

Positive Place

www.bgca.org

Cover

- Former Club kids give back
- Famous figures credit Clubs with success
- Boys & Girls Club alumni aspire and achieve

Meet a Few of Our Own

Masthead Changes

Vol. 7, No. 2

The Paths They Took

It's not too often you find so many successful people who got their start at the same place. But from business leaders to entertainers, from sports greats to military heroes, we're proud to boast about the countless successful adults who spent their childhoods at a Boys & Girls Club. There, they developed the self-esteem needed to help them pursue their dreams. Each year, we recognize outstanding former Club members by inducting them into Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Alumni Hall of Fame.

They may have taken different paths in life, but they all have something unique in common: the strong foundation for success they found at their Club. The mentors they met and the wisdom they received at a Boys & Girls Club encouraged them to believe in themselves and reach their full potential. And, as a testament to their belief in the Club and the values it instilled in them, many of them continue to give back, in both time and resources, to help others who just like them. Today, they not only serve as role models to the entire nation, but as role models to youth in their own communities.

We invite you to take some time to read about a few of our well-known alumni in the summer 2005 issue of *The Positive Place*. And while these are people you may know, there are also millions more like them who aren't as famous, but are just as successful, as parents, husbands, wives and caring citizens in their own communities. We salute them for their achievements and recognize them as unique individuals and outstanding human beings.

Thank you for your continued support of Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and our efforts to provide our nation's youth with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life.

Brooke Bennett

Three-time Olympic gold medallist swimmer

When she was just 5 years old, Brooke Bennett's grandfather introduced her to the Jim Walter Interbay Boys & Girls Club in Tampa, Fla. Immediately drawn to the pool, she soon became the fastest kid in the water. "The Club was the only place that would accept me," says Bennett. It wasn't long before swimming became Bennett's passion; by age 9, she was competing professionally. At 16, she earned a spot on the 1996 Olympic team and brought home the gold in the 800-meter freestyle. More gold medals followed in the 2000 Olympics, in both the 400- and 800- meter freestyle events.

Sgt. Maj. Alford McMichael

U.S. Marine Corps

As the highest ranking noncommissioned officer in the U.S. Marines, Sgt. Maj. Alford McMichael credits his Boys & Girls Club in Hot Springs, Ark., for giving him a vision of what the world should and could be. At the age of 9, Sgt. Maj. McMichael came to

his Club because “it was the only colorblind place to play,” in segregated Hot Springs. Today, he’s not only a heavily decorated hero, but the first African-American appointed to the post of sergeant major of the U.S. Marine Corps. “The Club gave me those things I use today in the Marine Corps,” he says.

Jennifer Lopez

Actor/Singer

This megastar credits the Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club in the Bronx, N.Y., with helping her get started in the entertainment industry. It was at the Club where Lopez honed her skills as a performer and where she continues to give back, both in time and resources, to help others who were just like her. Lopez made her feature film debut in 1995 and has since starred in dozens of feature films, while at the same time managing her Grammy- winning recording career. Today, she is known as one of the nation’s top female performers. She credits her Boys & Girls Club for this. “I can honestly say I don’t know where I’d be today with out the Club. Thanks to Boys & Girls Clubs from the bottom of my heart, for all you have done for me, and for so many others,” she says.

Michael Jordan

NBA Great

The name needs little introduction, but did you know that it was Michael Jordan who helped create the James R. Jordan Boys & Girls Clubs and Family Life Center? The Club was established in 1994 in memory of Jordan’s father and today serves more than 1,000 youth in Chicago’s West side community. In addition to his generosity and community involvement, the former Chicago Bulls guard has won almost every award in basketball and brought his team to record setting victories. It was during the 1986-87

season that he became the top scoring guard in NBA history. Boys & Girls Clubs salutes him for not only being a role model on the court, but off the court as well.

Sharon Sayles Belton
Former Mayor of Minneapolis

From 1994 to 2001, Sharon Sayles Belton served as the mayor of Minneapolis. She was both the city's first African-American and first woman to hold the post. As a community leader and activist, this public servant brought citizens and government together to clean up neighborhoods, fight crime, and develop local business and industry. In this capacity, she was also a tremendous advocate for children's and women's issues, leading efforts to improve services for victims of domestic abuse assault.

Harry Lee Anstead
Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice

It wasn't until Justice Harry Lee Anstead received a scholarship to attend a camp sponsored by his local Boys & Girls Club that he ventured outside of his Jacksonville, Fla., housing project. But it was a move that changed his life. "I saw an entirely different world after that gift was given to me," he says of the scholarship. With a new found attitude that people can accomplish anything, instilled by his Club experience, Anstead went on to obtain his bachelor and law degrees from the University of Florida. He was elected to Florida's Fourth District Court of Appeal in 1976, and appointed to the Florida Supreme Court in 1994. In 2002, he became chief justice. Reflecting on his Boys & Girls Club experience, he says, "You never know when that spark will occur in a young person's life."

Jackie Joyner-Kersey**Olympic Medallist**

Six-time Olympian Jackie Joyner-Kersey has been called the world's greatest all-around female athlete. She is also one of her community's greatest role models. She got her start at Boys & Girls Club of East St. Louis where she also established a new facility in 1999, to give young people in East St. Louis the same opportunities she had growing up. She has also shown dedication to our nation's youth by serving as a spokesperson for a Club initiative that brought sports and fitness programs to youth nationwide.

2005 Alumni Hall of Fame**Our Newest Inductees**

The newest members of our Alumni Hall of Fame were recently inducted at Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Conference held in San Diego.

