know for a fact whatever Bentley plans to do in her future she is going to be amazing at it!"

- David Nicholson, Unit Director



— YOUTH OF THE YEAR —

EACH YEAR, OUR CLUB HONORS AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBER TO SERVE AS YOUTH OF THE YEAR. He or she acts as an ambassador of the Club, speaks in front of City Officials and Board Members at Club events, and most importantly, acts as a role model for all the younger kids in our program.

To become Youth of the Year, nominees go through a rigorous process with an essay application and a panel interview comprised of Board Members & Strategic Partners.

Picking one outstanding teen is always a difficult decision, but it's also really rewarding to see all that our teens have accomplished thus far in their young lives and to hear about their goals for the future.

We are excited to announce this year's Youth of the Year: Shakira Haro!

A graduate of Rogers High School, Shakira joined the Club during her freshman year after learning about Keystone, our premier teen leadership program. The Club helped prepare Shakira for her future and provided her with the necessary skills to pursue her passions. In August, Shakira began her freshman year at the University of Arkansas, majoring in sociology.

"Shakira is one of the most genuine and compassionate teens I have had the pleasure of working with," said Ashley Skaggs, Director of Programs. "She has grown into a confident young woman who encourages others to embrace their individuality because she sees the good in everyone she encounters. Shakira's dedication and love to the Club has made an immense impact on her Club peers, the staff and our community."

— “ —
Being Youth of the Year is more than a title, but a reminder for myself that I can do it, no matter what "it" is. I am more than capable and so are many others.
— ” —
Shakira Haro

As a testament to just how outstanding Shakira is, she was also selected as the Arkansas State Youth of the Year. The honor recognizes an individual between the ages of 14 - 18 who demonstrates academic achievement, leadership skills, and service to the community.

Shakira also competed on the regional level for Arkansas's Youth of the Year. The winner from the state then goes on to compete regionally, and finally nationally against other recipients across the country. As Youth of the Year, Shakira has already received a \$5,000 scholarship from our Club and additional scholarship money from Boys & Girls Clubs of America to use toward her education. We are excited to see what the future holds for Shakira as she continues to pursue greatness.





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McKinney Unit (Bentonville)
2801 N Walker St.
(479) 273 .7187

**John & Maxine Watson Black Unit
(Pea Ridge)**
1442 N Davis St.
(479) 715.4448

Rogers Teen Center
704 W Cypress St.
(479) 256 .2464

Bella Vista Unit
2260 Forest Hills Blvd
(479) 876 .6786



Your gift helps keep our kids safe.

DONATE NOW!



Text To Give

Text: **GOBGCBC to 44-321**
to donate through texts!



Donate Online

bgcbentoncounty.org/donate



You shop. Amazon gives.

Visit smile.amazon.com. Select Boys & Girls Club of Benton County as your charitable organization!

GETTING + GIVING

THE MOST FROM YOUR ASSETS

When most people think about making a charitable gift, they think of giving cash. While we appreciate gifts of any kind to help support our Club and our members, there are many ways you can give and benefit from making a gift of other assets—such as real estate, annuities, life insurance, bequests, IRA roll-overs and more.

To learn more, contact
Stefanie Jackson, Director of Resource Development
sjackson@bgcbentoncounty.org

Donate a Wish List Item!

We serve over 2,500 kids in the community, so we are ALWAYS in need of supplies for our Clubs.

These items include:

- cleaning supplies
- candy
- copy paper
- art supplies
- office supplies
- board games
- school supplies
- sports equipment
- books
- personal hygiene items

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!