

Because YOU cared

How you make the difference our community needs



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SOUTH ALABAMA



“Growing up I was very timid and never really had many friends, but because of the Club I have become more connected with my peers.”

Amyah, age 18
2019 Youth of the Year Winner

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- Jamarcus Smith Swim Academy
- 2019 Telethon
- Faces of the Future & More!

Take a look inside  to find out more about our Youths of the Year.

Congratulations to our 2019 Youth of the Year Finalists



Amy M.

Semmes Branch



Amyah B.

Sonny Callahan Branch



Jarren N.

Kiwanis Branch



Elanna E.

Brenard Malkove Branch



Noah M.

Optimist Branch

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Jr. Youths of the Year



Coreion W.
Gilliard Elem. Branch

Coreion attends Clark-Shaw Magnet School and serves as President of the Gilliard Branch Torch Club. His favorite sport is soccer, and most of his free time is spent either outdoors or playing video games. When he grows up, Coreion will join the army and afterwards become a police officer because he enjoys helping people.



Terrence B.
Whitley Elem. Branch

Terrence attends Calloway Smith Middle School and loves to help and encourage other kids. His favorite sport is football, and most of his free time is spent either playing outside with his friends or playing video games. When he grows up, Terrence will be a music producer and music label president.



The JaMarcus Smith Swim Academy Program

In the summer of 2018, a tragic accident occurred when a teen member of our Optimist Branch, drowned while attempting to save his younger brother. Neither of these boys could swim.

In response to this loss, BGCSA decided that each member of our Optimist Branch would receive swim lessons. Through partnerships with the Michael Phelps Foundation, Austal USA and the Dearborn YMCA, Club members are transported to the "Y" where they receive swim lessons and learn water safety skills. Our swim program has been designated as the JaMarcus Smith Swim Academy, in memory of the young distinguished Alumni.



"Our City, Our Future" Telethon Surpassed it's Goal because of You!

This year's Telethon was a great success. Because of you, BGCSA surpassed its goal of \$30,000 receiving just over \$60,000 in overall contributions! Your donations gave 145 Kids the opportunity to attend Summer Camp at no cost! Thank YOU for providing youth in your community the chance to enjoy an enriching and life-enhancing summer.



The Club, Home Away from Home!



Growing up Amyah was very timid, and never really had friends. She stayed to herself most of the time, and never had the urge to talk to others. Her younger cousin attended the Sonny Callahan Branch and later introduced her to the Club when she was eight years old. Amyah was immediately welcomed by the team members and staff with smiling faces the very first time she walked into the club. She is very thankful that her cousin introduced her to the club because she has received many opportunities while attending.

Torch Club was the start of her community service. Torch Club is a program for younger kids to help make a difference and get involved. Some of their service projects included creating Thanksgiving gift baskets and participated in monthly can drives. Once she turned thirteen, Amyah was able to join the Keystone Program, where she served as secretary. She enjoyed

collecting data and developing ideas to help make their community great by volunteering their services. For some of their yearly projects they fed the hungry, volunteered at the Animal Rescue Foundation, made toiletry baskets for The Penelope House, and organized a Thanksgiving Can Drive. The Keystone Program allowed her to attend college tours at Alabama State University, Talladega College, Auburn University in Montgomery, the University of Alabama in Birmingham and the University of Alabama.

“The Club has made me who I am today, a stronger and better individual. It has helped me with my social connections, confidence, and acceptance.”

“It is a place where I could simply just be me and enjoy myself while doing it. It also took my mind off of things, whenever I was upset.”

All of these colleges had a lot to offer, and really opened her eyes for her senior year. The University of Alabama was personally her favorite because of the many things they had to offer, such as clubs, organizations, and sports. Being a part of Keystone helped her to decide which college was best for her future.

Amyah was also involved in the Photography Class, which was very different experience for her. She never really thought of just taking pictures for fun until the class came and I fell in love with the process of taking pictures, editing them, and displaying them for people to see. Some of their art was displayed at the LODA Art Walk Downtown Mobile, as well as the Mobile Public Library. The Photography Class taught her great work ethic and how one picture can express numerous of things.

Cheerleading never interested Amyah, until she met her best friend at the Boys & Girls Club. She helped to develop a passion for cheer that was never there before. As a result, Amyah cheered for six years, and there was nothing else that she would have rather done.



Once she finished cheer season, she started volunteering at the Sonny Callahan Branch to help younger girls find their passion for cheer, just like her best friend did for her. Overall the Club has helped her to become more interactive with other people. Being a part of all of the programs and activities helped her come out of her shell and become the person she is today. She was active with the Club for ten years, and it has taught her so much. She is glad to have a place to fall back on like the Sonny Callahan Branch.

