

## CEO End of 2020 Newsletter Letter

Hello,

At no time in recent memory has the role of the Boy & Girls Club been more critical in the lives of youth. We are central to the health, education, safety, recreation, and support of young people. Especially now during all that is happening.

Tremendous community support means kids and families can continue to have a safe environment for remote learning, healthy lifestyles, and summer camp. Since schools closed in March, we have provided more than \$700,000 in free services and more than 10,000 hours of programs.

We continued with remote learning this fall, serving more than 1,900 youth from 240 different schools. We are also seeing our youth community changing; we now support a significantly higher percentage of youth experiencing homelessness and foster care. Twenty-three percent of our youth are new to the Clubs. The severity of uncertainty causes our kids, teens, and team members to experience extraordinary levels of anxiety and stress. This evidence compels us to evolve our Club programs to meet youth needs by exploring mental health services and other innovative solutions, such as Peace Circles. (Read more on [p. 2](#).)

COVID is only one challenge our community is experiencing. Combatting racism is another. We condemn any act of racism or discrimination. We stand for safety, health, dignity, and equitable opportunity. We advocate for youth and encourage young people to harness the power of their voice.

We are dedicating time and budget to the initiatives that will allow us to become a more culturally responsive organization. We are providing professional training and education for our teams at all levels. This work will progress over several years.

We are thankful that our community is so generous in their support of our Clubs, especially during these uncertain times. We know we can't do this alone. Together, we can give all youth the most precious legacy there is - great futures.

Have a wonderful and safe holiday season.

Laurie Black