



Providing  
hope &  
opportunity  
for a better  
future



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

# Great kids don't just happen.

They thrive on nurturing, hope and opportunity, and respond well to kindness and concern for their well-being. These values are intrinsic in Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan. This is our annual report to you, reflecting our accomplishments of 2008.



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### Our Mission:

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan is a youth development organization providing a positive environment that enables its members to become responsible, self-reliant, caring adults!



From left: Len Krichko  
and Tom Hoeg



Dear friends,

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan (B&GCSM) fills a unique niche in the community by offering kids what they need most: hope and opportunity. Over the years, we've become known as the positive place for children ages six to 18 in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw counties. Our 13 Clubs provide a safe haven for some 26,000 kids annually.

During economic downturns, including the ominous 2008/2009 economic crisis, we cast a safety net for kids in need. Today, our services are needed more than ever as we assist children and teens whose families have been devastated by home foreclosures, job losses and shrinking incomes.

In our 83-year history, we have helped kids overcome adversity, embrace diversity and explore their talents, skills and interests. We encourage kids to have fun as we help them grow into responsible, self-reliant, caring adults.

Thousands of our alumni have excelled in their professions, taken care of their families and given back to society. Much of their success can be traced to our Clubs and the professional staff and volunteers who lent a hand to help them find their way in a world of vast potential. Our annual report contains profiles of members, donors and alumni. In them, you'll see the common thread of good mentoring, great experiences and golden opportunities made possible by B&GCSM.

As the leading youth development organization in the region, we need steadfast community support to help our kids thrive. We want to thank our contributors, volunteers and other supporters who have helped us reach challenging goals in 2008. This year, let's spread our message so more people know about the good work that we do. Thanks for making B&GCSM "the positive place for kids!"

Yours truly,

Thomas E. Hoeg, Chair of the Board

Leonard R. Krichko, President & CEO

# Lessons on getting kids to graduate from high school

## How we achieve a 90% graduation rate

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan has achieved one of the highest graduation rates among high school students who are prone to dropout. Many of the kids who attend the Clubs live in low-income households, often headed by a single parent. Many have faced neglect, foreclosure, violent crimes and other dire circumstances. Yet, B&GCSM President & CEO Len Krichko touts a graduation rate of 90% for Club members, compared to Detroit Public Schools' reported graduation rate of 58%.

While the high dropout rate locally, regionally and nationally won't be solved overnight, the rate can be slowed and overcome by building on what works.

Through a triad of programs, mentoring and opportunities, we can insure that virtually all Club members will graduate from high school. (Also see core programs article on page 4.)

By working together, B&GCSM and other youth organizations will help stem the tide of rising dropout rates. This is an area where the Clubs make a dramatic difference in helping kids thrive. The reasons for our high success rate are ripe for sharing:

**1. Start young.** When intervention comes at the right age, the message of staying in school becomes a mantra. As early as age six, kids can attend the Clubs' summer program known as Youth Enrichment Activities (YEA). In addition to YEA, which bridges the gap in knowledge over the summer break, sports and leadership programs help keep kids on the right path.

**2. Collaborate.** Helping kids graduate from high school has fast become a national priority. B&GCSM is taking a leading role in the national effort to curb the high dropout rate. In September 2008, Krichko attended an "America's Promise" conference in Washington D.C.,

## ALAYNA BELL

### Former Youth of the Year thrives on campus

Emerging from a shy girl in junior high into a leader shaped by the programs and people at Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan, Alayna Bell has blossomed into a spirited student on the campus of Oakland University.

Majoring in business and art with plans to work as an art director in marketing, Alayna is thriving in college. She's involved in several diverse, fun activities – ranging from being on the house council of her dorm, to being a member of the Grizz Gang spirit squad and cheering for women's basketball and other sports.

She is applying to the business fraternity Alpha Kappa Psi for networking and career advice. Next year, she hopes to become a resident assistant (RA) at Hamlin Hall, which houses about 500 freshmen. That role would not only add to her leadership skills but also pay for room/board and a stipend. Akin to taking the bull by the horns, you could say that Alayna has taken the Oakland "Grizzly" by the ears.

"College is wonderful," she said. "I like the whole experience. I can be very independent. It makes me ready to be an adult."

She's got studying down pat. She reads constantly and reviews course material well before exams, so she can actually "relax" and concentrate on her tests during exam week. "It's very important to study before the exam, not the day of the exam. I have to study more than I did in high school because college has more depth," she said.

A skilled artist in the making, Alayna is passionate about her classes in art and art history. When stressed, she turns to art, talks with a friend or calls her mother. For fitness, she goes to the campus recreation center and rides a stationary bike.

The hardest part of her transition from high school to college was letting go of some former friendships and learning to

live without her parents on a daily basis. Many weekends, she visits her former Club, the Dick & Sandy Dauch Campus, home of the NFL/YET Boys & Girls Club in Detroit. Last summer, she worked as a student aide there. In 2008, Alayna was voted B&GCSM Youth of the Year and earned a partial scholarship after graduating from Henry Ford Academy.

She notes that B&GCSM helped prepare her for being a good student and getting involved in programs and community efforts. "Serving as president of the Keystone Club helped me become a leader," she said. "On the house council, I have to listen to a lot of different opinions. Other students often come to me because they can see that I'm friendly and willing to help."

Another lesson that she learned at the Club: "You have to have tough skin. Everyone in the world isn't going to be nice to you. You have to always believe in yourself."

