

# Our response to COVID-19

Doing Whatever It takes to continue Building Great Futures



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF SOUTH ALABAMA



## **COVID-19**

**RELIEF ♥ FUND**

Donate Today

[www.bgcsouthal.org/donate](http://www.bgcsouthal.org/donate)

### Inside This Issue

- Corporate Spotlight on Austal USA
- 2020 Youth of the Year stories
- Virtual Clubs
- Congratulations to class of 2020!

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

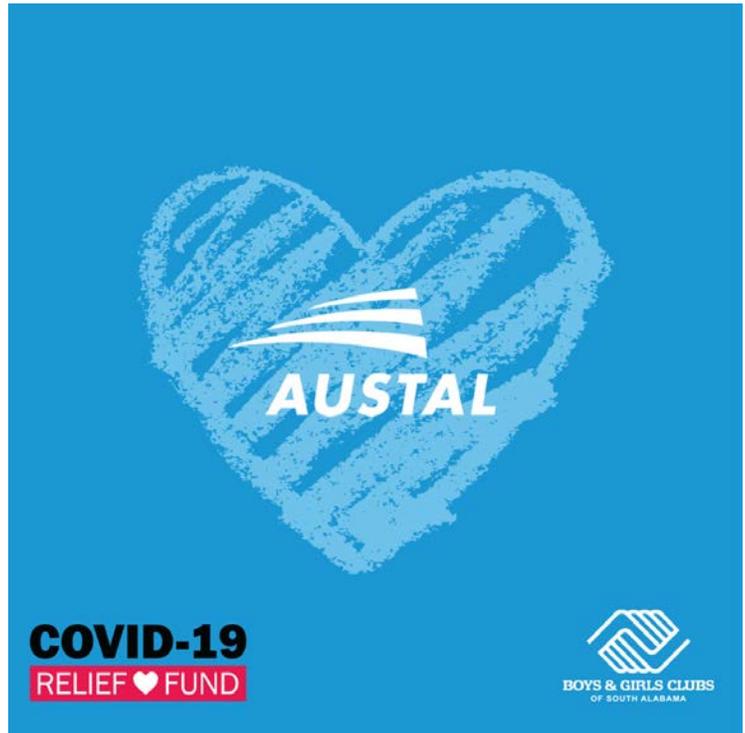
## Corporate Spotlight on Austal USA

After launching our COVID-19 Relief fund in April, we were excited to get notice of a generous donation from our friends at Austal USA.

To ensure we are able to continue to Build Great Futures, Austal has issued a challenge to the community. For every dollar raised for our COVID-19 Relief Fund, **Austal will match your donation dollar for dollar.**

Austal USA is a proud member of the South Alabama community and we feel very lucky to be able to support our community that does so much to support our workforce and our families," said Craig Savage, Austal's Director of External Affairs.

Austal USA is an industry-leading defense contractor: designing manufacturing, and supporting innovative and affordable high-speed aluminum ships.



Partner with our friends at Austal USA by donating to our COVID-19 Relief Fund today!

Thank you to our friends at Austal USA!

REGISTER TODAY LIMITED SLOTS

### Camp Chandler Tonsmeire

## SUMMER DAY CAMP

YOUR DAILY ADVENTURE

CAMP CHANDLER - TONSMEIRE • 2701 SHELTON BEACH ROAD • MOBILE, AL 36618

Welcoming Ages  
**6 to 12**

**DAILY ACTIVITIES**

- ARCHERY • HIKING •
- LOW ROPES COURSE •
- GAMES • CRAFTS •
- SPORTS • SWIMMING •

**CAMP WEEKS**

- MAY 11TH - 15TH
- MAY 18TH - 22ND
- MAY 26TH - 29TH
- JUNE 1ST - 5TH
- JUNE 8TH - 12TH
- JUNE 15TH - 19TH
- JUNE 22ND - 26TH
- JULY 6TH - 10TH
- JULY 13TH - 17TH

CAMP CHANDLER - TONSMEIRE • 2701 SHELTON BEACH ROAD • MOBILE, AL 36618  
WWW.BGCSOUTHAL.ORG/CAMP | /CAMPTONSMEIRE 251-423-2180

## Adventure Awaits!

Our 150-acre campground, Camp Chandler Tonsmeire, is officially open!

Come and enjoy a daily adventure, Monday-Friday from 8:30am-5:30pm.

Space is limited, so sign up today!  
Adventure awaits!

