



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

## **Impact100 South Jersey Grant**

### **SECTION 1: OVERVIEW**

1. **Focus Area:** Women, Children & Families
2. **Name:** Boys & Girls Clubs of Cumberland County
3. **Website:** [www.bgccumberland.org](http://www.bgccumberland.org)
4. **Non-Profits Affiliated With:** Boys & Girls Clubs of America
5. **Name of Project:** Youth for Change Center Expansion (IMPACT 100 Wing)
6. **County Where Organization is Located:** Cumberland County, NJ
7. **Counties Being Served by this Project:** Cumberland County, NJ
8. **Executive Director Name:** Christopher J. Volker
9. **Executive Director E-Mail:** [cvolker@vinelandbgc.org](mailto:cvolker@vinelandbgc.org)
10. **Contact Phone Number:** (856) 696-4190

### **SECTION 2: ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

#### **MISSION**

1. **Mission of Organization.** The mission of the Boys & Girls Club is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. The organization strives to accomplish this mission by providing a safe, nurturing, diverse and educational environment where area youth gather on a regular basis during out-of-school hours.
2. **Target Population:** Underserved youth, ages 5-18 (both male and female).
3. **Number of Individuals Reached in last Two Years:** 265+
4. **Changes in Numbers:** The Club has seen a decrease in membership in the past year due to COVID-19 and we needed to close one of our sites in March 2020. However, we were able to accommodate a number of young people to take part in virtual classrooms on a daily basis in order for them to keep on track with their schoolwork. This has proven to be beneficial for both children and their parents and helped them keep on track with their assignments thus preventing learning loss.
5. **The Efforts Made to Incorporate the Target Population into Our Strategic and Operational Planning:** The Club is extremely well integrated within the communities it serves. Boys & Girls Clubs (BGCs) have the unique opportunity to serve as a bridge between home, school, and community, connecting these different learning ecosystems to best support youth to reach their full potential. The situation created by COVID further emphasized the importance for Clubs to work collaboratively with schools, social service agencies, churches and other groups to meet the needs of youth and families. As a first step in deepening that collaboration, Club includes these goals and objectives as part of its Strategic and Operational Plans. The major vision and purpose of Boys & Girls Clubs is to connect with the community, other local agencies, and political leaders to provide for the needs of its members,

families, and caregivers and offer support to address these needs. Furthermore, The Club has unveiled its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policy at its year-end board meeting in 2020. This includes diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of the organization, from board to staff/volunteers to members served. The Club believes that, as the nation becomes increasingly diverse, it becomes more and more important to help young people learn how to live with respect and tolerance among those who might be different from them but also benefit from others' experiences, uniqueness, and traditions. As a result, The Club runs its Youth For Unity program in which youth learn to value their own individuality and the unique combination of qualities that makes them who they are as well as build cultural identity. Therefore, Club members will appreciate the beliefs, traditions, and values of the culture in which they belong. This initiative also includes curriculum focused on the LGBTQ, Black Lives Matters, and woman's rights communities who are an integral part of the American tapestry.

**6. What Makes Our Organization Unique:** The organization is at the forefront of youth development in Cumberland County, NJ and, through our small organization, big things happen. Most notably, the Club focuses on three key focus areas: Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles, and Good Character and Citizenship. Located in the poorest county in the State of New Jersey with the highest teenage pregnancy rate, it is quite challenging (but rewarding) to help young people be the best they can be especially in a community plagued with poverty, gang presence, drugs, domestic abuse, and high unemployment. In Cumberland County, NJ and, essentially across America, many underserved young people come from environments where positive role models are scarce, education is not a priority, and career opportunities are limited. Many area school guidance departments are short-staffed and underserve their students in the crucial areas of post-secondary education options and career pathway preparation. Through our group mentoring and case management approach, our Club helps fill an important gap in those critical areas and help guide them toward success. The Club has been offering out-of-school programming for youth for over 18+ years while delivering a proven youth development strategy, access to Club services several days a week, a safe and clean environment, life-changing programs, and the opportunity to receive mentoring experiences and relationships with diverse, trained, and caring staff and volunteers in a supervised and structured environment.