"At college, I'm learning that this is a step into the world. There's a lot of diversity. Oakland has students who are Caucasians, Asians, Hispanics and other nationalities. You have to be able to deal with everyone – no matter what their background or color of their skin. She learned much about diversity and the ability to get along with others at the Clubs, one more way that B&GCSM prepares kids to succeed.





along with community leaders from 11 other metropolitan areas with the highest dropout rates. The conference called for participants to collaborate on local levels and implement solutions. Now, B&GCSM is sharing its best practices and working on developing winning strategies to help kids stay in school and graduate.

**3. Think big.** Krichko recommended that Boys & Girls Clubs of America also take a leadership role as America's premier youth development organization. In response, B&GCA launched a national task force to address the problem and invited B&GCSM to serve as one of 12 Boys & Girls Clubs on the task force. A tenet of the task force is "every member, every year." To help ensure that each member completes coursework and moves up to the next grade level, professional staff are being asked to watch the ABCs – attendance, behavior and course failure. These three areas often signal the risk of dropping out.

**4. Be creative.** The Summer Olympics program at the Fauver-Martin Club titled "Rings around the World" gave kids a real education in diversity in summer 2008. Eight different countries were discussed and explored through their arts, food, activities, dress and language. People from various ethnic groups were invited to the Club to discuss their culture and show crafts and other native items. Irma Elder, CEO of the Elder Automotive Group, was one such local ambassador representing her native country of Mexico. Regions of study were: China, India, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria and the U.S. Highlights of the program included making and tasting native food, working on art projects and visiting the International Center in Detroit.

**5. Help with homework.** At each of the Clubs, kids must complete their homework before starting on activities. The motto is, "work first, play later." The kids like the structure and gain confidence when they've completed their homework – it's one less thing to worry about later. The Clubs' professional staff and volunteers lend a hand as tutors and mentors.

**6. Instill self-discipline.** Helping kids learn how to make good choices that impact their schoolwork, safety and social life are inherent in the programs and culture at the Clubs. Kids learn that practicing self-discipline keeps them from experimenting with drugs and alcohol, and hanging out on the streets. Addressing high-risk behavior in middle school provides a natural path for kids to follow when they enter high school. The Clubs work hard to help students realize that getting good grades and setting goals is their ticket to a brighter future.

**7. Model leadership skills.** The Clubs offer the Torch Club for kids ages 11 to 13, and the Keystone Club for kids ages 14 to 18. Each of the clubs elect officers to lead the group. Community service and outings for fun and education are part of the program. Our gender-specific "Passport to Manhood" and "SMART Girls" programs teach boys and girls to make wise choices and set goals.



# progress

## ADAM DREW accelerates his career path



As a 15-year-old high school sophomore, Adam Drew has his trucks in a row. Pardon the pun, but Adam intends to become an auto mechanic and has taken the needed steps to work toward that goal.

While too many kids nowadays are dropping out of school, the professional staff at the Wertz Club, of Shelby Township, has helped Adam stay on track for graduating and pursuing a technical skill. At Henry Ford II High School, a Utica community school, Adam excels in shop class. When technical school representatives visited the class to talk about getting an associate's degree, Adam listened. He has decided to attend a technical college in Chicago and return to Michigan to work.

Adam said that he learned a lot from Mike Matthews, a program coordinator who conducts the Career Prep program at the Club. He learned what to expect from a job and what employers expect from him. He knows how to write a resume. To "get experience at how the real world works," he is a student aide at the Club and enjoys helping younger kids.

As a Club member for eight years, Adam has many friends – some of them are classmates, others are friends he otherwise wouldn't have met. "It's a good place to be. There's always something going on at the Club," he said. "I can get help with homework. They (the staff) make homework more exciting."

He often asks for help with Algebra, and appreciates the guidance he receives. When his homework is done, he likes to draw and spend time in the art room or play basketball in the gym. Adam realizes that without the support and direction of the Club staff, he is at greater risk of getting into trouble like some of his buddies who aren't members. "When I'm feeling down, the staff seems to know it and asks, 'What's going on?' Sometimes I talk to them about it, sometimes I just want to work things out on my own." Either way, he knows other adults outside his family care about him.

While Adam doesn't yet have his driver's license, he does have a vision of his dream car. If he continues to plan and pursue his goals, don't be surprised to see him driving a yellow or red Porsche boxerster on the highway. Just watch the speed limit, Adam!

# Core programs build character, commitment & skills

We give our kids the tools to succeed. Many of these tools come in the form of programs, outings and new experiences. Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan offers five core program areas that help Club members gain confidence, pursue their interests and develop their abilities. If kids learn to express their feelings and thoughts in words and actions – through writing, art, sports, group discussions and interactive skits and games – they are less likely to resort to risky behavior to get attention. Our programs help channel our members' mental and physical energy into productive, stimulating activities.



## Our five core program areas are:

1. Character and Leadership Development
2. Education and Career Development
3. The Arts
4. Sports, Fitness and Recreation
5. Health and Life Skills.

While each of these programs merits further explanation, this article will focus on the fine arts program. (More information about our programs is available on our website: [www.bgscsm.org](http://www.bgscsm.org), and will be featured throughout the year in our newsletter, "Kids First.")

