



Dear Friends of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County:

May 14, 2014

Every child deserves a memorable summer filled with friends, fun and new experiences. When the school doors close for the summer, what do kids face? For some, it's a world of interesting vacations, music lessons, and library trips. For many youth, the summer break is a time of isolation, boredom, academic stagnation and minimal contact with positive adult mentors.

Research conducted by the *Johns Hopkins Institute* shows that low-income youth suffer significantly from a loss of academic skills over the summertime. Each year these losses compound, contributing to an achievement gap that can make the difference between students moving forward on their path to a high school diploma and beyond or dropping out of school, making their path in life ever more difficult and limiting. .

According to the *National Summer Learning Association*, summer learning opportunities improve academic outcomes for youth. Early and sustained summer learning opportunities lead to higher graduation rates and better preparation for college or technical school. Summer programs have also been shown to positively affect children's self-esteem, confidence, motivation and behavior.

For the children in our community who need us most, the summer program of the Boys & Girls Clubs provides the solution. BGCMC offers high-quality summer programs at all 7 of our Club locations. A Boys & Girls Club Summer provides a 9 week, 11 hour a day program (in our traditional Clubs) that offers fun, excitement and learning in a safe, structured environment. Members form positive relationships with caring adults, who foster their creativity and innovation while helping them stay fit, active and healthy. Our programs are staffed with well trained, caring, professionals who strive to make every day of the Summer Program memorable.

Sadly, thousands of children in our community live in poverty. Over 3,400 of our current membership come from low income households. These members need the opportunity to have a memorable summer engaged in positive activities. Their only barrier is financial.

Now, more than ever, we must remove the financial barrier so that more children will have an opportunity to participate in a high quality summer programming full of fun, friends, learning and new experiences.

Your donation will allow children in our community to have a Great and Memorable Summer.

Wishing you and your family a healthy, happy, wonderful summer filled with great memories!

For the Children,

Valerie Bliss
Vice President of Development

**To make an on-line donation
Go to
www.bgcmanatee.org**