



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

## Upvalley Boys & Girls Clubs served 2,005 youths in 2012

Significant milestone surpassed for St. Helena, Calistoga clubs



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For the first time in 23 years, the Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Helena and Calistoga reported more than 2,000 youths served in 2012.

“This is an important milestone for our organization,” said Executive Director Jay Templeton. “These numbers are a testament to our talented and devoted staff who build trusting relationships with kids.”

The BGCSHC was founded in 1989 and operates three clubs, which offer a safe and supervised environment for children and teens in the afternoons. Templeton said that members come not only from St. Helena and Calistoga, but also from Napa, Yountville, Angwin, Pope Valley and Middletown.

Out of the 2,005 youths served by the organization in 2012, about 700 are members of the St. Helena Club, 500 are members of the school-based club operating out of Calistoga Elementary School, and another 300 are members of the Calistoga Teen Center club, operating out of the Monhoff Center. An additional 500 youths participated in the different community outreach programs that the club offers.

One of these programs is called “Diversion and Intervention.” About 100 teenagers participated in it last year. The program was created as an alternative to the juvenile hall system for first-time teen offenders and is managed by Heather Baker, a BGCSHC staff member.

“Teens who enter the program sign a contract. Once they complete the program guidelines, which include participation in workshops and classes and damage restitution, their record is expunged and they will have a clean record,” Templeton said. In the past, the program always had a high success rate, and last year for the first time it had a 100 percent success rate.

“The police departments for both St. Helena and Calistoga love the program and help funding it,” Templeton said.

The majority of kids served by BGCSHC, however, are club members who attend one of the three clubs after school, during school vacations and during the summer. Each club offers various indoor and outdoor activities, in addition to homework assistance. The club’s gym and the outside play area provide an opportunity to stay active, while inside the club members can work on an art project, play educational computer games in the grand room or tech lab, or just

hang out with friends in the play area.

“Unlike a school, the kids do what they want here. We don’t force them into anything. Instead, we make things attractive to them,” Templeton said. “If it’s not fun, we’re not going to have any kids and so we have to keep it fun.”

Many of the club’s activities help children develop various capabilities and life skills, such as Money Matters, a financial literacy program that develops financial responsibility from an early age.

Templeton said that he feels that the tech lab inside the club has a great role in preparing the young club members for life.

“The technology program in the club is the great equalizer,” he said. “It allows children from lower-income backgrounds, who have limited computer access in school or may not have a computer at home, to build their technology skills. We help them to become productive 21st-century citizens. A person in the 21st century has to operate computers successfully or he is not going to be economically viable.”

Another important role of the club is preventing children from making bad choices, the director said.

“Studies have shown that the after-school and summer hours are the times when most youth violence, youth crime and teen pregnancy occur,” Templeton said. “A strong Boys & Girls Club program during those times is good for kids, good for the community and good for America.”

The program’s community benefits are likely among the reasons that national and regional agencies support it, as well as local residents. Membership fees for the BGCSHC are \$50 for the school year and \$60 for the summer. The idea is to keep it affordable and accessible for all. However, those fees only cover 6 percent of organization’s annual budget, which is \$1.23 million. Of that, 52 percent of revenues come from grants and contracts and 42 percent from fundraising from foundations, businesses and individuals.

“Boys & Girls Clubs are usually community-supported and not fee-supported,” Templeton said. The remaining parts of the budget come from grants and contracts and from community contributions and fundraisers.

While the annual fees are affordable and paid by most members, no one is turned down and scholarships are offered when necessary, Templeton said.

“We are available for all kids and accessible for everyone,” he said. “Yet, we have a special focus on those who need us the most.”

Templeton has been with the organization for 43 years — since he was a freshman in college. He said he loves his job and sees great importance in helping children stay on track.

“The national average dropout rate is 30 percent. Within the Boys & Girls Club members, it’s only 10 percent,” Templeton said. “I think just this one statistic is a great reason to value the Boys & Girls Club.”

## **Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Helena and Calistoga**

- To learn more about the clubs, visit [BGCSHC.org](http://BGCSHC.org).
- To sign up students for the Boys & Girls Club of St. Helena, contact Adrian Lopez at 963-8944.
- To sign up students for the Boys & Girls Club of Calistoga, contact Greg Bouillercce at the Calistoga school-based club, 738-8197, or Clint Ferrier at the Calistoga Teen Center, 696-1437.
- To find out more about contribution and support opportunities, call Renee Sweezey at 963-8944.