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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
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Important Updates

Now Enrolling for
Afterschool Programs!
September 2026 - May 2027
$240 / month – Scholarships Available Register online at www.boysandgirlsclub.info

The Club is Hiring!
View open positions by visiting the Careers tab on our website. www.boysandgirlsclub.info/careers



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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Panda Cares Foundation "Center of Hope" Renovation at Live Oak Teen Center

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of our Live Oak Clubhouse on the Shoreline Middle School campus, we are thrilled to unveil a completely revitalized environment for our teens and tweens. Because this location serves the largest number of middle school and high school students in our organization's footprint, we knew it was time for a meaningful investment in their future.

This incredible transformation was made possible by a generous $45,000 grant from the Panda Cares Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Panda Express Restaurant Group. With their support, our Live Oak location has officially become a Panda Cares Center of Hope. These centers are intentionally designed spaces created to provide the resources and support students need to develop the academic and life skills needed to succeed as they pursue great futures.

GREAT FUTURES FRIENDS LIVE OAK SANTA CRUZ COMMUNITY CAPITOLA

Walking into the newly renovated Teen Center, members are greeted by a revitalized, inspiring atmosphere. In addition to fresh paint and original murals created by artists from the Made Fresh Crew, the space also features new carpeting, furniture, and technology.

The main Teen Room now features several sectionals and large format seating for group activities, as well as flexible rolling desks that are perfect for homework time. With the addition of stackable chairs, our teens can easily reconfigure the room for collaborative projects or independent study, whether academic projects or large puzzles and board games. For peer-to-peer connection and group activities, the massive new U-shaped couch anchors the room and seats more than 30 students. When the homework is done, a new 100" Smart TV paired with room-darkening blinds transforms the area into a premier movie and gaming zone—serving as the ultimate pro-social positive incentive. Additionally, colorful felt wall panels proudly display our members' artistic and academic achievements for everyone to see.

Just next door, the Teen Tech space has been completely reimagined into an active learning hub. The room boasts a large central co-working station and an exciting new Maker Space, fully equipped with 3D printers and a laser engraver to spark creativity and technical skill-building. For quieter moments, an updated Teen Library features a selection of books generously donated by Bookshop Santa Cruz and several comfortable lounge chairs. This cozy environment mimics beloved "third spaces," like a favorite coffee shop or bookstore, and offers a dedicated area for reading and social-emotional learning discussions.

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GREAT FUTURES START HERE.

Executive Director's Message



After a busy summer filled with field trips, outdoor play, exploration in nature, art activities, and daily reading, our Clubs and our youth are settling back into the school-year routine. And as I reflect on the past several months, I can't help but be grateful for the many collaborations that allowed us to make this summer especially meaningful for our Club members.

We are deeply grateful to our friends at Teen Kitchen Project, who provided scholarships for twelve of our Club Kids to build their culinary skills during TKP's acclaimed summer cooking camps. We were also humbled and delighted by a partnership with **Bookshop Santa Cruz, which provided hundreds of free books** to our Club Kids in support of their beloved summer reading program. And perhaps most importantly, our partners at **Santa Cruz City Schools and the Live Oak School District provided free health meals and snacks** each day our Clubs were open, helping to ensure that no kids went without the nourishment needed to stay active and engaged throughout the summer months.

Our annual partnership with the City of Scotts Valley's Parks and Rec department allowed us to once again bring some high-energy community fun as host of the annual 4th of July parade's Kids Zone. Festivities included several bounce houses, water play, face painting, pinwheel making, food trucks, live music, and of course lots of Red, White, and Blue.

I'm also thrilled to share that an **exciting partnership with the Panda Cares Foundation** came to life over the summer months, allowing us to establish Panda Cares Center of Hope in the Teen Center of our Live Oak Clubhouse. With fresh paint, carpet, furniture, and technology, the Teen Center provides a fantastic environment for our Club members to hang out, connect with friends, and get their homework done every day, as detailed in the cover story.

This past summer was filled with learning, fun, and new experiences, thanks to the support of partners like these and the donors whose generous support makes our work possible. In the months ahead, **we'll be focused on afterschool programming**, with an emphasis on homework help, social-emotional learning and providing the consistent, safe and fun environments our Clubs are known for.

Read on for more information about happenings at the Club this fall, and ways you can support our youth on their path to Great Futures. Thanks, as always, for being a part of our Club community!

With gratitude,

Lis DuBois

Lis DuBois, Executive Director





PHOTOS BY JAY MELENA

President's Message

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Club,

As we approach the end of the year, I find myself reflecting on the vital role the Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Cruz County continue to play in meeting the basic, essential needs of our local youth and their families.