For more information visit:  
[BGCSOUTHAL.ORG/CAMP](http://BGCSOUTHAL.ORG/CAMP)



# COVID-19

## RELIEF ♥ FUND

In times of tragedy and crisis, Boys & Girls Clubs have stepped up to provide safe places for kids and teens. Today, the organization is committed more than ever, to ensure Club staff, members, families, and communities have the resources and support they need to navigate these uncertain times –while also partnering with state and local officials to do more. Funding from the campaign will go toward immediate, short-term operation's needs, support Club re-opening efforts, provide resiliency training for staff, and provide essential in Club supplies.

Double you impact today by donating to our COVID-19 Relief Fund visit: [bgcsouthal.org/donate](http://bgcsouthal.org/donate)



MOBILE COUNTY COMMISSION



## “Grab and Go” Meal Service

For many Boys & Girls Club members and their families, the COVID-19 pandemic underscores a critical food insecurity issue. With the closure of Clubs and schools, vulnerable youth are left without the meals they rely on daily. Fortunately, Boys & Girls Clubs are providing access to meals so in-need families in their communities have one less thing to worry about during these uncertain times



In partnership with Feeding the Gulf Coast, our Optimist Branch is serving 170 meals a day to youth in the community. “Grab and Go” breakfast and lunch bags are available for ALL youth ages 18 and younger, Monday - Friday from 11am - 2pm. Membership at the Club is not required to receive the meals.



## Employee spotlight:



We would like to thank Sandra Hawkins for doing #WhateverItTakes at our Sonny Callahan Branch! Ms. Hawkins has consistently gone above and beyond for her Club! She is a true example of what a role model looks like. Ms. Hawkins improves our program quality by making everyone who walks through our doors feel welcomed and invited; greeting them with her smiling face and warm tone each day. She makes sure each and everyone of our members are signed in and accounted for, keeping up with anyone who sneaks by. Ms. Hawkins is a true asset to the Sonny Callahan Branch!



# WATCH US LIVE ON WKRG-TV5 JUNE 23RD

by making a pledge you too can  
transform lives in our community!



OURCITY  
OURFUTURE  
TELETHON  
*opening doors to great futures*

**COVID-19**  
RELIEF FUND

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WKRG.COM



## Virtual Clubs: Reaching Youth Where They Are

Through our newly launched Virtual Clubs, Boys & Girls Clubs are connecting to and reaching youth in a new way. Virtual Clubs engage youth through developing character, promoting health and wellness, and foster creativity.

Everyday youth can participate in:

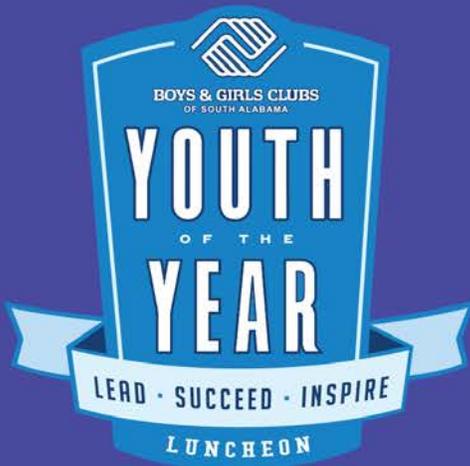
- Word of the Day
- Activity of the Day
- Fun Fact in History
- Morning meditation while at home

Thanks to sponsorship from Alabama 21st CCLC, Wind Creek Hospitality, Mobile County Commission, City of Mobile, Austal USA, Taco Bell, and Alabama Power.

Even though our doors are closed, we are continuing to reach, connect, and serve youth in Mobile virtually.

Be sure to check out Virtual Clubs on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok @bgcsouthal or visit our website [virtual.bgcsouthal.org](http://virtual.bgcsouthal.org)

JOIN US FOR OUR  
**YOUTH OF THE YEAR VIRTUAL**  
"Whatever it Takes"  
Every Club. Every Kid. Every Day.



**06.25.20**

**12:00PM**

[BGCSOUTHAL.ORG/YOYVIRTUAL](http://BGCSOUTHAL.ORG/YOYVIRTUAL)



## "Club on the Go" Bags

Many kids throughout the Mobile area do not have access to the necessary resources to continue engaging in fun, educational activities. As a result, we created "Club on the Go" bags in conjunction with our virtual programming to meet this need.

Every week 1,000 bags are being prepared and distributed to youth throughout the Mobile area. Each "Club on the Go" activity kit is filled with various donated supplies ranging from books and art supplies for children ages 6 to 12 to engage in activities at home.



