



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS AT THE BOYS &
GIRLS CLUB OF JOLIET:
CELEBRATING THE SEASON WITH JOY
AND COMMUNITY"

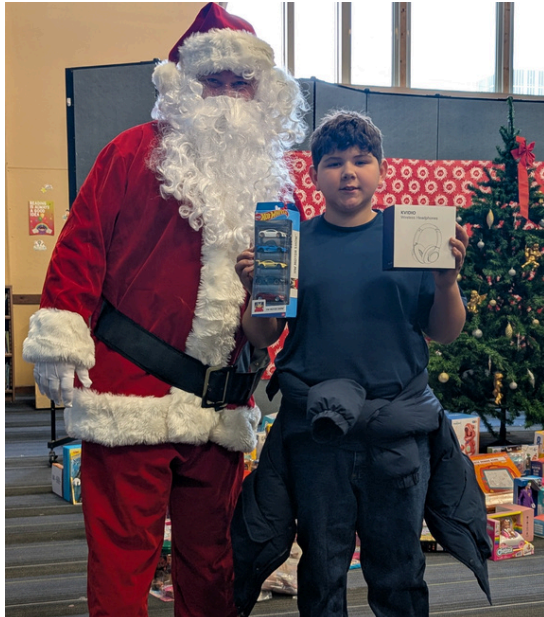




HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS AT THE CLUB

On Saturday, December 14, 2024, the Boys & Girls Club of Joliet welcomed club families to its Annual Holiday Party, spreading joy and festive cheer. The Club received approximately 500 toys, generously donated by community and corporate partners who hosted toy drives.

A heartfelt thanks goes to Harrah's Joliet Casino and Hotel, Joliet Slammers, United Way of Will County, The Rock Island Group, Toy Box Connection Children's Non-Profit, Old Navy Joliet Commons, RE/MAX, Stan's Donut Shop, and Chase Bank Joliet for their contributions.



The celebration offered a variety of holiday-themed activities, including karaoke, carnival games, gift giveaways, photos with Santa, and raffles. Joliet West Roundtable Academy student volunteers played a key role in the festivities, leading carnival games and helping to create a fun and vibrant atmosphere.

Families enjoyed memorable moments with Santa Claus, who posed for photos with youth and their gifts, making the event a heartwarming experience for all who attended.





HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS AT THE CLUB CONTINUED...

Parents participated in raffles and were treated to a personal festive space while their youth participated in holiday activities. Ana, a parent whose son attends the club commented, "The Boys & Girls Club has changed me and my family's life in many ways. I am a single mother of two. This helps with my son being able to interact with other kids. To get his homework done. I work a lot of hours, so it is helpful to have some place for him to be while I get my work done."



A heartfelt thanks to Chick-fil-A Joliet for generously donating 250 meals for our families and volunteers.



Boys & Girls Club of Joliet Board of Directors served as Holiday Helpers. They assisted club members in selecting holiday gifts.

LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMMING: CULTIVATING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND CAREER EXPLORATION FOR YOUTH

Social and Emotional Life Skill groups at the Boys & Girls Club of Joliet provide youth with valuable opportunities to learn and practice essential skills.

For 1st through 3rd grade participants, sessions focus on personal boundaries, handling conflicts, and understanding consent. Through engaging activities such as icebreakers, projects, and discussions, these young members strengthen their social and emotional development. Daisy, a 1st-grade student, shared that she initially struggled to make friends because many classmates didn't like her. However, the club helped her learn how to build new friendships.



For 4th through 8th graders, the Career Launch program inspires youth to explore various career paths, identify their passions, and envision their futures. Participants also reflect on the challenges and opportunities within their community. Activities include writing letters to their future selves and creating vision boards to reinforce their goals and aspirations.



SEL Supportive Relationship Results:

86% of Club youth surveyed they are able to work out their problems.

97% of club youth surveyed I can talk to an adult if I have a problem.

66% of club youth surveyed peers at the club encourage them to try their best.

*The Boys & Girls Club is a Teen REACH funded program.

EMPOWERING ACADEMIC SUCCESS: ENHANCING CLUB YOUTH ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE PROJECT LEARN GRANT

The Boys & Girls Club of Joliet was awarded a \$10,000 Project Learn Grant from the Panda Cares Foundation. This generous grant will further enhance the Club's academic and life skills programming. Every day, the Club creates a nurturing and focused environment for learning. Work-study students collaborate with members to complete daily homework assignments, followed by engaging reading or math games designed to reinforce foundational skills.



Additionally, youth benefit from extended academic opportunities, such as participation in Compudopt digital literacy and coding classes, which are available for 1st to 5th graders. Social-emotional learning (SEL) small groups meet three times a week to support members' mental well-being. Thank you to the Panda Cares Foundation for selecting the Boys & Girls Club of Joliet for this opportunity!

INSPIRING GROWTH: JOLIET TOWNSHIP PARTNERSHIP EXPANDS PROGRAMMING FOR CLUB MEMBERS

The Club is thrilled to partner with Dr. Keisha Ellis, Director of Violence Prevention at Joliet Township, and her dedicated team to bring these enriching opportunities to Joliet youth. Registration is now open for youth ages 6–17 who are eager to take part in these exciting classes. Club members will participate in percussion, boxing, and basketball skill development classes. These programs aim to introduce youth to the arts, sports, and fitness, while promoting healthy mental well-being.



UPCOMING EVENTS:



The George Werden Buck Boys and Girls Club of Joliet's gala, **Inspiring Tomorrow, Today**, is an inspiring evening dedicated to supporting youth in our community.

Guests will enjoy an elegant event featuring live entertainment, impactful stories, and exciting silent and live auctions, all aimed at empowering children & teens with programs and opportunities that shape their futures. Join us as we celebrate the transformative power of investing in our kids today to build brighter tomorrows.

This event is Black Tie Optional.

Sponsorships and Tickets are available for purchased: <https://www.bgcjoliet.com/spring-gala-2025>



Special Thanks to our friends at Harrah's Joliet. Harrah's has been a strong supporter of the Boys & Girls Club of Joliet, providing numerous donations and sponsorships over the years. The generosity of its leadership, employees and patrons has greatly benefited the Club and its programs. This partnership has had a positive impact on the local community and the youth it serves. The Boys & Girls Club is grateful for the ongoing support from Harrah's Joliet.