

Great Futures



Our New Leadership

By: Steve Weis, Board President

Your continued support has allowed us to push forward with energy and purpose amidst much uncertainty due to the COVID-19 crisis. As you know, during this time, we have been looking for the next leader of Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus who will help us pursue excellence during the next chapter of our organization.

It is my great pleasure to share that the board of Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus has named Doug Wolf the new CEO. Doug has served as Interim CEO since March 2020 and has been a member of the executive leadership team since 2016—most recently serving as Chief Program Officer.

It is especially during these unprecedented times that Doug has consistently demonstrated smart and steady leadership, as well as tireless passion for our kids and Clubs. We look forward to growing our impact in central Ohio with Doug at the helm. Now, more than ever, we need your support.

Thank you for your belief in our mission and our kids.

Dear Club Family,

When I walked through my first blue door in 2016, I knew it wasn't just about the space — it was what was inside the space that mattered. At Boys & Girls Clubs, we offer an oasis for kids where the places they're from and the circumstances that surround them don't determine their access to experiences or opportunities.

Throughout our 72-year history, our Clubs have been a safe space full of quality programming for youth across central Ohio. As COVID-19 sweeps through our community, we continue to adapt and respond.

We are an organization built on strength, grit, and resilience.

I am honored to serve the Boys & Girls Clubs' mission as the next CEO. What I love most about this organization is that we are a family of donors, staff, and volunteers who support one another and *do whatever it takes to ensure all kids have a great future.*

In a time of so much change, one thing remains constant — our mission to empower young people to reach their full potential. **Thank you for all that you do to ensure that every child has the opportunity for a great future.**

To Great Futures,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Wolf".

Doug Wolf, Chief Executive Officer



Kids Thrive When They Know That Adults Care



Words of encouragement from a caring adult can provide both motivation and guidance for kids, especially in challenging times. Thank you to our many donors who sent messages of hope to our Club kids letting them know, "I'm here for you!"

Email hope@bgccolumbus.org to send your message of hope today.

2020 Youth of the Year, Antoine, Reflects on Life During the Coronavirus



“It’s hard having to teach yourself something new each day,” says Antoine. “I try, but it’s not the same as being in class. For the first time, I miss school, and I really miss going to the Club.” For Antoine, age 17, life changed almost overnight. One day, he was laughing with friends at school and the Club; the next day, he was home trying to navigate the challenges of distance learning.

“For the first time, I miss school, and I really miss going to the Club.”

A Typical Day During Quarantine

Antoine has assumed additional responsibilities at home since the onset of COVID-19. His mother leaves early each morning to work a full day at Kroger, leaving Antoine to care for his younger brother Kenyon, age 8. Apart from trying to complete his junior year of high school with good grades, he has the added responsibility of helping his younger sibling complete schoolwork,

supervising chores, and cooking meals. He also helps his mother keep the family healthy by taking on additional cleaning and sanitizing chores around the home, as well as washing extra loads of laundry.

Virtual Club Connections

Antoine represented central Ohio youth by competing virtually in the Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year competition in April. Though competition day was not as he originally envisioned it, Antoine delivered his speech to a panel of judges via Zoom, an online meeting application, while dressed in a jacket and seated in front of a Boys & Girls Club banner. The highlight of the program was a collection of videos made by both current and past Club staff who have watched Antoine grow and develop during his 12 years as a Club member. “Knowing how much people cared was amazing,” said Antoine. “It made me feel so special.”

The launch of the Club’s **Virtual Club Experience** serves as a constant reminder that the Club is still here for both Antoine and Kenyon. Both boys have enjoyed the familiarity of participating in Club enrichment and the chance to connect with staff members on video.



“There are so many kids that depend on the Club for so many things. Some kids need food, some kids just need a grown-up they can talk to. For me, I would not be anything without the Club. Your support is making a difference for so many kids out there.”



Chris and Mike Close pictured with their children and grandchildren.

Why We Give

Family Joins Together To Help Ensure Great Futures for Columbus Kids

When Jorie and Brian Close walked through the Club’s blue door for the first time, they knew Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus was an organization they wanted to support. “We were so impressed by the kids and their desire to achieve their dreams. We wanted to be a part of helping them reach their full potential,” said Jorie.

Brian’s father, Mike Close, was eager to join his son and daughter-in-law in their work. Mike was a gym teacher at the Club’s first site on Gift Street in the 1960s. He saw first-hand the importance of the constancy and guidance provided to kids by the Clubs.

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Seven years later, the family’s circle of giving has expanded to include 20 members, including in-laws, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins. The Close, Schirmer, and Schmitt families are proud to band together to support a mission that makes a difference for so many kids in our community.

“When kids come to the Club, they have the chance to just be kids. And every kid deserves that opportunity,” said Jorie.



Care Packages Bring Smiles to Club Kids

Although everyone’s lives have been affected by the uncertainty of this pandemic, the community keeps reaching out to us, asking for ways to help. Our staff has been working directly with families to connect them to free resources for food, internet and technology. During this outreach, many families expressed the need for food and other basic household items. We also learned that our kids, who rely on our Clubs for physical activity, needed tools to stay active.

Thanks to our donors and friends at the Lindy Infante Foundation, OSU LiFEsports, The Champion Companies, & Mid-Ohio Food Bank!

250 care packages containing shelf-stable foods and sports equipment were distributed to kids and families by Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus volunteers. Included in the packages were tools to help kids maintain positive mental health, as well as messages of hope from our donors.



THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION

DON'T FORGET!

Coming June 10-11

Thank You To Our Blue Door Society Donors!

The Blue Door Society celebrates donors who support the Club's mission by giving \$1,000 or more within the calendar year. Donors who join the Blue Door Society receive special communications and newsletters, recognition in Club publications and an invitation to exclusive donor events like the annual Youth of the Year celebration.

Welcome to our 2020 Blue Door Society!

*List as of 5/18/2020

Individuals

Jonica Armstrong
Vanessa and George Arnold
Warren Bauer
Gillian Brassil
Bonnie and Bob Brokaw
Chris and Mike Close
Jorie and Brian Close
Carol and Fred Crum
Tom Davis
Barbara and Gary Douglas
Barbara and David Eft
Erin and Michael Farley
In memory of Zac Hoefl
Laurie and Jeffrey Kameron
Catherine and Steve Kennedy
Jackie and Ken Krebs

Tani Mann and Andrea Russell
Johnathan Northup
and Luke Bolin
Shirley and Ed Nyhan
Chris and Randy Randolph
Lynne and Martyn Redgrave
Sandy Rich and Rick Daley
Jan and Doug Wolf

Corporations and Foundations

Adobe
AEP Foundation
Anthem Blue Cross Blue
Shield Foundation, LLC
Armstrong World Industries
The Champion Companies

Columbus Youth Foundation
Cycle614
Deerborn Charitable Fund
Fifth Third
Gap
Gledhill Robbins & Talis Group
Huntington
Kids Foot Locker Foundation
Kiwanis Club of Columbus
Kiwanis Club of Hilltop
Columbus
Marian Foundation
Nationwide Foundation
Old Navy
Reinberger Foundation
The Robert Weiler Families
United Way of Central Ohio

**For more information on how you can join the Blue Door Society and open the door to great futures for kids in our community, please contact:
Julie Kirk, Philanthropy Manager at 614.221.8830 or jkirk@bgccolumbus.org.**

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