One component of our arts program encourages Club members to create artwork in a variety of media, including drawing, printmaking, mixed media, collage and sculpture. Expressing feelings or perspectives through art draws on creativity and life experiences. Those skilled at using an art medium to express their intent or capture the essence of an object – a dog's soft look, a sunset's glow, shade cast by a tree – are given the opportunity to exhibit.

Competitions are held at the local, regional and national level, with each contest narrowing down the quantity of artwork on display while raising the quality. In 2008, the artwork of two Club members was chosen to be displayed in the National Fine Arts Exhibit.

## Current interests drive Shannon DeFoe to big goals

A ninth grader at Romulus High School, Shannon DeFoe dreams big. When she grows up, she wants to be a member of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and then become a dermatologist.

As a 6-foot center and starting player on her high school varsity girl's basketball team, she's off to a good start. In the off-season, Shannon plays AAU basketball. She also does well in school and plans to go to Michigan State University.

Shannon belongs to the Romulus Club (Merriman), where she enjoys helping younger students with their homework. She is a past president of the Torch Club, a leadership development program for members aged 11 to 13 who get involved in special activities and community service. She now belongs to the Keystone Club, for older teens. She likes to play dodge ball and plans to work as a student aide at the Club.

As the single mother of Shannon and two other daughters, Clenynthia Johnson, aka CJ, has high praise for the Club. "The reason that Shannon does so well at the Club is due to the staff and the director, Jill (Covell). When you have someone who is compassionate about what they do and about the children, you know you're in a good place."

Shannon concurs, "If I have a problem, I know I can talk to the staff. It's a nice Club. I feel safe here." Her younger sister Shannel, 11, also goes to the Club that's been Shannon's second home for five years. Many siblings belong to the Clubs, which helps keep families close.

Johnson believes that Shannon has the opportunity and ability to excel. While she sometimes struggles in school, there are people at the Club to help her. She is learning self-discipline and how to stay focused – important traits for a high school student.

"I tell my kids the sky is the limit," Johnson said. "You need to reach for your goals. It all starts at home." And the Clubs are here to support and foster the parents' role.





You can view the award-winning work of Rachel Griffin, of the Wertz Club, who created the multicolor drawing, "Happiness," and Tiffany Gibson, of the Huron Valley Club, who sculpted "Fetish," at Boys & Girls Clubs of America's virtual gallery ([www.bgca.org/programs/finearts](http://www.bgca.org/programs/finearts)).

Studies show that students who take art education or create their own works of art tend to do well academically, participate in math and science fairs, are often elected as class officers, and have better school attendance. The arts also help individuals develop skills in abstract and concrete reasoning and judgment, organization, self-discipline, complex problem solving, and cause-and-effect relationships.

Enter any of our 13 Clubs throughout southeastern Michigan and you're likely to see our members' art gallery. The art room is one of the favorite places for kids to be. There, children and teens are instructed in the project of the day but also are given the freedom to explore. Time spent on artwork is a relaxing way to channel one's skills and feelings into a creative, tangible piece of art – whether it's a drawing, sculpture or montage. Viewing works of art in the members' gallery – either at the Clubs or online – promotes diversity and art appreciation.

Art is a powerful means of expression. As public schools reluctantly cut art programs due to budget constraints, B&GCSM is committed to keeping arts as a core program so our members can reap the rewards of its amazing benefits.



# character

## JASON

### Budding artist blooms at Wertz Club

For 8-year-old Jason, going to the Wertz Club gives him time to delve into art. Despite his young age, he's an exceptional artist who likes to draw in pastels, chalk and oil. His favorite subjects are pets, flowers, butterflies and lions. He looks at existing pictures and models, and painstakingly traces his object freehand before filling it in with the media of his choice.

His father Patrick says that his son's artwork is pretty amazing. The professional staff at the Wertz Club agrees; his drawing of an owl earned him first place in the B&GCSM Fine Arts Exhibit in monochromatic drawing and sculpture for ages nine and under. It's on an exhibit tour and will be judged next at the regional level.

As one of triplets, Jason is very active and dissipates some of that energy by playing basketball at the Club. Art tends to calm him down. He thrives on being in the art room, usually with older kids, where he can create his masterpieces. When his dad comes to pick him up, he often begs to stay just a little bit longer.

Being easily distracted when doing homework, Jason welcomes the help of the professional staff. Summer is one of his favorite times because he can hang out at the Club, where he's been a member since he was six years old. His siblings, Kara and Tyler, also attend the Club.

As a third grader at Mohawk Elementary in the Chippewa Valley School District, Jason enjoys science and math. Being good at art, science and math will really take him places as he grows, and the Wertz Club will be there to guide him.

# Outcomes connect with opportunity



Club alumni often point to their membership as one of the reasons that they have excelled in their professions. Many are leaders in the community and successful in business and politics, education and other endeavors. Some have even become movie stars and entertainers. Alumni build on the skills and experiences they gained in the Clubs. As adults, many are doing well with families, businesses or careers, and often volunteer to help others. This section features two alumni who have maintained a connection with B&GCSM.

**In Southeastern Michigan**, over 270,000 young people over the past 83 years have benefited from belonging to Boys & Girls Clubs. Based on research by Louis Harris & Associates, Club alumni said they gained a great deal from the Clubs, including:

- 80% said Club staff helped them learn right from wrong
- 95% indicated the Club was the best thing available in their community
- 57% said participating in the Club "saved my life."