Right now, our community is facing significant economic challenges. The rising cost of living is impossible to ignore. With housing, food, and fuel becoming increasingly expensive, the daily pressure on working parents is heavier than ever. Compounding this stress is a severe lack of dependable, high-quality, and affordable out-of-school options in our local area. While retired now, I was once a single parent of two boys, working a very demanding job with the City of Santa Cruz—I get it!

This is where our Club steps in to bridge the gap. To keep our doors open and our programs accessible, the Club works hard to leverage grant funds and local business sponsorships. However, the most important piece of our funding puzzle has always been you. Philanthropic gifts from generous donors in our community are what truly ensure our Clubs can continue to meet this growing, critical need.

As we look ahead to our year-end fundraiser, I am asking for your support. Please give generously this season to guarantee that high-quality mentors, enriching programs, and healthy meals continue to be available to local kids and their families. Your investment is not just a donation; it is a lifeline for working families and a brighter future for Santa Cruz County.

With gratitude! Best,

Carol Scurich

Carol Scurich, Board President

Panda Cares Center of Hope

POWERED BY PANDA EXPRESS ASSOCIATES AND GUESTS

Panda Cares Foundation Center of Hope, Continued:

The Panda Cares Foundation is a proud and ongoing sponsor of BGCA's Project Learn strategy. Project Learn includes five key components, including: Homework Help and Tutoring, High-Yield Learning Activities, Family and Caregiver Engagement, School Partnerships, and Positive Incentives. We prioritize youth-centered, flexible programming that integrates social-emotional development and creative problem-solving for members of all ages and backgrounds, and know that our new Center of Hope will provide ample opportunities for our Club members to implement Project Learn!

We are deeply grateful to the Panda Cares Foundation for believing in our youth. This stunning new Center of Hope ensures that our Live Oak teens have a safe, state-of-the-art environment to learn, connect, and thrive for years to come.

- Homework Help & Tutoring
- High-yield Learning Activities
- Family/ Caregiver Engagement
- School Partnerships
- Positive Academic Participation Incentives

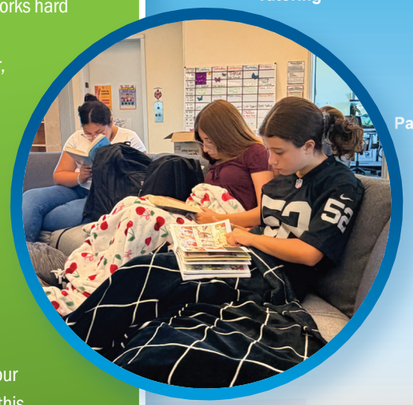






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Make a generational impact!

Donors Like You— *A legacy that inspires!*

As a longtime supporter of Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Cruz County, you understand how vital it is to invest in the next generation. Whether you have faithfully supported our mission for ten years or more, made impactful gifts of stocks or securities, or are now watching your own children and grandchildren grow, the commitment of donors like you is the foundation of everything we do.

With October marking National Estate Planning Awareness Week (Oct 19-25th), it is a wonderful time to reflect on the lasting impact you can make. Many of our dedicated supporters choose to extend their impact by making a bequest or naming the Club as a beneficiary in their estate, will, or financial accounts such as insurance or retirement accounts. In fact, leaving certain assets like these to a non-profit organization like the Boys & Glrls Club can both benefit a cause you care about deeply, and your heirs (who may be taxed differently on these assets than others in your estate).

National Estate Planning Awareness Week is the perfect opportunity to protect your loved ones and reflect on the causes closest to your heart.

If you have already included the Club in your plans, we invite you to share your intentions through this simple form, accessible by scanning the QR Code to the right. We cherish donors like you and want to properly thank you for your incredible foresight, generosity, and commitment to a legacy that will keep our Clubs open and thriving for generations to come.

If you are just beginning to think about your estate plan, National Estate Planning Awareness Week is the perfect opportunity to protect your loved ones and reflect on the causes closest to your heart. If you are a grandparent, share the link below with your children and know that they are taking the important steps needed to protect the future of their children. You can use our partner FreeWill's free online resource to guide you through the process step-by-step, accessed by scanning the QR code the right or by visiting https://partner.freewill.com.bgcscc.

www.boysandgirlsclub.info

SUMMER CAMP RECAP & HIGHLIGHTS





***The energy** at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Cruz County was electric* this year as we celebrated eight incredible weeks of summer programming. From June 1st to July 31st, our doors were open bright and early from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, across our three bustling clubhouses in Santa Cruz, Live Oak, and Scotts Valley.

