

# **Exclusive: Boys & Girls Clubs Of Greater St. Louis Merges With Boys & Girls Club Of Bethalto**

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ST. LOUIS - After years of exploration and discussions, the Boards of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis (BGCSTL) and the Boys & Girls Club of Bethalto unanimously voted to merge. All parties agreed that a merger would strengthen the organizations, impact the lives of more children and families, and provide more youth

access to low-cost, life changing programs and services. Integration activities are currently underway and should be completed by year's end.

The combined organization is now one of the region's largest youth development agencies serving more than 8,856 (BGCSTL 7575 + Bethalto 1281) kids and teens annually. In addition, the merger will expand opportunities for staff, enhance fundraising and produce better outcomes for kids.

The Boys & Girls Club of Bethalto will operate under the banner of Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis, while retaining their local identity and relationships. Members of all organizations will continue to attend their home Clubs.

“Collectively these organizations have provided young people safe places, positive mentors and life-enhancing programs for nearly 105 years. By coming together, they will create an even stronger and more efficient organization, positioned to meet the needs of youth in their communities for decades to come. I look forward to seeing the organization grow its reach and increase its positive impact through expanded programming, especially in essential areas like workforce readiness. Under the leadership of Flint Fowler and through the efforts of dedicated staff, volunteers, and community members, the expanded BGC of Greater St Louis will shape a brighter future for thousands of kids and teens in Missouri and Illinois,” stated Jim Clark, president of Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

The merger will be accomplished over a period of time. An integration committee has been named and over the next year the details of operating a single entity will be finalized. In the short term, Club operations will continue as they always have. In the long term, operations will likely not change significantly but new programs will be added and new measurements put into place to ensure positive outcomes in priority areas that include Academic Success, Good Character and Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles.

Both organizations are chartered by Boys & Girls Clubs of America. The national office provides a wide array of resources – from program best practices to professional development opportunities – to help local member organizations achieve priority outcomes of Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles and Good Character & Citizenship.

Dr. Flint Fowler, President of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis says of the merger, “I’m excited about this unique opportunity to combine efforts with the Boys & Girls Club of Bethalto. We have a shared goal to provide the best possible services to our youth members and believe our collective efforts will produce powerful results for the Greater St. Louis community. This decision was made following months of exploration, benchmarking and analysis. The unanimous conclusion is to merge our

organizations to create a more effective, efficient and results oriented enterprise for members as well as staff.”

Kathleen A. Wilson, Executive Director for Boys & Girls Club of Bethalto said of the merger, "Our desire to serve more youth and the growing need in our community far exceeds our capacity. This partnership/merger will increase our resources and allow us to provide more opportunities to current members, while increasing our ability to add youth from our waiting list and in the future, expand to surrounding areas of need. With this investment we can easily double our impact on those we serve.”

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis (the combined organizations) will now operate nine locations across the Greater St. Louis region (MO/IL) serving over 8,856 (BGCSTL 7575 + Bethalto 1281) youth. At our Clubs, youth participate in afterschool, teen, and summer camp programming geared towards academic success; healthy lifestyles; and good character and citizenship development. The organizations are also focused on providing an optimal Club experience for all members.

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis**

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater St. Louis (BGCSTL) is to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens. BGCSTL provides after-school, teen, sports and summer programs to youth across the Bi-State Region while also providing a safe place for them to learn and grow. The Clubs serve youth across the region at nine locations, including (Adams Park Club, Boys & Girls Club of Bethalto, Boys & Girls Club of Lovejoy, Hazelwood Elementary School Club, Herbert Hoover Club, O’Fallon Park Club, Riverview Gardens Club, Hazelwood Southeast Middle School Club and the Teen Center of Excellence). We also operate dropout prevention programs within two High Schools (Normandy and Roosevelt High School); as well as Mentor St. Louis and St. Louis Internship Program.