## ROSA TEFTSIS

### The Clubs are a key ingredient for success and happiness

As a mother, businesswoman and mentor, Rosalva (Rosa) Teftsis believes in the powerful impact that Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan has on youth in Detroit and surrounding suburbs. She is an alumna of the Clubs, having attended the Bloomer Club in Detroit.

Now, she is chair of the Bloomer Club's advisory council. In this role, she rallies support for the annual Steak & Burger fundraising event that benefits Wayne County Boys & Girls Clubs. She is also a generous donor and has helped B&GCSM flesh out the role and activities of the Alumni Association.

She has high praise for professional staff members at the Clubs who are dedicated to serving youth. Many are trained youth professionals and also grew up as Club members. "These rare and distinguished professionals are blessed in their capacity to mentor, support, inspire and guide youth," Teftsis said. "They know how to communicate with children."

Teftsis joined the Bloomer Club at age 10. She recalls doing many of the things that kids in the Clubs do today: play four-square and dodge ball, make crafts, take photos, play softball, and attend workshops on health, managing money and other life skills.

"Being at the Club was such an exciting experience for all of my youthful senses," she recalls. "I was a happy, blooming child."

She also belonged to the Keystone Club, a leadership experience where she learned about community problem-solving, how to accept responsibility and how to run a meeting. In this role, she was invited to youth conferences in Indianapolis and Nashville. At each conference, the participants were divided into groups to show the larger assembly how they would discuss and propose solutions for youth issues, such as being pressured to join a gang.

Her involvement with the Clubs went to an exceptionally high level. She was named Youth of the Year for B&GCSM in 1990 and went on to win as B&GCA Midwest Youth of the Year. She was one of five regional winners who went to Washington D.C. for the National Youth of the Year award presentation. She and other Club members met with the senior President Bush in the Oval office of the White House. That once-in-a-lifetime meeting with the president was captured in a photo that now serves as a valued memento.

When the national organization (then known as Boys Clubs of America) changed its name to Boys & Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA), Teftsis attended the news conference and major event

in New York City. She also represented B&GCA in two international youth conferences: one in Germany, just after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the other in Calgary, Canada, just after that city had hosted the Olympics. She also attended a board meeting in Paris, France for the international federation that organized the international youth conferences.

"The Boys & Girls Clubs opened doors to places and experiences that enriched my life forever," she said.

After graduating from high school, Teftsis earned a Master of Health Services Administration degree from the University of Michigan (1997) and a Master of Accountancy from Walsh College (2005). She received tuition assistance from the Joseph Freedman Scholarship Fund, through B&GCSM. When she and her husband Michael started their family six years ago, her priorities shifted. She left a corporate position at MEDSTAT Group to spend more time with her children and began to manage the information technology needs of Astoria Pastry Shop in Greektown, a business owned by her husband and his brother, Anestis Teftsis. Despite her busy life, she remains committed to the Clubs on both an advisory and personal level.

"I had the opportunity to connect with the Youth of the Year (Alayna Bell). We hire some Club members to help out at the bakery. Consistency is a strength of the Clubs. I hear today's members say the same thing that I felt 25 years ago when I first joined. They say the Clubs feel like their home away from home.

"The sense of security and belonging is a compelling reason why so many kids stay with the Clubs," Teftsis said. They thrive on being challenged physically and mentally in a way that builds their self-esteem and helps them set and attain goals, Teftsis notes.

In rebuilding our communities, Teftsis said, "The Clubs' most important benefits are to contribute to the maximum growth of the human spirit among our youth – the community's most important asset."







## Join the Alumni Association

If you or someone you know has ever belonged to Boys & Girls Clubs in any state, we invite you to join the B&GCSM Alumni Association. You can renew friendships, expand your professional network, attend events, help out at Clubs and donate to a great cause for kids. To join, register on the B&GCSM website ([www.bgcsm.org](http://www.bgcsm.org)) or contact Ann-Marie D. Morris, director of Annual Giving, at (248) 522-4418 or [amorris@bgcsm.org](mailto:amorris@bgcsm.org).



# giving

## LEVEN WEISS touches lives



Helping kids grow up strong with a good support system enables them to become contributors to society. If they are left to fend for themselves and figure things out without any guidance, all too often they take the wrong path and become a burden to society. That's the assessment of Leven Weiss, a Chrysler executive and strong supporter of B&GCSM. He notes, "The Clubs teach our kids – whether disadvantaged or from solid households – to be contributors to society."

Weiss attended the Diehl Club in Detroit when growing up in the early 1970s, and now is in its Alumni Hall of Fame. Day-to-day activities coupled with big opportunities molded his childhood and helped launch his education. He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa on a football scholarship and graduated from law school at Howard University in Washington D.C., with help from the Joseph Freedman Scholarship Fund secured through Boys & Girls Clubs.

At age 14, he went on an amazing month-long, cross-country trip with other Club members to 26 different states and many of the national parks, including the Badlands, Grand Canyon, Mt. Rushmore, Yellowstone and Yosemite. "It was the trip of a lifetime," he recalled.

He's a firm believer in the Clubs' outcomes. "Even though there were challenging things in the neighborhood and urban community, I would feel safe and shielded from a lot of that by coming into the Club," he said. "Those who followed the rules and guidelines of the Clubs moved on; many of those who couldn't are now extended wards of the state."

A harsh reality indeed, but one that illustrates the flip side of the coin if there aren't enough Clubs to help kids grow up safely, interact with positive role models and gain opportunities in support of our public schools and neighborhoods. Many of these kids simply end

up in prison or become a drain on society in other ways. As an attorney with criminal law experience, Weiss noted that none of his young male clients had ever been members of Boys & Girls Clubs.