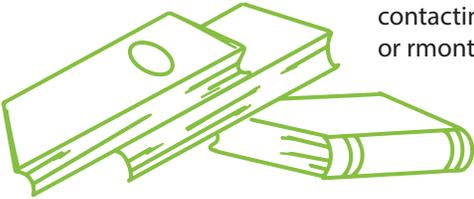
## Let's Read Mobile

Reading is core to much of our academic success programming. "Let's Read Mobile" was launched as part of the virtual programs. "Let's Read Mobile" is a part of our Read. Learn. Achieve. Initiative created to spark the love of reading within our community.

Videos are posted daily of volunteers throughout our community reading some their favorite stories.

What is your favorite childhood story? We want to hear it! Let us know by sharing your favorite childhood story on one of our videos posted on YouTube and Facebook.

Join in with us and be a guest reader by contacting Rosa Monteiro at 251.689.9836 or [rmonteiro@bgcsouthal.org](mailto:rmonteiro@bgcsouthal.org)



## Virtual Teen Talk



Every Tuesday and Thursday teens are meeting virtually for Teens Talks.

Guest speakers discuss a range of topics from applying for financial aid to creating a budget.



# Jr. Youth of the Year



DeAsia, Age 11  
Whitley Branch

Upcoming 6th Grader at Calloway Smith Middle School  
Favorite Subject: Math  
Favorite Hobby: Dance  
Future Occupation: Pediatrician  
DeAsia is the President of the Whitley Torch Club and has spearheaded 5 community service projects this school year that led to:

- Donating 100 socks and sandwiches to the Homeless
- Donating Mardi Gras throws to homeless veterans
- Donating toys to homeless children.

DeAsia is truly a leader at heart and enjoys mentoring and working as a Jr. Club Staff throughout the club.



MyKayla, Age 11  
Gilliard Branch

Upcoming 6th grader  
Favorite hobby: Arts and Crafts  
Favorite food: FooSacklys & salads  
Favorite color Blue & Gray  
MyKayla is an active member of Torch Club, Book Club, and Garden Club. MyKayla is a very creative, talented, and sweet spirited young lady. She is willing to lend a helping hand in all areas of the Club. MyKayla is known around the Club for greeting everyone with a warm smile!

# 2020 Youth of the Year Stories



Alyssa V.

Brenard Malkove Branch

Reflecting back on her first day at the Bernard Malkove/Cody Road Boys & Girls Club, Alyssa Vann talks about how she felt "intimidated....and thought about never coming back." But fortunately her mother was firm in her own commitment for positive things to happen in her daughter's life, and so Alyssa returned the next day to begin her six-year journey as a BGC member.

Feelings of frustration, rebelliousness and negativity at having to attend what she first saw as "just a daycare center," as well as anxiety about some family issues, would eventually dissolve as Alyssa soon came to view the Club as a "bright, happy place." She states that "Growth was one of the most important things about my Club experience, and through that growth I learned that I have a talent which is leadership."

That talent for leadership is evident in Alyssa's many accomplishments. She has served as leader of both the Torch Club and the Keystone Club, as the Club's UPS Road Code Ambassador, and a "No Limits Girls' Aviation Program team leader. Alyssa also founded a new program, Sister Code, with the mission to mentor middle school girls.

During the past year, Alyssa became a full-time staff member of Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama, and as such continues to lead and inspire her peers and younger members. She recently finished at Baker High School with a 3.5 GPA, and will attend Alabama A&M University to pursue a major in Business Management and a minor in Project Management.

*"I want you to know that no matter what you have been through, or are going through, you can overcome all of it. The community you grew up in, the people you grew up around, and your family's history, does not determine your future. Do not be confined. Pop your own bubble." –Alyssa Vann*

Brandon McCall often tells about experiencing anxiety and low self-esteem when he was younger, but as a result of his twelve years as a member of the Kiwanis Boys & Girls Club he now confidently describes himself as a "determined, empathetic and inspiring leader."

According to Brandon, self-confidence, dealing with hardships and empowerment are just a few of the skills he learned as a BGC member. He now uses these skills to help other young people face their own feelings of negativity and peer pressure. "When my friends come to me with their issues, I try my best to brighten their day and encourage them to keep going, and to better themselves," says Brandon.

At the Kiwanis BGC, Brandon is Vice-President of the Keystone Club, is a liaison with the Torch Club, and has organized #WeOwnFridays teen events and community cleanups. Currently a junior at John LeFlore High School's Law & Public Safety Signature Academy, Brandon has a 3.40 GPA and is ranked tenth in his class. He previously served as President of his homeroom. Brandon is active in his church where he serves as an Usher.

When he graduates in May of 2022, Brandon plans to study for a degree in Psychology at Morehouse College, and to pursue a career as a children's therapist.

*"It's our job to lift up each other and empower one another. We are people of the present and the future." – Brandon McCall*



Brandon M.

