

JULY 2025

Club Kid Matters

ISSUE NO. ONE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY

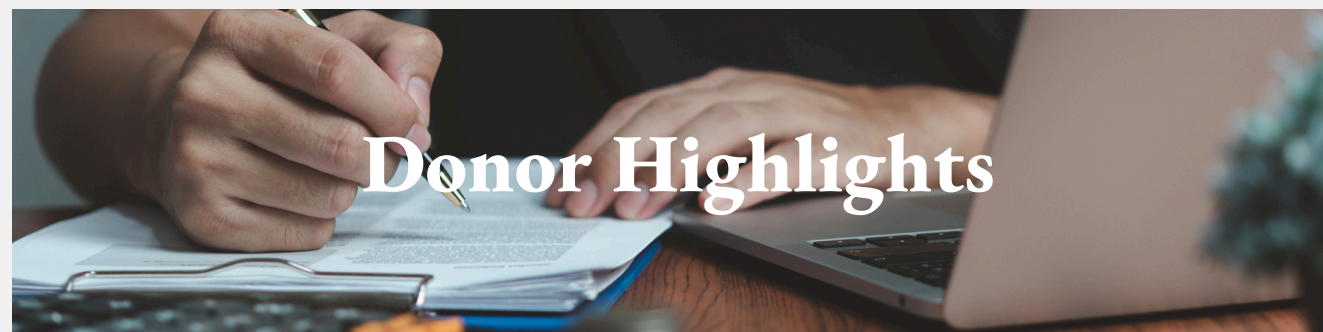
**Keep an eye out for
our latest marketing
campaign.**

**Columbus
Needs
Club Kids**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America has launched a powerful new campaign: “America Needs Club Kids.” This national movement highlights the vital role Club youth play in building a stronger, brighter future for our communities. Here in Georgia, we’re proud to echo that message with our own local rallying cry: “Columbus Needs Club Kids.”

At the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley, this campaign is more than a slogan—it’s a commitment. We believe our Club kids are tomorrow’s leaders, innovators, and changemakers. With your support, we’re helping them unlock their full potential, right here in Columbus. Because when we invest in Club kids, we’re investing in the future of our city—and our country.

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Donor Highlights



Teen Centers in Action



Sports Change the Game



Donor Spotlight: Chuck Griffin Jr.



by Katie Evans

Chuck Griffin Jr. went from the rec room to the board room at the Boys & Girls Clubs. Chuck worked for the Boys & Girls Clubs in Opelika and Columbus for around 8 years before starting his business, Griffin & Griffin Towing. His philanthropy began before joining the board of directors in 2022, providing a Thanksgiving meal at our J. Barnett Woodruff Club for our Club members and their families for over 10 years. During the holidays, Chuck sponsors "Shop with an Op", where some of our Club members are paired with his tow truck operators for a Christmas shopping spree. Chuck also steps up in other ways throughout the year as a Upatoi Polo Cup sponsor, sponsoring Boys & Girls Clubs memberships for his employees' children, and so much more. We're proud to have Chuck's steady support, generosity, and leadership shaping the future of our Clubs through his role on the Board of Directors.



Our Teen Centers Hit the Mark

by Larry Underwood

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley's teen centers are more than just after-school hangouts—they're launching pads for future success. Central to this mission is the state-of-the-art remodel of the John F. Flournoy Sr. College & Career Center, the newly upgraded North Columbus Teen Center designed to empower teens ages 13–18.

After nearly two years and a \$2.5 million investment, this center opened in January 2024 with cutting-edge learning environments, gaming and "Level-Up" lounges, podcast studios, and dedicated labs. It provides targeted workforce development through certification programs—such as ServSafe and trade pathways—alongside college prep support (SAT/ACT, applications, scholarships) and one-on-one mentorship. These features are part of a broader strategic effort to ensure teens are not just academically prepared but are job-ready from day one—whether heading to college, entering skilled trades, or stepping into the workforce. This remodeled facility complements other teen hubs—like the East Columbus Teen Center and the J. Barnett Woodruff Center—making sure every teen in Columbus has access to safe spaces, quality programming, and pathways to a successful future. With a focus on college readiness and career readiness under one roof, these teen centers are key pillars of BGCCV's mission to build skills, confidence, and opportunity for local youth.