"One of the things that impressed me most about the Club was the sense of community and community service. There were many adult volunteers who would come in and work with the kids," he said.

Weiss benefitted from a male teacher who volunteered to coach him in chess. Weiss learned fast and went on to win championships. "I didn't realize the magnitude of his involvement and how it impacted me until later," he said.

Now, that memory guides him to help others. "We often focus on financial resources; an even more valuable resource is time. You never know the impact of a successful adult's presence. You may not ever see it. But when a man or woman walks into a Club wearing a suit, you don't know what child might be looking at them and thinking, 'I want to be like that.'"

Weiss is a board member of B&GCSM and sits on its Executive Committee. He says the organization augments the efforts of public school education and fills a void that is expanding due to budget constraints and a sour economy. "The Clubs instill discipline, values, honor and respect in a manner that's non-denominational. These time-tested values benefit a community and are deeply rooted in the precepts of our democracy."

Weiss lives in West Bloomfield with his wife Priscilla and has two daughters, Jourdan and Peyton. Both his daughters went to the Wilson Club in Auburn Hills. His work with B&GCSM on the board and as chair of the Michigan Alliance for Boys & Girls Clubs consumes much of his free time. Why does he do it?

"It's my way of saying thank-you to those who did something for me 40 years ago," he said. "I'm passing on their legacy to someone else. If my efforts can increase contributions by a few dollars or have an impact on one or two kids, it will be worth it. You never know which of those kids will come up with the answer to cancer or bring about world peace."

# We've earned the support of many

*Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan brings together successful business owners and executives, philanthropic-minded individuals, skilled professionals, and scores of volunteers. All of the people who support the efforts of B&GCSM through their donations, in-kind gifts or by volunteering are also improving*

*the community for kids and families. Their involvement helps prevent children from falling through the cracks of society. By working together, generous sponsors help the Clubs prepare our kids for a brighter future.*

## Peter Brown gains sponsors for major golf event

As executive editor and associate publisher of Automotive News, Peter Brown has a birds-eye view of the auto industry and the executives who make it run. As chair of the executive planning committee for the Automotive Golf Classic and a B&GCSM board member, he also knows that these industry executives like to give back to the community where they live and work.

In his charitable role, he has become an ambassador to the auto industry for B&GCSM. "It keeps you humble when you see the tremendous achievement of kids who've overcome many difficulties in their lives. The staff is dedicated to making a difference and they do," said Brown.

On May 18, 2009, Brown will commemorate a decade-long involvement with the annual golf event. Last year, more than \$475,000 was raised at the May 12 Automotive Golf Classic held at Indianwood Golf & Country Club in Lake Orion.

"It's the major golf event of the year for the auto industry," Brown said. The golf outing is also a stellar networking event that attracts automotive executives who work in purchasing, sales and marketing as well as their suppliers.

Many sponsors, including business rivals, come together to make this event swing. Last year's event was sponsored by five automakers: GM, Ford, Chrysler, Toyota and Nissan.

Brown is especially appreciative of the efforts of Fran LeVeque, executive vice president of Meridian Automotive Systems. LeVeque also serves on the executive planning committee and his wife Marti assists by selling raffle tickets at the golf event.

"Meridian Automotive has been a superior supporter. Year after year, this company has energetically promoted this event. They have been the hospitality sponsor for nine years and brought in many other suppliers," Brown said.

Brown became involved at the invitation of Harold Kutner, a former vice president of worldwide purchasing at GM who transformed a smaller golf event into the highly successful Automotive Golf Classic. He recalls Kutner's initial pitch, "Just go to one of the Clubs and you'll be sold." Needless to say, Brown was sold on the Clubs and what the staff does for the kids. "I feel very blessed to be involved with this group," he said.



## ANDRA RUSH encourages kids to "dream big"

Andra Rush is a Native American who has worked hard to achieve success. Now, she is giving back to Boys & Girls Clubs as a board member, mentor and philanthropist.

Education is the cornerstone of her success. Rush earned a nursing degree and pursued a master's degree in business administration at the University of Michigan. While working on her MBA, she did an internship at an airfreight company. Noticing that the weakest link was inconsistent pick-up and delivery between trucks and airplanes, she devised a solution and asked for the opportunity to test it in the field. Armed with that experience, she founded Rush Trucking in 1984, in Wayne, MI.

As president, she led the company's growth to become a world-class transportation group that covers North America, Mexico and Canada. She also is president of Dakkota Integrated Systems LLC, a joint venture with Intier Automotive, a subsidiary of Magna International. As a woman who works in a male-dominated industry, Rush relies on teamwork, collaboration and innovative solutions.

Nine years ago, she joined Boys & Girls Clubs of America's volunteer leadership team, serving as a national trustee for the Midwest region. She had known of the Clubs through her father and uncles, who

were members. One uncle, Jim Rush, a lightweight golden gloves boxer, claimed, "The Clubs saved my life."

"So many leaders and people that I've admired belonged to a Boys & Girls Club," Rush said. Fighting the odds is what she treasures most about the organization; the Clubs help kids overcome bad neighborhoods, limited opportunities, despair, neglect and mediocre education.

