



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF LAWRENCE

CLUB NEWS

Winter 2026

Message from Markus: Looking Ahead



As we begin 2026, we're proud to reflect on a highly successful 2025 at the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence. Because of your support, we expanded opportunities and strengthened outcomes for the young people we serve—from growing our workforce development programming through hands-on training, career exploration, and local employer partnerships, to deepening inclusion by more fully integrating youth with disabilities across our programs. We also ended the year with a joyful Christmas party that brought families together and celebrated the sense of belonging that makes the Club feel like home.

Looking ahead, 2026 will focus on key capital improvements that will strengthen our facilities and elevate programming for years to come, including expanding our music recording studio and replacing rooftop heating and air conditioning units that have reached the end of their lifespan. Thank you for believing in our mission and making this impact possible.

Leadership Programs at BGCL

Torch Club

Torch Club is a leadership group for 7th and 8th graders that supports Keystone through hands-on service at the Club. Members volunteer three hours each week, helping with everyday needs and building responsibility, teamwork, and confidence. Torch youth also assist at special events, coordinate a community service project, and take part in fundraising to help offset the cost of trips—giving them meaningful opportunities to contribute, grow, and stay connected to the Club community.



Keystone Club

Our Keystone Club empowers high school youth through leadership, service, and teamwork. Keystone has 12 members and a student leadership board (president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary). Members serve as junior staff and role models—supporting our supper program, assisting at special events, and keeping the Club welcoming. Through the Keystone Café during basketball games, teens sell food and drinks to fund special experiences and field trips. Members also plan community service projects. Youth of the Year applications are open, and we look forward to recognizing outstanding teen leaders through this premier program.



Youth Spotlight

Meet Aiyanna D.

Aiyanna D. is an 8th grader at Guilmette Middle School and a proud Torch Club member who has been part of the Club for the past few years; she's known for being kind, hardworking, and always willing to help—whether cleaning the Teen Center or leading our Christmas prayer. Aiyanna also shines as a lead performer in school plays, on the basketball court, and in the Music Room, where she takes voice lessons and serves as a lead singer in the Club band.

"I love the Club because the staff really care and make every kid feel seen. It keeps me productive, lets me try new things like basketball, and spend time in the Music Room because I love to sing. Torch Club has taught me the value of helping others and made me a better person."



Dive Into Our Swim Program!

Our Swim Program provides youth with safe, structured opportunities to build essential water skills, stay active, and grow in confidence. From beginner instruction to competitive swimming, snorkeling, and leadership pathways, the program supports swimmers at every stage while reinforcing water safety, goal-setting, and healthy routines.



Swim Lessons

Our swim lessons run year-round and help swimmers progress with confidence—whether they're just getting comfortable in the water or building stronger technique and endurance. Lessons are taught in groups and focus on water safety first, then skill development through guided practice, repetition, and encouragement. Swimmers build fundamentals like breathing, floating, coordination, and foundational strokes, while also developing habits like listening, perseverance, and goal-setting. Families can join on a rolling basis after attending a pool orientation, and no formal registration is required.

Swim Team & Junior Lifeguarding

The Club's Swim Team gives youth the chance to strengthen athletic skills, teamwork, and discipline through training and competition. Swimmers are wrapping up the fall/winter season and competing in the Division 1 NENEAPC Sectional Championships. New swimmers are welcome to join the spring team beginning February 2. Youth can also explore leadership and career pathways through Red Cross Junior Lifeguarding (ages 11+) after February vacation and Red Cross Lifeguarding Certification (ages 15+) launching mid-April. Lifeguarding Certification is free for Club members.

Meet Our 2026 Boston Marathon Runners!

We're excited to introduce our 2026 Boston Marathon runners — Mackenzie Hansen and Isabela Miller! They're running Boston to support the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence and help ensure more young people have access to the safe spaces, caring mentors, and opportunities they deserve.

Meet Mackenzie

Boston has always held a special place in her heart, and running became a passion that pushed and grounded her. Now she's bringing those two loves together by running for BGCL—after volunteering inside our Club and seeing the impact up close.

Meet Isabela

Raised in North Andover and a former Division I lacrosse player at the College of the Holy Cross, Isabela has seen how BGCL strengthens local youth and families. She's running Boston to help expand opportunity for kids in Lawrence.

Every gift fuels our life-changing work—supporting academic help, healthy meals, mentorship, and a community where kids can dream big. Join the journey and donate today by scanning the QR code.



Opening Doors to the Future: Our Annual Career Fair Returns on March 4

We're excited to welcome students back to our Career Fair this year on March 4—an evening packed with career exploration and real-world connections. Open to the public and designed for students in seventh grade and up, the event gives youth the chance to meet professionals, discover different industries, and connect their interests to future opportunities. It's a great way for students to start thinking early about what comes next and what skills different careers require.



Last year, more than 150 youth attended and engaged with professionals representing over 50 careers. Students spoke with lawyers, police officers, educators, IT professionals, chefs, and many others—asking questions, hearing personal stories, and gaining a clearer picture of what different paths can look like day to day. These conversations helped shift thinking from “what do you want to be?” to “what steps can I take to get there?” Many youth also left with a stronger sense of motivation and clarity about their goals.

At BGCL, we know career readiness is about more than choosing a job—it's about building confidence, communication skills, and a sense of direction. Opportunities like this give youth a chance to practice introducing themselves, asking thoughtful questions, and learning how passions and strengths can translate into real careers. It's also a reminder that there isn't one “right” path: college, trade programs, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training can all lead to meaningful, successful futures.

The Career Fair reflects our commitment to providing meaningful opportunities that broaden horizons and support long-term success. Be sure to check our blog for a recap and highlights from this year's event.

Save the Date: BGCL Annual Auction 2026 — An Evening of Possibilities

Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 11 and join us at Andover Country Club for the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence's Annual Auction—an unforgettable night of community, connection, and purpose, featuring both a silent auction and live auction.

This year's theme, An Evening of Possibilities, reflects what we believe at BGCL: Every possibility we create for a child today becomes a brighter story tomorrow. When you attend, sponsor, donate, or share the event, you're helping build the kind of support system kids can count on every day—a safe place to belong, caring adults who show up for them, and opportunities that help them grow into confident learners and leaders.

The impact is real. On any given afternoon, up to 500 kids come through our doors for friendship, mentorship, a nutritious supper, and programs that spark curiosity—from STEM and the arts to sports and leadership. That support leads to real results: 100% of our high school seniors graduated last year, and most continued on to college.

Last year, our Auction raised nearly \$600,000 in mission support. With your help, we're ready to make 2026 even more meaningful—because every bid, every donated item, and every sponsorship helps create more “yes” moments for the kids who need them most.

Questions—or want to donate an item, attend, sponsor, or join our Auction Committee?
Contact Sarah Hogue at Shogue@lawrencebgc.com or 978-683-2747 x128.



[Visit Our Bidding Website!](#)





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MUSIC

**Jamming to New
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Program Is Hitting All
the Right Notes!**



BASKETBALL

**Hard Work Pays Off:
How BGCL's Academic
Basketball Program Is
Changing Lives—On and
Off the Court**

Explore these stories and more on our
website at lawrencebgc.com



UPCOMING EVENTS
save the date



**Career
Fair**

*March
4*



**Annual
Auction**

*APRIL
11*



**Boston
Marathon**

*APRIL
20*



**Golf
Tournament**

*June
15*