The goals of Club programming and services are to increase the high school graduation rate, build self-esteem, discover new skill sets, prepare for college and the workforce, and engage youth with service work through the afterschool program. The Club's major objective is to develop youth's knowledge and skills in the areas of academic success, leadership development, community service, healthy lifestyles, the arts (including STEAM), social recreation, post-secondary and career exploration options, and environmental stewardship. A major goal of the Club is for youth to make smart and informed decisions for the future. To ensure student progress and outcome achievement, the Club's structured activities have clearly identified and measurable outcomes and are aligned with each youth's Individual Youth Development Plan.

Furthermore, The Club boasts four New Jersey Youth of the Year winners out of the last six years and one Northeast Regional winner. These outstanding teens were awarded scholarships for college and all have accomplished much since aging out of the Club and pursuing their goals and dreams.

## STAFFING

1. **Number of Years Executive Director in position:** 18+ years
2. **What is Number of Full-Time Employees:** 2
3. **Number of Part-time Employees:** 16
4. **Current Number of Active Volunteers:** 8

## BOARD

1. **Current Number of Board Members:** 12
2. **Number of Board Members that Contributed to Organization:** 12 (this includes donor engagement, community service, special events support, and program support)
3. **List of Board Members (Board meets monthly):**

Carolyn Kaspar  
(President)  
LS Technologies  
Two years served

Alex Kaganzev  
(Vice President)  
Retired – State of NJ  
Four years served

Cornelio Sabio  
(Treasurer)  
Atlantic County Public Schools  
Eight years served

Sandra Weber  
(Secretary)  
SW Tax Services  
Three months served

Diane Fischer Cristiano  
(Corresponding Secretary)  
Dee Lee Promotions  
Sixteen years served

Roberta Goodman  
Nursing Student/Rowan College of South Jersey  
Board Member  
Three months served

Vicky Miller  
Board Member  
Insight Workforce Solutions  
Four years served

Vonda McPherson  
Board Member  
One Year Served

Michael Morton  
Board Member/Safety Chair  
Bridgeton Public Schools  
Seven years served

Darren Palmer  
Board Member  
Atlantic County Public Schools  
Two years served

Ute Propert  
Board Member  
State of NJ/DCP&P  
Eight years served

Susan Sauro  
Board Member/Area Council Liaison  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Two years served

### FINANCE

1. **Operational Budget 2021:** \$327,900.
2. **Total Operating Budget Project for 2022:** \$425,600
3. **Top Three Revenue Sources:** State of NJ (DCF) -- \$100,000; Attorney General's Office/County of Cumberland -- \$50,000; Pappas Family Foundation -- \$50,000.

### STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

1. **Date of last strategic plan and years it encompasses:** The Clubs' most recent Strategic Plan was drafted November 2020 for years 2020-23.
2. **Long term goals and vision:** The major objectives and goals of the organization is to have a greater presence in the Cumberland County, NJ region while we expand to serve more young people, especially those who need us most. Furthermore, these goals encompass an overall effort to inspire and empower Club youth to achieve success and be the best they can be. The Club offers programs that target Cumberland County, NJ area youth, both male and female, (ages 5-18). The Club and its programs help to champion youth and provide opportunities for them as well as build their integrity and self-esteem. At the same time, it continues its major goal of helping to reduce

the community drug/alcohol problems, gang involvement, delinquency, teenage pregnancy, and other issues plaguing our communities.

The vision of the Club is to make a big difference in the communities it serves and strive to be the foremost youth development organization in the Cumberland County, NJ area while providing programs, services and activities that provide hope and opportunity for all youth. In this regard, the Club offers vital and engaging educational experiences with greater recognition and support from area businesses, the media, political leaders, foundations, coalitions, and the community at large.

Furthermore, The Club recognizes the challenges of living in an impoverished community and the lack of resources available. The organization values the communities it serves and is interested in their ultimate development. The youth of today are the adults of tomorrow and we need them to take the harness and develop into good citizens with excellent characters. The Club realizes that it has the potential to greatly impact the life of each and every young person it serves in a positive way. The expansion of the Youth For Change Center is important since it will enable the Club to expand its programming and serve more underserved youth (50+). This initiative is an integral part of the Club's long-term goals and vision of reaching more youth.

- 3. Any significant changes to take place in next 6-12 months:** The only significant change that can be communicated is to get back on track with enrollment and engaging more young people after the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **SECTION 3: PROJECT INFORMATION**

- 1. Project Summary:** The Club is planning an Expansion Project for its Youth For Change Center site (IMPACT 100 Wing). The building is currently rather small (was previously a credit union) and it is challenging to serve youth with our life-enhancing programs in a smaller space. This expansion will help the Club build capacity by adding a 60 foot x 40 foot extension to the building which would accommodate more young people (50+) over a 24-month period in order for more youth to engage in the Club's life-changing programs and activities. Not only does this project improve the community's quality of life through the creation of more jobs, but it also promotes further youth development. In addition, The Club also hopes to incorporate green or high-performance building components in order to reduce long-term building costs.

