



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
OF TAMPA BAY**

---

# PRESS RELEASE

## **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Great Futures Breakfast Raises More Than \$300,000 For Tampa Youth**

**December 13, 2012, Tampa, FL:** Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Great Futures Breakfast, raising more than \$300,000 for its 17 Clubs in Hillsborough and Pasco Counties.

Jeff and Penny Vinik served as honorary co-chairs, donating the Tampa Bay Times Forum for the event, transforming the forum floor to accommodate 79 tables set with a continental breakfast. More than 750 guests were in attendance for the one-hour program, which included Ken Griffey, Jr., future Hall of Famer and 9-time All-Star MLB player. Griffey, Jr. serves on the Board of Governors for Boys & Girls Clubs of America and came to Tampa especially for the event. Griffey was introduced to the stage by Lou Piniella, Boys & Girls Club of America Alumni Hall of Fame Member and future Major League Baseball Hall of Famer

Celebrating 85 years of making a difference in Tampa, the program showcased past and current Club Members and the impact the Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay had on their lives.

“Growing up in West Tampa, I have always known the importance of the Boys & Girls Club to the young people and their families. Anne and I continue to support the operation and expansion of various Clubs throughout the community because we firmly believe they provide a much needed service,” stated Joe Garcia, Attorney for Trenham Kemker and Boys & Girls Club Board Member.

Entertainment was provided by 16-year-old Sasha Alvarez, current Club Member at the Joe and Anne Garcia Smith Salesian site, who dazzled the audience with a dance routine. Sasha was the recipient of the Hank and Billye Aaron “Chasing the Dream” Foundation National Scholarship, an honor that was given to only 44 young people. A student at Blake High School, her dream is to dance professionally.

Each guest was given a copy of A Hand To Guide Me, by Denzel Washington, past Boys & Girls Club Member and current spokesperson for Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and had the opportunity to share their story for 30 seconds in two private booths at the end of the program.

“The Boys & Girls Clubs gave me the only chance to begin my swimming career the summer that I turned 5 years old. Along with my four years spent on the Club swim team (Tampa Bay Rays), I also spent summers in the summer camp program because my parents both worked. I have wonderful memories of my time spent playing games and of course, my favorite, I always made sure I have .25 cents in my pocket to get a pickle,” stated Brooke Bennett, 3-time Olympic Gold Medalist.

Through the generous donations of the Tampa Bay Times Forum, Tampa Bay Lightning, AVI-SPL Productions, the New York Yankees Foundation, AAA South, Virginia Kaul & Vic Holcomb, PDQ & Lee Roy Selmon’s Restaurants, and Catering By The Family, all proceeds raised from the event will go directly back to the Clubs in Tampa Bay, providing opportunity to more than 10,000 youth between the ages of 5-18 years.

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay has been a positive force in the community for 85 years; enabling young people to become productive, responsible and caring citizens through structured programming, safe learning environments and dedicated staff. With a focus on three core priority outcomes – Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles, and Improving Character & Leadership, Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay provides opportunities to build new skills that raise each Club Member’s belief that he or she can succeed and receive recognition for personal, social and academic accomplishments.

Are you an Alum of Boys & Girls Clubs? We want to hear from you! Contact Cassandra Thomas at 813-769-7535 or [cthomas@bgctampa.org](mailto:cthomas@bgctampa.org) to share your story and receive a Great Futures T-Shirt. Whether a Club kid from Tampa or elsewhere, we want to hear your story!

Interested in volunteering? Visit [www.bgctampa.org](http://www.bgctampa.org) for a listing of opportunities.

### **Media Contact**

Cassandra Thomas | [cthomas@bgctampa.org](mailto:cthomas@bgctampa.org) | 813.769.7535

### **Additional Quotes:**

“The people that worked at the Boys & Girls Club were extraordinary and through example I learned a lot about leadership, I learned about integrity, I learned a lot about community. I’ve had the opportunity to work in the White House and who would of thought it, a kid from Ybor City Boys & Girls Club working in Washington, in the White House?” - Frank Sanchez, Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade at the Department of Commerce.

“Luckily, I found the Boys & Girls Club that was near my neighborhood and they have been like a family to me ever since. Because of Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay, I am now Dr. Vondalyn Crawford. The Boys & Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay is my family.” – Dr. Vondalyn Crawford

“The Boys Club was by far the single most important part of my life in helping me develop leadership skills that have assisted me throughout my life. The life lesson and skills available will help all young men and women.” – Mario Polo, Jr., Broker Associate with Keller Williams Tampa Properties

“When I was growing up in West Tampa, the Boys Club was my place for fun and sports besides the baseball fields.” – Tony LaRussa, Former Major League Baseball Player and Future Hall of Famer