Jamie Farr**Master of Ceremonies - Inducted in 2004**

Born in 1934 in Toledo, Ohio, actor Jamie Farr and his friends used to walk to the downtown Boys Club, where Farr enjoyed swimming, basketball, and arts and crafts. Jamie began his acting career at California's Pasadena Playhouse, where he was discovered by an MGM talent scout. This led to his first movie role in 1955, and his professional beginnings as an actor. In 1972, Jamie won the role of Corporal Klinger on M*A*S*H, one of the most popular programs in the history of American television. In recent years, Jamie has appeared in feature films, television, on Broadway and in

numerous road shows. He also founded a charity golf tournament that contributes millions of dollars to charities in Ohio, including Boys & Girls Clubs. “I think it makes you a better person to know where you came from,” says Farr. “No matter where you go, there’s someone who has the same dreams as you.”

Joe Morgan

Baseball Great

Joe Morgan is best known for his achievements as second baseman for the Cincinnati Reds, winning back-to-back MVP awards in 1975 and '76 (the Reds won the World Series both years). Born in 1943, Joe began attending the Boys Club in Oakland, California at age 7. A self-described “sports fanatic,” young Joe was active in baseball and basketball programs at the Club. His talent on the diamond began to appear around age 14; by age 19, Morgan was in the major leagues. After five Gold Gloves and 22 seasons, Morgan retired from pro baseball in 1984. He was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame six years later. For more than a decade, Morgan has been an analyst for ESPN's Sunday Night Baseball. “Boys & Girls Clubs are more important today than ever before,” he says. “The only thing we can do for our kids is to give them knowledge about their decisions. Kids today are having to make important decisions about things that I never had to think about growing up. I was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, but this is just as meaningful to me.”

Arthur Myers

Director of Services, United States Air Force

Arthur Myers attended the Boys Club in Newark, N.J., from age 7 through high school. Two weeks after high school graduation, he joined the United States Air Force. Twenty years of service to his country and two college degrees later, Myers stayed on with the Air Force in a civilian capacity as Director of Services, the highest civilian rank that can be held in this branch of the service. At the Boys Club, Myers found sports, interaction with other kids and lessons for success. Myers says that going to the Club affected him fundamentally. “There’s no limit to what you can do in life. So much of what I am now is because of the Boys Club.”

Ed Pinckney

Former NBA Player and Assistant Basketball Coach, Villanova University

Born in 1963, Pinckney grew up in the Bronx, N.Y., and attended the Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club. Pinckney recalls that he joined the Club to avoid playing basketball outdoors in New York’s cold winters. After honing his skills at the Club, Pinckney was accepted at Villanova University and became one of the finest basketball players in Villanova University’s history. During his time there, the Wildcats captured the university’s only NCAA championship title. A number one draft choice of the Phoenix Suns in 1985, Pinckney spent 12 years in the National Basketball League. Following his retirement in 1997, Pinckney joined the Miami Heat organization as part of its broadcasting team. Coming full circle, Ed Pinckney returned to Villanova in 2003 as an assistant basketball coach. Reflecting on his Club experience, Pinckney says, “The Club helped us establish a fantastic foundation in athletics. It was just an incredible experience for me and my family.”

Ruben Studdard

Singer, 2003 American Idol Winner

This Alabama native who became famous for his vocal talents enjoyed sports, crafts and games at the Hueytown Unit of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Alabama. Young Studdard also sang at church every Sunday and lived in a household full of music and learning (both parents were teachers). In 2003, a friend persuaded him to go along for an American Idol audition in Nashville. In a few weeks, Studdard's singing talents made him a finalist and put him on national television. After 24 million call-in votes from across the country were counted, Studdard became the 2003 American Idol. He followed up with a national tour and debut album, garnering a Grammy nomination for the hit single *Superstar*. "I had some of the best times of my life at the Boys & Girls Club of South Alabama," he recalls.

Courtney B. Vance

Actor

A Tony-nominated actor, producer and graduate of the prestigious Yale School of Drama, Courtney Vance attended the Highland Park unit of Boys & Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan. There, he met camp counselor George Browne, who helped him earn a scholarship for the city's most prestigious prep school. Harvard came next; then Yale Drama School. Vance's two Tony Award nominations came for August Wilson's *Fences* and for John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation*. Film credits include *The Hunt for Red October*, *Hamburger Hill*, and *The Preacher's Wife* (playing opposite Club alumnus and BGCA spokesperson, Denzel Washington). Says Vance of his Club experience, "I would not be doing what I'm doing today if it wasn't for the Club."

How's Your Nest Egg?

Baby Boomers – currently defined as 40-58 years of age – are approaching retirement and considering their options. Millions of these Americans will retire in upcoming years. But are their nest eggs ready for them? Fewer than half believe that they will have enough to live comfortably in retirement.

Retirement is a milestone in anyone's life – the crowning achievement of a lifetime of work. But it is also a time of planning for the future – your own, your family's and for generations to come. Whether you are already retired or preparing for it, we have something that can help.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America has a new **FREE** brochure that offers valuable information about retirement. Please return the coupon if you would like a copy.

_____ Please send me a free copy of the brochure-*Ideas for Retirement*

Name _____ Birth Date _____

-
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

-
-
_____ Please have a planned giving representative contact me to provide further information about estate planning.

_____ I have already included Boys & Girls Clubs of America in my will and estate plans and would like to become a Heritage Club member.

-

-
To receive your *Ideas for Retirement* brochure, please complete and mail or fax this form to:

Cyndi Court
Office of Planned Giving
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
1230 West Peachtree Street, NW

Atlanta, GA 30309-3447

Phone: 404-487-5885

Fax: 404-487-5825

You may also e-mail your request to ccourt@bgca.org