- 2. Who Will Oversee this Project:** Christopher J. Volker, CEO

- 3. The Need or Problem that the Project will Address:** Many of the areas in Cumberland County, NJ are extremely impoverished and families here lack access to youth programs focusing on academic success, healthy lifestyles, and other important lessons for life. Under the proposed expansion program, the Club will not only be able to more than double its capacity to serve underserved youth but also be better equipped to create a supportive environment that promotes success, so our youth are better prepared for the future. The proposed project (titled Youth For Change Center Expansion/IMPACT 100 Wing) will provide 50+ additional youth with the ability to participate in programs and activities, including service learning projects, designed to build leadership skills, as well as other related skills like teamwork, problem solving, and critical thinking, in more than double the space. Research has found that Club programs are most effective when those "21st Century skills" are

integrated through real-world learning experiences. As always, The Club will also emphasize collaborations with other groups with like-minded goals to create a more sustainable future.

**4. How will the project address this problem or need:** The Boys & Girls Club implements the Five Key Elements for Positive Youth Development with high-quality staff that offer best practices in order to provide youth with an optimal Club experience. Research has found that implementing the highest optimal experience can increase positive impacts on youth and certain staff practices enhance the quality of the Club experience for greater youth outcomes.

At the Boys & Girls Club, as part of the Club's vision and long-term goals, helping as many young people as possible is intended to have advantageous outcomes. This is especially true in regard to participants' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to academic success, healthy lifestyles, and community development. This project will truly help address the need of mentoring the next generation of leaders through an expansion effort that benefits the community in a big way while expanding on the organization's resources.

**5. Description of How this Project Fits into our Ability to More Effectively Carry Out our Core Mission:** The proposed project will integrate a community-based approach and engage more youth in the process. Currently, the Club's Youth For Change Center is approximately 2,600 square feet (including the basement) and this grant would help more than double its current space and serve more youth which is a major part of the strategic plan for the organization. The Club is committed to its core mission of providing a safe place for youth, offering life-enhancing programs, and giving young people hope and opportunity for a brighter future. This project will not only provide a larger "home away from home" for more young people but also become more of a space in which great things happen!

**6. How Does Project Fit into Club's Current Strategic Plan or Long-Term Vision:** The Club's Strategic Plan Goal #4: -- REACH MORE YOUTH. Increase daily participation in Club programming and keep members engaged in life-changing programs to provide for an optimal Club experience. The major objective of this expansion project is to reveal a significant increase in participation among the young people that live in the communities the Club serves. In addition, The Club sees the major impact as being that participants develop ownership of their communities and become more inclined to spend their own free time helping to develop themselves and also give back to the community. In essence, the Club can help engage a sense of responsibility among the young participants while helping them create a connection to positive activities. As a further indicator of impact, the results of this expansion project has a potential to display a significant change in perception when asked the importance of youth programming and how there is a connection between its direct and indirect correlation.

**7. Approximately How Many Individuals do we Expect to Reach over the 24-month Period:** We will reach over 50+ that need a safe and comfortable space to attend during after school hours. This is in accordance to State of NJ licensing standards since the expansion will increase our occupancy and capacity.

**8. Will you be Collaborating with Other Organizations to Carry Out this Project?** Yes. The Club will work closely with the City of Vineland and County of Cumberland and the following 501 c 3 organizations, agencies, and clubs: Aaron Melnick and Sharon Flaim -- City of Vineland Community Development/Clean Communities Coalition (city contact/landscaping); Father Donohue -- Saint Augustine Prep/Caritas Project students (local private school/volunteer help); MaryJane Kincaid --

Community Outreach Coordinator, Our Lady of Mercy Academy (local private school/volunteer help); Maria Aviles -- The Girls Scouts of Southern NJ (non-profit for volunteer help & referrals); Tracy Swan-Grova -- Cumberland County Prosecutor's Office (support and help from Positive Youth Development Coalition); Kellie Warker Slade – Professor, Rowan University/Cumberland Campus (volunteers & referrals); and Coleen Ayala – President, Tri-County Rotary Club/Interact and Rotaract Clubs (service clubs for volunteer help), just to name a few.