Rush is a member of the board of B&GCSM and also sits on its executive committee. When she visits the Clubs, she is impressed by the mentoring. "The Club directors and professional staff are engaged with the kids. Their smile is often the first one that a child gets from an adult that day. The staff teaches study skills and communication skills. Often, the staff tells kids that they can be great. They are truly great leaders and heroes in their lives."

Her advice to kids mirrors that of her grandmother and mentor, Minnie Maracle, who was born on Six Nations Reservation in Oshwegon, Ontario, Canada. "Dream big, go to college and be anything you want to be," Rush said. "Don't let anyone steal your dream. You have to believe in yourself. Your environment and past doesn't predict your future. Don't be afraid to ask for help."

Rush has successfully managed a business while raising a family of three boys. The kids at the 13 Clubs of B&GCSM are already benefitting from her leadership and example. Having another adult to help them visualize and believe in their dreams is the first step toward acting on them.

One of her dreams is to create a sustainable foundation to fund a club on a reservation to provide for the many complex needs of Native American children and their families.





## THE MARTINS continue family legacy to support Clubs

Kirk and Kathy Martin are highly motivated to support Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan based on their personal involvement with the Clubs and a family tradition of giving back.

Kirk's father Nick Martin has a 50-year history of supporting the Clubs. He was introduced to the organization by his good friend, John Fauver. John and his wife By, and Nick and his wife Lou are namesake donors to the Fauver-Martin Club in Highland Park, where they funded renovations and expansion.

Kirk, a successful business owner, has since continued his father's legacy. Now that their three children are grown, Kirk and Kathy are more active in the organization. Kirk is a member of the board of directors and Kathy supports events and fundraising for the B&GCSM Women's Association.

Both Kirk and Kathy agree that the Clubs fill a void. "They keep kids in the community safe; it's a circle of growth, education, working at an occupation and giving back," said Kathy. "Those who've come up through the Clubs help the community thrive and provide for more children growing up."

The Martins have seen first-hand that activities at the Clubs provide the building blocks for strong kids, strong families and a strong community. "When you see how the Clubs run, you'll notice that the older kids take responsibility for the younger kids and help mentor them. And staff members mentor the older kids," Kirk said. "Kids with problems may find others with the same situation and are able to gain support and encouragement. That helps greatly."

Kirk supports the Clubs' approach to provide a safe and nurturing place for kids to go, learn and become socially responsible. "The Clubs teach them certain abilities, such as computer skills," he said. "They are encouraged to go into higher education. In the summer, the Clubs provide lunch for the kids."

Kirk and Kathy admire the positive habits the Clubs instill in kids, such as completing homework and treating others with respect; coupled with larger pursuits such as setting life goals, getting an education and helping out in the community. They believe the Clubs provide a beacon of light, particularly in troubled urban areas.

"Kids see that there's more to life than what they see at their homes and on the streets," Kirk said. "The poverty and the demise of the city around them may be their present reality but it doesn't have to be their future."

"You see proof of the Clubs' positive effects every day, especially when you hear about some of the kids' heartbreaking personal stories," Kathy added. She notes that the Clubs help all kinds of kids: those from broken homes and poverty, and those from stable, middle-class families.

Kirk and Kathy attend the Fauver-Martin Club Golf Classic in the fall, which generates funding for the Club. While Kirk helps the organization raise money through his presence on the board, Kathy has generated additional funding on behalf of the Women's Association, including its scholarship drive (for Club memberships). She co-chaired the July 25, 2008 Summer Social with Julie Beals and has helped with other events as well. Her greatest reward is "seeing the smiles on the kids' faces at the Clubs and knowing they are getting opportunities they otherwise wouldn't have."

Both Kirk and Kathy agree: "It's a good organization. We are proud to be a part of it."



## Mitch Harris helps the Pontiac Club

Helping kids comes naturally for Mitchell (Mitch) Harris, of Troy. With two grown sons of his own, he now has more time to give back to the community and help younger children who lack the opportunities that his sons have had. Ryan J. is a senior at Bowling Green University in Ohio and Mitch Jr. is a 2004 University of Michigan grad, now working for Proctor & Gamble in Fayetteville, AR.

"It was time to get re-engaged in the community. The natural place to start was to help kids," Harris said. "I love kids. I always have."

That opportunity came when Larry Knox, a longtime supporter and board member of Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan, invited Harris to attend the B&GCSM Friendship Club Breakfast in April 2008. This annual event increases awareness in the philanthropic community of the organization's mission and outcomes. "It opened up my eyes to the need," said Harris.

What followed not only shaped Harris' role as a community volunteer, but led to an outpouring of support and volunteerism among employees of AkzoNobel, a global manufacturer of industrial coatings and specialty chemicals with local operations in Pontiac and Troy.

As a human resources executive at AkzoNobel, Harris is responsible for the company's corporate social responsibility program, aimed at giving back to local communities. He was able to secure \$50,000 in corporate support to help upgrade the Pontiac Club. With the help of employees, the Club received a new fence, a repaved asphalt parking lot, and interior improvements. Employees also held a fundraiser to refurbish its game tables.

When an ancillary office building closed, Harris and other employees salvaged the carpet for subsequent installation at the Club. Many employees had attended a Pontiac Club in their youth, making this

hands-on task a tribute to the organization that previously helped them.

Harris now serves as chair of the Pontiac Club advisory council and sits on the board of B&GCSM, serving on the Programs/Buildings & Properties Committee. His goal is to get more employees in Research and Development (R&D) at the Troy location involved at the Pontiac Club. Several have volunteered to teach classes in French and math, and they've already put on a chess tournament for the kids.