Our dedicated staff ensured that every single day was packed with both fun and evidence-based programming developed by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. We made sure to cover all the bases, keeping both young bodies moving and young minds actively engaged. Kids burned off energy through daily sports, games, and recreation, and kept their academic skills sharp with our Common Core-aligned Summer Brain Gain modules and dedicated **"Drop Everything and Read"** (DEAR) time.



PHOTO BY JAY MELENA

Of course, active kids need exceptional fuel. We are incredibly proud that we **provided daily free meals**, including breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks, ensuring that every child stayed fed, focused, and ready for the day's adventures at no additional cost to our families.

Summers at the Club are the perfect time to collaborate with incredible local partners to keep our youth engaged and inspired. This year, we teamed up with the Teen Kitchen Project to provide specialized cooking classes to Club kids across nine weeks of summer programming. It was a true win-win for working parents, who could drop their children off for all-day Club care while our staff safely transported them to and from the TKP kitchen for two hours of hands-on instruction. Meanwhile, our youth also dove into the joy of reading through Bookshop Santa Cruz's Summer Reading Program, an enriching experience made possible by generous local business sponsorships and the fantastic Bookshop team.



PHOTO BY JAY MELENA

A true highlight of our 2026 summer camp was undoubtedly the expeditions. Our field trips took Club kids to explore the wonders of our region, both near and far. Campers marveled at marine life at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, stepped back in time at Roaring Camp, and hiked beneath the towering redwoods of Big Basin and Nisene Marks State Parks.

We also enjoyed classic summer thrills at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk and cooled off with multiple trips to local movie theaters to catch the latest summer blockbusters.

None of these unforgettable summer memories would be possible without the unwavering dedication of our Club families, donors, and supporters. **Thank you for helping us build a summer of belonging, learning, and immense fun!**



PHOTO BY JAY MELENA



PHOTO BY JAY MELENA



"I really enjoyed the Teen Kitchen Project cooking camp this summer! The staff were really nice and helpful, and never rushed us through the activities. It was a lot of fun, and I learned a lot of new skills–like how to hold a knife the right way. It helped me feel more confident when cooking at home!"
—Jonathan V. 5th grade Club member



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Nature Mindfulness Field Trips

By Hayley Rizzi, Youth Behavioral Health Counselor

This summer I had the privilege of going on outings in nature with adventurous club members from each of our Clubhouses. The purpose of our outings was to support our youth with feeling connected with our natural surroundings and encouraging mindfulness and emotional regulation.

Growing up and into adulthood, I have found peace and solace when being outside. I was excited for the opportunity to encourage our members to explore and have fun in nature. We traveled together in small groups and visited many different state parks in our area including Nisene Marks, Henry Cowell, and Wilder Ranch.



On each trip, Club Kids had the opportunity to experience what each unique park has to offer—from the steady and comforting presence of our redwood forests to the ever moving ocean waves. The members who were invited to join these outings were engaged and excited to participate in mindfulness activities, such as journaling, nature bingo, taking moments to meditate, and drawing what they saw around them. On each trip, youth were encouraged to notice all the sounds, sights, and smells that they can only find outdoors. After an afternoon of playing outside one of our club members shared that "nature is so cool! I hope I can do this again."

We are excited to continue these trips to give our youth the opportunity to grow and thrive outside.



Scotts Valley Library Partnership

Public libraries increasingly function as critical after-school gathering spaces for youth. This is especially true at the Scotts Valley branch library, where an estimated 75-100 teens gather each Wednesday, following Scotts Valley Middle School's early release bell at 12:30pm.

Boys & Girls Club staff were honored to be approached by the library to develop collaborative programming aimed at providing additional support, supervision, and positive engagement for local middle school students during these high-impact, after-school hours.

Through this successful partnership, Boys & Girls Club staff helped create a safe, welcoming environment where youth could connect with caring adult mentors, receive academic support, and participate in structured enrichment activities. The program strengthened supervision during peak after-school hours, providing developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed approaches to youth engagement while reinforcing positive, library-appropriate behavior.

Each week, Club staff served as positive and consistent adult role models within the library's teen center. Youth participated in BGCA's signature Power Hour program, receiving homework assistance and academic support. In addition, Club staff led supervised games, encouraging teamwork, communication, and positive peer relationships.

As one participant explained, "I like that the Boys & Girls Club staff can help me with my homework, and also keep the other kids from getting too rowdy."

By working together, the library and Boys & Girls Clubs helped ensure that young people had a safe and productive place to spend their Wednesday afternoons—while providing opportunities to learn, connect, and thrive.







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