Columbus United Visits our North Columbus Club

The Power of Play: Why Sports Matter

by Larry Underwood

At The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley, sports are more than just games—they're powerful tools for growth, teamwork, and building lifelong memories. From the sound of sneakers squeaking on the basketball court to the laughter echoing across the kickball field, athletics play a vital role in helping our Club kids learn, grow, and thrive.

Basketball is one of the most popular activities at our Clubs. It teaches kids the importance of discipline, practice, and focus—on and off the court. Players develop confidence through competition and learn how to win with grace and lose with dignity. The lessons they learn through basketball extend to their studies, their relationships, and their dreams.

Baseball gives our members a chance to step up to the plate in more ways than one. Whether they're catching pop flies or cheering on teammates from the dugout, our young athletes are learning responsibility, sportsmanship, and the value of teamwork. Each inning is an opportunity to grow in skill and character.

Soccer is another favorite, offering fast-paced fun and a strong sense of unity. On the soccer field, kids learn how to communicate, work as a team, and appreciate the diversity of backgrounds and cultures—skills that will serve them far beyond the game.

Kickball might seem like simple playground fun, but it's one of our most inclusive and exciting sports. Everyone can join in, making it a fantastic way for kids of all skill levels to stay active and build friendships. It teaches the importance of having fun, trying your best, and including everyone.

At the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley, sports help shape healthy habits, develop leadership, and create a sense of belonging. Every game played brings our Club kids one step closer to becoming confident, capable young leaders—on the field and in life.





North Columbus Boys & Girls Club

North Columbus Boys & Girls Club Pool Installs WAVE Drowning Detection System

by Larry Underwood

Columbus, GA – In a bold move to elevate water safety for local youth, the North Columbus Boys & Girls Club has become the first pool in both Georgia and Alabama to implement the WAVE Drowning Detection System—an advanced, wearable safety technology that provides real-time alerts if a swimmer is in danger of drowning.

The WAVE system uses lightweight, wireless wearables used by swimmers to continuously monitor their movement in the water. If a child is submerged for too long or shows unusual stillness, the system immediately notifies staff through audible and visual alarms, giving rescuers critical extra seconds to respond.

“This is a game-changer,” said Fred Maglione, Interim CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley. “Our number one priority is the safety of our kids. WAVE gives our staff another layer of protection that helps prevent tragedies before they happen. We’re proud to be the first to bring this life-saving technology to our region.”

The decision to bring WAVE to the North Columbus location was spearheaded by Ronnie Bell, Area Director for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley, whose dedication to youth safety and innovation made the project a reality.

“Ronnie’s leadership has been instrumental in getting this technology in place,” Maglione added. “He’s always thinking ahead and pushing for ways to create the safest and most supportive environment for our Club members.”

The pool at North Columbus is a central hub of summer activity, offering swim lessons, recreational swim time, and water safety education to hundreds of local youth. While the Club maintains certified lifeguards on-site at all times, WAVE acts as an added safeguard by continuously monitoring every swimmer, even when visibility is reduced or the pool is crowded. According to the WAVE Drowning Detection System team, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children under the age of 5, and one of the top causes for youth under 14. Often, it happens silently and within seconds. WAVE provides an extra layer of vigilance that supports, rather than replaces, human supervision.

“This is about more than just technology,” said Maglione. “It’s about peace of mind—for our staff, our parents, and most importantly, our kids.”

To learn more about how the WAVE system works and its impact on aquatic safety, visit www.wavedds.com.



Upcoming Events:

- Back to School 2025 (August 4th)
- Upatoi Polo Cup (September 21st)
- Youth of the Year 2026 (February 5th)



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY

In the next issue:



Our Back to School enrollment is in full swing, join a club today!

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