Furthermore, The Boys & Girls Club has strong support, referral sources and partnerships with the State of New Jersey (DCF), County of Cumberland Human Services, Family Success Centers, the Police Chaplain Program, Cumberland Empowerment Zone, Workforce Development, and the Vineland Elks Club. These partnerships can also be leveraged for help and support in regard to in-kind services and donations, technical assistance, and grant funding.

**9. List of Specific Activities/Components of the Project and Projected Timetable:** The timetable for the project will run from July 1, 2022 and go through June 30, 2024. Components of the project are as follows:

<b>Activity/Project Component</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Develop plans for building expansion	June-July 2022
Start the construction	August 2022
Finish Major Portion of Project	September 2022
Furnish interior	October 2022
Project completion	October/November 2022
Outreach to area youth	January 2023 (ongoing)
Finishing touches to room	Complete by June 30,2024

**10. List 2-3 Specific Outcomes the Organization Hopes to Achieve with this Project:**

*Outcome #1* – Serve more youth, especially those who need us most. The Boys & Girls Club collects data from its member tracking database to gather information of students' GPA, behavior, attendance, participation in programming, and on-time grade progression. In addition, The Boys & Girls Club collects yearly optimal Club experience surveys from Club members ages 8-18 through the BGCA's National Youth Outcomes Initiative (NYOI). Each year, a portion of Boys & Girls Club members take an online survey which reflects what works and issues that might need improvement. The data is an overall snapshot and is used by staff professionals to assess, refine, and improve each Club site individually and as a whole and is also shared with key stakeholders. Most of the surveys indicated that youth need a safe and comfortable place to go during after-school hours where they have the attention and mentorship of a caring adult. Therefore, a significant outcome is to do more outreach and serve more underserved youth in the communities we serve.

*Outcome #2* – Engage more youth in S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) programming (with a particular emphasis on girls of color). Yearly, each Club site conducts an annual internal assessment of the quality of their programs and practices, addressing areas of need and maximizing ability to serve young people. By measuring and tracking the quality of Club programming, each Club site can evaluate how well they are meeting the needs and interests of youth in the core program areas. Club staff professionals and volunteers work together to develop a 12-month objective and action plan for the upcoming year and share responsibility for meeting those objectives. It was determined that S.T.E.A.M. programs were beneficial and could help youth in the long-term and that girls of color would be compelled to participate in this type of programming, in addition to the other vital programs offered by the Club.

*Outcome #3* – Collaborate with stakeholders. With this particular expansion project, the fact that capacity will increase is a win-win situation for the organization. More youth will be tracked via case management in relation to their goals and objectives and be a major component of the capacity-building model. The overall outcome of the expansion project would be measured on how it has improved the community’s quality of life while promoting more vital youth development programming. This would also involve collaborations with major stakeholders of the Club such as the State of NJ (DCF); County of Cumberland; City of Vineland; Prosecutor’s Office; Police Athletic League; SERV; Girl Scouts; Citizens United; Wheaton Arts: Revive South Jersey; John Scarpa Foundation; Pappas Family Foundation; and more.

Furthermore, The Boys & Girls Club will identify other sources of income to sustain the building expansion. This effort includes donations from area businesses and individuals, as well as leveraged grants from such foundations/agencies as: United Way, State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs in NJ (BGCNJ), Community Development Block Grants, AARP, and other targeted foundations. This is a truly significant time for the Club to receive this grant funding and it will make a big impact on the community and the youth/families we serve.

**PROJECT BUDGET**

**1. Total project budget amount. \$125,000.**

<b>Specific Expenses</b>	<b>Additional Details/Breakout</b>	<b>Total</b>
Building & Foundation Costs		\$72,500
Labor Costs		\$10,000
Furniture (tables, chairs)		\$ 5,000
Misc. Supplies (window coverings, etc.)		\$ 2,000
		\$ 1,000
Indirect Costs (Permits, etc.)		
		<b>\$125,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		

**2. Additional funding sources for project: Various**

<b>Funder/Donor</b>	<b>Amount/Value</b>	<b>Date</b>
State of NJ (DCF-Stabilization Grants)	\$15,000	September 2022
City of Vineland (CDBG)	\$8,000	October 2022
Donations (Businesses, Individuals)	\$2,000	October 2022