



GREAT FUTURES START HERE.

SUMMER 2022

Assistant Executive Director Jamie Atkinson Earns National Recognition with *Maytag Dependable Leader Award*

The Maytag Dependable Leader Award recognizes staff or volunteers at Boys & Girls Clubs around the world who demonstrate dependability, reliability, and a commitment to excellence. These standouts are committed to making a positive difference in the lives of others and their communities. Jamie Atkinson is such an individual, one of two award recipients in 2022. Jamie has been with The Cindy Platt Boys & Girls Club for over three years, joining as Operations Director and quickly moving into her current role as Assistant Executive Director. Her nomination highlighted the depth of her relationships with the kids and staff, her commitment to modeling appropriate work-life harmony, and her willingness to lend an open ear, an open heart, and an open door to anyone in need.

Executive Director Sarah St. Marie wrote, "Jamie is a strong and fair leader who genuinely cares about the people around her, whether that's Club staff, members, parents and guardians, community partners, donors, or board members. She knew that before she could be seen as a leader within the Club, she needed to establish rapport and build trust. What lends to Jamie's dependability as a leader is that she knows who she is and what she's about. She is not easily swayed from conviction based on popular opinion and as a result staff have come to rely on and trust Jamie implicitly. They know what to expect from her because she is consistent in her approach to her role and her response to people."

Jamie's award will come with a \$20,000 grant to make improvements to the Club's garden and health & wellness program.

Sarah St. Marie, Jamie Atkinson, and Operations Director Emily Whitt



Club Tackles Ambitious Expansion

In our first major capital campaign in almost two decades, our Club has begun the Quiet Phase of fundraising for *Building a Place to Belong*. Our vision is to bring our teens back home to our campus and expand the existing Clubhouse to serve more children in the elementary grades. Our campaign slogan is strategically selected to highlight the emphasis on building connections and relationships with kids and teens.

"The Club...has a demonstrated history of offering high-quality programming around academic success, healthy lifestyles, and good character for school-age youth."

*Tara Rybka and J. Elaine Russell
Transylvania Public Health*

Stay Tuned...More Updates to Follow!



**Facebook: BGCTransylvania
Instagram: cindyplatt.bgc
www.bgctransylvania.org**

Get Outside and Learn Captivates Kids

We have a process for encouraging learning during the school year, but what do you do during the summer? Every August through May, Club members have Power Hour rotations scheduled Monday through Thursday.

Power Hour is where members have a quiet space to work on learning-related activities (or homework, if assigned) with the dedicated assistance of program staff. On average, 87% of the 495 members surveyed said that Power Hour is meeting their needs. From June to August, our rising third through fifth graders enjoy Get Outside and Learn (or G.O.A.L.), an adaptation of an earlier program called The Walking Classroom. Members vote as a group to choose a topic of interest. Then they listen to a podcast through headphones while being outside. G.O.A.L. takes advantage of the natural beauty of our Boys & Girls Club campus adjoining the County's park and the French Broad River. It gives the kids a chance to negotiate with each other to advocate for their favorite topic. Listening to one another and giving space for differing opinions is a good life skill to have. It also gives kids a stress-free way to explore new ideas and talk about them together.

Club kids can listen and learn wherever they want to (under the supervision of staff) but it has to be outside for G.O.A.L.!



Summer Training and Summer Fun

Before we could get to the fun of summer with our 300 kids and teens enrolled, we needed to get down to the serious business of training. Fortunately, all of our summer program staff returned from either the school year or a prior summer. That meant we could go the extra mile to use an idea we learned from Shania Powell, School Social Worker at Rosman Elementary, Middle, and High School, and T.C. Henderson Elementary School of Science and Technology. The idea is "connection mapping." We posted the name of every child and teen on our Club walls and asked program staff to identify if they

have a close enough relationship where the child or teen would feel comfortable seeking them out for guidance or advice. Our cohort of 110 teens flipped this same exercise on its head. They shared *back to us* their names of mentors, leaders, advisors, pastors, parents/caregivers, or friends...someone in their lives they can turn to when they need support. This exercise brought attention to the places where we *have connections* within our Boys & Girls Club community and highlighted where we need to build connections through intentional outreach to fortify resources for wellbeing.

On to More Fun...

The teens are enjoying splitting time between Stanback Hall on Brevard College's beautiful campus and our Clubhouse.

The Club's garden provides more than just carrots. A bountiful harvest leads to smiles.



Some of our teens are engaging in the *Work-based Learning Program* which allows us to compensate the participants for time spent doing service hours at the Club and participating in targeted Club programming. One such teen said it is "a dream come true" to work at the Boys & Girls Club.



Cooling off in the Davidson River with besties. This is one of the perks of living in beautiful Transylvania County.