Kiwanis Branch



Madison D.

Semmes Branch

As a five-year member of the Semmes Boys & Girls Club, Madison Durggins considers her Club as a "second home" where she and her friends have grown together and become close friends. According to Madison, her special network of Club friends study together, volunteer together and encourage one another to achieve and be their very best.

Madison is treasurer of the Keystone Club and has helped to plan #WeOwnFriday teen nights. She has also volunteered at the Semmes All Class Reunion event held at the Club, and at the Annual Christmas Tree fundraiser sponsored by Pathway Church.

Madison is a rising junior at Mary G. Montgomery High school where she has earned a 3.78 GPA and is ranked in the upper 10% of her class. She is a member of Future Business Leaders of America and is considered as an outstanding, active member of the Leadership Program. As a leadership student she has hosted and organized pep rallies, fundraising events and a blood drive for Life South. After graduation in 2022, Madison plans to attend Alabama State University and major in Education and Social Work.

*"I will use my voice to ensure that I am heard. My voice is meant to be heard, but many youth today feel as though they have no voice. I want to be the drum major and the champion for change." – Madison Durggins*



Noah M.

Optimist Branch

Noah believes one should join the Optimist Boys & Girls Club for the diversity, opportunities and experiences it provides, and credits his Club journey for helping him to move from being a “shy, private person into an outgoing leader and role model.” Noah’s selection as his Club’s Youth of the Year for two consecutive years reflect how much he has taken advantage of those opportunities and experiences.

BGCSA’s Job Ready program provided Noah with his first job, and the chance to develop a good work ethic and social skills. Working at the Club’s annual Optimist Christmas Tree Lot helped him refine his customer relations skills. He is currently serving as Keystone Club president, and is a member of the Gavel Club and Omega Lamplighters. Assisting with writing the Club newsletter, attending the Rotary Youth Leadership Camp, learning to swim, and the chance to travel to national BGC youth events are unique chances which Noah views as having made him a more social, well-rounded person.

Noah is an active member of Destiny Vision Christian Center where he is a member of the sound and media team. In 2018 he was the recipient of an award from P.U.S.H., Inc., a local mentoring group, for his school and civic involvement. Upon graduation from Grace Bible College in May, 2021 Noah plans to attend UAB to pursue a degree in Biomedical Engineering.

“I want my story to be one of empowering and motivating others to keep persevering through any obstacle. Staying motivated, focused and prayed up are the keys to my success and can be to others as well.”

– Noah Mingo

After having been selected as the Sonny Callahan Boys & Girls Club’s 2017 Youth of the Year, Jakobie Forrest decided to wait out the next two years because he “... wanted to allow my peers the same opportunity. I had had the experience already, and it was time for others to experience being Youth of the Year.” Such consideration of others is only one of the reasons Jakobie was selected as BGCSA’s organizational 2020 Youth of the Year.

During his seven years as a Boys & Girl Club member, Jakobie served as President of the Keystone Club, was a member of the Job Ready crew, and facilitated several community service projects for the Club. He became known as a mentor to younger members, and for his willingness to always lend a hand whenever needed, without being asked to do so.

Jakobie was also a member of the Southwest Mobile Chamber of Commerce’s T.A.L.L. Leadership Academy, and volunteered with Keep Mobile Beautiful, the Ronald McDonald House and Feeding the Gulf Coast. He was recognized for his recruitment of teen volunteers for the Great American Clean-up.

Jakobie graduated from Theodore High School with a 4.03 GPA and was ranked 32nd out of a class of 321. He was elected Mr. THS, was a member of the Student Council, and a member of Future Business Leaders of America. He served as Treasurer of the National Honor Society, and won awards for perfect attendance and academic achievement. He will be entering Alabama A&M College this Fall to pursue a degree in Business.

“Life is all about what matters to you, because if nothing matters then there is nothing to live for. And the things that matter the most to me are my reputation, love and leadership.” – Jakobie Forrest



Jakobie F.

Sonny Callahan Branch

2020  
YOY Winner



presented by



Tune in at 12 pm to hear the stories of our YOY candidates  
BGCSOUTHAL.ORG/YOYVIRTUAL



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF SOUTH ALABAMA

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**Congratulations Class of 2020**  
**#BGCSAMade**



**CLASS OF 2020**

**GRADUATION IS NOT CANCELLED**

Optimist Branch	Shamar Smith
Marhyia Averhart	Larone Williams
Alexis Bell	Jason Wilson
Jaden Blackmon	Korian Wilson
Damond Brown	Bernard Malkove
Tierra Boggs	Branch
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