"The Clubs give kids a safe haven and a stimulating environment," said Harris.

"These are good kids," he added. "Although many of the 473 Club members are growing up in poor economic conditions and often in single-parent households, it doesn't diminish the fact that they are smart, motivated, want to learn and be the best they can be."

For a city like Pontiac, which grapples with a high crime rate and has a median household income of only \$31,000, having a Boys & Girls Club in town is key to a brighter future. Only 10% of residents in this town of 60,000 who are 25 years and older have a college degree or more advanced degree. This lack of educational achievement underscores the need for Pontiac's young people to learn how to establish positive goals and act on them. The Club helps kids bridge the gap from hard times and tough neighborhoods to a better future.





# Meet our board members

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\* Members of  
the Executive  
Committee.



## McLernon Challenge steps up giving

In 2008, Jim McLernon, director emeritus of B&GCSM, issued a challenge to board members for the 2008 Board Campaign to seek 100% participation and raise at least \$100,000, which he would match. Board members generously contributed and exceeded the goal by raising a total of \$338,000.

Of his 45-year involvement with the Clubs, McLernon said, "The Clubs never varied from their mission. They have always been here to educate, provide a safe alternative to the streets, tutor and counsel Club members and offer sports. Everyday, you see the results of what we do. Many former Club members are now executives and leaders."

McLernon's commitment to the organization was steadfast throughout his remarkable 50-year career in the automotive industry, which took him from GM to the helm of Volkswagen of America (VWA) and to other successful ventures. He was one of the founding partners and past chairmen of American Axle & Manufacturing.

His impressive accomplishments set a high standard for board members and other B&GCSM supporters. "I stay active in it because I believe in it."

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### Jane Warren

Women's Association Life Member

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Buffalo Bills

# Women's Association funds scholarships

The Women's Association launched a first-time scholarship drive in 2008 to help ensure that no child is turned away from the Clubs due to an inability to pay.

The drive exceeded expectations by raising more than \$21,000. This amount will help families in need pay for Club fees: \$50 for an annual membership. Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan spends \$500 per child each year to provide programs.

"We found that approximately 5,000 kids would not be able to join a Club because their parents can't afford to pay for it," said Pat Steffes, who chairs the scholarship drive with co-chairs Lil Erdeljan and Linda Gillum. A new annual drive is under way for 2009.

The Women's Association formally recognized this achievement at the In Celebration Dinner on Nov. 19, 2008. Additionally, the Women's Association raises about \$100,000 annually to help support the Clubs. The group is open to new members who would like to volunteer, provide financial support and attend social events to benefit the Clubs.



*The Women's Association award luncheon on April 9, 2008 brought together (from left) Anita Dauch, co-chair; Alexandra Esslinger, 2008 Youth of the Year from Orion/Oxford Club; Sue Nine, event chair; and Pat Steffes, past Women's Association chair.*



*Valerie Straith and Judie Sherman mingle at the Summer Social.*



## Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan gratefully recognizes the following donors who supported the scholarship drive in 2008.

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Mrs. Robert A. Allesee  
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## 2008: Year in Review

A summary of what we achieved with donor and volunteer support:

1. Delivered vital youth development services to more than 26,000 youth. We also provided "safety net" services to families of members affected by job loss and home foreclosures.
2. President & CEO Len Krichko was invited to a national forum called America's Promise to share the Clubs' methods of success to help kids graduate from high school. (B&GCSM has a 90% graduation rate among members, compared to about 58% for Detroit Public Schools.)
3. FOX Sports Detroit provided 1,000 children with Club memberships and launched a public service campaign to create awareness of the organization's mission and new website.
4. Facility improvements at Fauver-Martin Club, Diehl Club (ongoing) and the Pontiac Club now provide a brighter space for kids to learn, play and be safe. Several Clubs also upgraded their computer centers.
5. Long-term supporters increased their contributions. A \$100,000 challenge led by Board Emeritus Jim McLernon exceeded its financial goal.
6. Obtained new sources of funding. The Skillman Foundation supported a new initiative to enroll more kids in YEA to improve learning retention over the summer and start a new basketball program to help adolescent boys work toward the goal of graduating from high school.
7. Created a new website with online giving. (EDS employees provided the design and architecture as a community service. Microsoft donated the software.)
8. Activated an alumni group to create a culture where adults who've been members could assist current members by mentoring, making donations and volunteering.
9. The Summer Olympics in China led to many interesting programs that fostered diversity and cultural awareness at our Clubs in addition to a focus on athleticism.

## Honor Roll of Donors

*We gratefully acknowledge the support of our generous donors - individuals, families, corporations and foundations - that enable us to fulfill our mission to kids in southeastern Michigan. Through our 13 Clubs, 26,000 kids annually have the opportunity to learn, interact with others and exercise in a safe, positive environment. They gain hope through mentoring by staff, volunteers and other role models and by sharing friendships with peers. As a result of your efforts, more kids are experiencing a fulfilling childhood and growing up to become responsible, self-reliant, caring adults.*

(For gifts received  
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2008)

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Mike Brevard, of Microsoft, congratulated 2008 Youth of the Year Winners (from left: Alayna Bell, Samuel Maddox and India Smith) at the Friendship Club Breakfast.

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The 2008 In Celebration Dinner honored Irma Elder (center), shown with event co-chairs Millie Pastor (left) and Lisa Wilson.