Being part Ghanaian, Amyah grew up finding herself to be different from others. Her mother is African American, and her father is Ghanaian. Nobody really knows that fact about her. For some reason she always felt the need to hide it, as though she was ashamed of who she really was. When she was five years old, her parents separated, and she had to move from Virginia to Alabama. The move was already difficult enough, so the thought of anyone knowing her true ethnicity would have made the move more challenging. This caused her to not communicate with kids her age during this time. Boys & Girls Club helped with her with this problem.

“The love and support I received from the members and staff was unconditional. I loved being a part of such a dynamic program like the Sonny Callahan Branch. Everyone is like family - we stick together no matter what. I am blessed and very thankful for the Club.”

There were kids from the club who understood her problems and her as an individual. The staff members made her feel special and important, they helped her embrace who she is.

Amyah’s vision for Americas Youth is equality. Her definition of equality is, everyone is the same and nobody is better than the other. If youth start with themselves, then one street, one block, and one community at a time, equality could be reached. She believes this because being a part of the Boys and Girls Club was a family, a family that personally loves you for who you are. There are different races, cultures, and genders at the club. Therefore, in the Boys and Girls Club family, they establish an environment where youth are not judged for race, gender, or cultural beliefs. That is truly what makes the organization different. The Club simply loved her for her. It is truly an environment where you can just be ourselves without any differences.



Pictured from left to right: Amyah, Elanne, and Jerren

Planet Fitness, Inc., one of the largest and fastest-growing franchises and operators of fitness centers in Mobile, awarded 3 deserving Club members the Judgement Free Generation™ Scholarship. As the home of the Judgement Free Zone®, Planet Fitness seeks to recognize young people who have promoted kindness, acceptance and inclusion in their communities, qualities that Planet Fitness strongly support. As part of the program, each scholarship recipient received \$5,000 toward their college education.



Teens Learn Valuable Customer Service Skills with Starbucks

Through workforce development, teens learn about different positions and career paths through job shadowing and internship opportunities with company staff. For the past two year, our teens have been learning about customer service which helps them improve their communication skills to become more employable in today's workforce. Each month our teens work with Starbucks at the ArtWalk providing free coffee with smiles and great conversations.



Dance is in Full Swing!

As a part of our six core areas, the arts is designed to foster creativity in young people, and give them outlets for self expression. Dance is a very powerful form of artistry requiring multiple levels of engagement. Because of you, dance lessons are in full swing at our Clubs. While participating in dance, Club members are growing physically, mentally, socially, and cognitively. This current generation of young people, one-third of whom are overweight or obese, may be the first in American history to live shorter lives than their parents. Our dance programs directly address this health issue by helping children to become more active and to exercise in a fun way. This year, 30 kids a week received dance instruction at 2 clubs, and we are hoping to expand the program so that all Club members have an opportunity to experience the joy of dance.



Reel Fun on the Water!

This summer several Club members got the chance to enjoy a day of fishing during our annual "Wishing to Go Fishing" Trip. Because of our sponsors at White-Spinner & Doug Wilson, Club kids got the experience of a lifetime.

Faces of the Future



Job Ready Program gives Teens New Skills

Through our Job ready program, youth are exposed to meaningful on-the-job training experiences while practicing and strengthening employability skills. First-job training opportunities include organized summer employment and seasonal part-time employment, paid or unpaid internships, and training of hard skills.



The job ready crew strip and wax floors for all of our clubs and some local churches in the community. Additionally, members of our cooking club provide catering services for various events. Recently at Leinkauf Elementary, our future chefs served Leinkauf staff nutritious fruits and berries to jump start their morning!



Lindsey, Age 6

Semmes Branch

Lindsey's favorite thing to do in the Club is to play in the gym with her friends and the Club staff. Lindsey is being recognized for her leadership and willingness to help others throughout the Club.



UPS Program Develops Safe Drivers

UPS Road Code focuses on different safety principles throughout the program, from basic instruction to the consequences of risky behaviors such as talking on cell phones, texting or drinking while driving. During the program, teens learn safe driving skills and practice the skills on a driving simulator. The driving simulator features a computer screen that serves as a windshield to the program's interactive animation, a steering wheel, and life-like gas and brake pedals. Safe drivers are being created because of you!



Brandon, Age 15

Kiwanis Branch

Brandon was a previous member of the Torch Club and is currently the Vice President of our Keystone Club. He participates in the Photography Program and is a Teen Leader at the Club.





BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SOUTH ALABAMA

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**Did your Club Experience
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Share your story
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