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***United Way awards Boys & Girls Clubs \$40,000  
to support Summer Brain Gain***

BRADENTON, FL – The Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County received a \$40,000 grant from United Way of Manatee County for the summer learning loss prevention program, Summer Brain Gain. The program is part of the activities rotation during the Boys & Girls Clubs' summer program.

“By focusing efforts to prevent summer learning loss in partnership with organizations like the Boys & Girls Clubs, we can help guide our young people down a path to academic and career success,” said Philip Brown, president of United Way of Manatee County. “This is vital to having a healthy community.”

Summer Brain Gain was developed in partnership with the International ArtScience Prize Program, The Walt Disney Company and Boys & Girls Clubs of America. It was designed specifically to be used in Boys & Girls Clubs to counter learning loss through the summer. Summer Brain Gain is an interdisciplinary, project-based curriculum based on a model developed at Harvard University. The program fosters creative thinking, incites passion about learning and applies classroom content to real world issues.

“As the odds begin to stack up against a child trying to keep pace with their education, it can cause a great deal of anxiety and frustration, said Dawn Stanhope, president of Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County. “When members participate in Summer Brain Gain, they have fun, stay on track and, sometimes, even surpass their peers at the beginning of the school year.”

Without enhanced learning programs, like those offered by the Boys & Girls Clubs, children can lose two months of math and reading skills, placing them in an academic deficit. Manatee County is particularly challenged with an on-time graduation rate (percent of freshmen who graduate in four years) of 65%, which trails both the state and national averages of 75% and 81%, respectively.

“If we are truly going to make a difference in helping our kids achieve academic success, we must change this dynamic by offering proven strategies that help reinforce what they learn in school,” said Stanhope. “We are fortunate to have caring partners like the United Way of Manatee County to help us empower our kids to build a stronger community.”

#### About Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County

Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County is an afterschool and summer program that offers hope and opportunity to every child in the community, especially those who need it most. In operation since 1946, Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County currently serves over 4,100 young people at seven locations (2 traditional Clubs and 5 school-based Clubs). The Clubs provide a safe place to learn and grow, where young members experience both life-enhancing and character-building programs focused on academic success, healthy lifestyles, and good character and citizenship. For more information or to arrange a tour, call 761-2582 or visit [www.bgcmanatee.org](http://www.bgcmanatee.org).

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