



Workforce Readiness

Vision Statement: Investing in a skilled and robust workforce is essential to the future of America’s local economies. Boys & Girls Clubs *Workforce Readiness Initiative* builds knowledge, skills, and learning experiences that will help youth prepare for the 21st century workforce and economic potential over a lifetime. Clubs build critical soft-skills that are in demand by employers, and are transferrable across all industries.

Background

By 2020, **60 percent** of all jobs will **require education and/or training beyond high school**, and if the lack of a skilled workforce is not addressed the U.S. economy will face a shortage of **5 million workers**. Many U.S. employers say the inability to find qualified workers is their biggest obstacle to growth. **This does not have to be the story for America’s next generation of workers.**



Every dollar invested in Boys & Girls Clubs returns \$9.60 in current and future earnings and cost-savings to their communities.

Youth Workforce Readiness

Youth spend more time out of school than in, making quality and impactful out-of-school time (OST) an economic, moral and national imperative for our country. As the leading nonprofit provider of OST programming, Boys & Girls Clubs are uniquely situated to prepare youth to achieve success in work and life. Clubs help youth develop the soft skills – like perseverance, communication, and problem solving - and hard skills – like digital literacy, STEM skills, and financial literacy – that are transferable across industries. Available programming equips youth with the skills they need to succeed in the workforce and creates access to partnerships for real-life experiences to explore career options.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) developed its **Workforce Readiness Initiative** to address the skills and readiness gaps presently facing our nation’s youth and workforce through:

- Providing a high-quality Club experience that includes 1-on-1 and group mentoring.
- Implementing four pillars of workforce programming: soft skills development, career exploration, employment readiness training, and work-based learning.
- Partnering with local businesses and thought leaders to increase access to workforce programming resources and services.
- Closing representation gaps in fast-growing, lucrative STEM fields by building confidence and skills to pursue STEM education and careers.



Boys & Girls Clubs are now the **2nd largest provider of afterschool programs in rural America**—second only to public schools. There are **990 rural Clubs** that serve nearly **290,000 registered members**, which is **1 out of every 3** young people in rural areas where Clubs operate.



We ask that you support forthcoming legislation providing federal investments for national organizations serving youth in out-of-school time to **bolster workforce readiness programs and work opportunities** so that our nation’s youth are equipped with the skills they need to succeed.

Policy makers must understand how out-of-school time bolsters America's future workforce and join private sector partners who look to youth-serving organizations like Boys & Girls Clubs to ensure workers are equipped with the soft and hard skills that make America's economy globally competitive.

With a national network in all 50 states that touches virtually every community, BGCA can help align funding where it is needed most and provide technical assistance to local communities and Clubs to ensure youth are getting the job readiness skills to lead the strong workforce of tomorrow.

Findings



According to the Boys & Girls Clubs of America National Youth Outcomes Initiatives Report:

97% of Club teens expect to graduate on time and **87%** expect to attend college.

2X More than twice as many 12th grade Club members express interest in a STEM career as 12th graders nationally.

51% of Club girls expressed an interest in a STEM career compared to 14 percent of their same-aged female peers nationally.

Success Story

Boys & Girls Clubs of King County, Washington operates a career development program called **YouthForce**, which connects local companies with talented youth through on-the-job experiences that are supported by individualized training and coaching by the Club. In 2017, YouthForce **served over 1,000 youth** through events and workshops focused on career and post-high school planning, while also providing over **150 youth** with internship opportunities. Local companies providing these internship opportunities included: Seattle Seahawks, Sounders FC, Walmart, Alaska Airlines, Acumatica, and Amazon. In 2016, of the 112 who had internships **66** obtained post internship employment or pursued additional education.

The **Minnesota Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs** **served over 4,300 youth** with workforce development and STEM programs thanks to a grant awarded by the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)—far exceeding the initial requirement of the grant. **63 percent** of Club members participated in a career exploration program at the Club and **over 51 percent** of Job Ready participants obtained a position following their participation in the available programs.

Eighteen separate **Massachusetts Boys & Girls Clubs** benefited from partnership with the Attorney General to provide summer jobs for low-income young people focused on health and wellness. Through the program, young people will be able to advance public health in their communities by providing health promotion and disease prevention interventions that address factors identified by the CDC.



For any questions please contact Andria Oliver, Director of Government Relations at AOliver@BGCA.org.