John & Sharon James; Jedediah, of the Fauver-Martin Club; Alayna Bell, 2008 Youth of the Year; and Edd Snyder enjoyed the In Celebration Dinner.



Club members toured FOX Sports Detroit's studio as guests of announcers Trevor Thompson (far left) and Shireen Saski (far right), who also volunteer at Club events and mentor kids.



Thanks to a generous grant from the EDS Foundation, young people who attend the Fauver-Martin Club have a state-of-the-art technology center, complete with new computers, software and furnishings.

## \$250 - \$499

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Fran I. and Marti A. LeVeque



*Maggie & Bob Allesee  
enjoyed the 2008  
In Celebration Dinner.*



*(from left) Nick and Lou Martin and John and By Fauver  
attended the 2008 Women's Association Summer Social.*



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Len Krichko, Diana Jones, Bob Ficano (honorary co-chair), Bella Marshall Barden (event chair), Tom Hoeg and Cathy O'Malley celebrated the success (\$100,000 raised) of the 2008 Wayne County Steak & Burger Dinner.

Kids from the Clubs surround role model and mentor Jon Kitna, Boys & Girls Club alum and former Detroit Lions quarterback. Kitna was honorary co-chair of the 2008 Wayne County Steak & Burger Dinner.



Darrell and Lynn Middleton, Lisa Wilson and Mary and Robert Nunez mingled at the In Celebration Dinner. Mary is the current Women's Association chair.

To view a list of 2008 donors who contributed less than \$100, please visit our website. Please notify our office of any errors or omissions so we can correct our records and acknowledge your support. Thank you.



## BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

### Providing quality programs in four counties

Our Clubs are centrally located in neighborhood settings (free-standing and school-based facilities). Annually, we serve more than 26,000 boys and girls, ages six to 18. We have 13 Clubs in four counties. Please visit our website for the names of our Club directors and contact information.

#### Wayne County

**Belleville Club** (school site)  
Edgemont Elementary  
125 South Edgemont St.  
Belleville, MI 48111-2830

**Bloomer Club**  
3910 Livernois St.  
Detroit, MI 48210-2900

**Dick & Sandy Dauch Campus**  
NFL/YET Boys & Girls Club  
16500 Tireman St.  
Detroit, MI 48228-3629

**Diehl Club**  
4242 Collingwood Ave.  
Detroit, MI 48204-1614

**Fauver-Martin Club**  
24 Ferris Ave.  
Highland Park, MI 48203-2912

**Holden Club**  
20100 Schoenherr Rd.  
Detroit, MI 48205-1166

**Romulus Club** (school site)  
Merriman Elementary  
15303 Merriman Rd.  
Romulus, MI 48174-3290

**Romulus Club** (school site)  
Wick Elementary  
36900 Wick Rd.  
Romulus, MI 48174-1391

#### Oakland County

**Orion/Oxford Club**  
1801 Waldon Rd.  
Orion, MI 48359-1239

**Pontiac Club**  
124 W. Columbia Ave.  
Pontiac, MI 48340-1810

**Wilson Club**  
220 S. Squirrel Rd.  
Auburn Hills, MI 48326-3253

#### Macomb County

**Wertz Club**  
14975 21 Mile Rd.  
Shelby Township, MI 48315-5000

#### Washtenaw County

**Huron Valley Club**  
220 North Park St.  
Ypsilanti, MI 48198-2953

*For more information about our Clubs and programs, please contact:*

**Administrative Office**  
26777 Halsted Road, Suite 100  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3560  
(248) 473-1400  
[www.bgcsm.org](http://www.bgcsm.org)

### How our kids grow & prosper

- Clubs are located in freestanding facilities or school-based settings in neighborhoods. They are open five days a week, providing a safe, positive place for kids.
- Professional staff provides guidance, serves as mentors and helps kids do well in school.
- We offer life-enhancing programs and build character development through new experiences.
- Kids make new friends at the Clubs.

### Who we serve:

- **In 2008: 26,383 youth (members and guests)**  
Male: 14,551      Female: 11,832
- **Diverse members:**  
African American: 70%      Multiracial: 4%  
Caucasian: 20%      Asian: 1%  
Hispanic: 4%      Native American: 1%

### How you can help:

We welcome volunteers and donors to help support B&GCSM. To find out more, please call our Administrative Office or visit our website.



Produced by Cezat Creative Resources, Inc.

Writing/project management: Liz Cezat

Design: Julie Nyhus

Photography: Jeanne Stevenson



## Providing a better future, beginning today

Our core principles:

- Serve as an outstanding youth development organization – establish quality programs at a local level, drawing from the strengths and research provided at the national level.
- Provide a safe place for kids – offer an alternative to the streets (and the inherent problems of drug/alcohol addiction, violence, crime and dropping out of school).
- Offer a positive environment – help kids develop optimism and hope, and learn to treat others with respect.
- Reinforce a child's education – encourage kids to graduate from high school; help them retain knowledge over the summer months; supplement learning through outings, activities, courses and service clubs.
- Prepare kids for a bright future – help kids set goals and develop healthy self-esteem; encourage higher education or learning a trade; and foster a sense of compassion and service to the community.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

For more information about our Clubs and programs, please contact:

Administrative Office  
26777 Halsted Road, Suite 100  
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3560  
(248) 473-1400  
[www.bgscsm.org](http://www.bgscsm.org)