



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

METRO DENVER

spring newsletter
2014



Helping Kids. Building Communities.



THE RESULTS ARE REAL – SOLID, TANGIBLE, RESULTS.



**"We have an obligation
to all the fans and this
community to serve
them well."**

JOE ELLIS
President of the Denver Broncos

JOE ELLIS, President of the Denver Broncos,
Speaking about the impact of the Boys & Girls Clubs.

The Broncos' pursuit of excellence carries over beyond the field and into how the organization evaluates its involvement with the community.

We caught up with Joe Ellis, President of the Denver Broncos, a few weeks ago. His first and last message was the notion and importance of achieving results.

Speaking on behalf of the Broncos organization, one of the many things that Ellis admires about the Clubs is their ability to produce extraordinary results. Whether academic, artistic, athletic, nutritional or values, Boys & Girls Clubs serve kids up against the toughest odds and consistently produce positive, lasting results with a significant impact to the kids and communities they serve.

IMPACT

Ten years ago, the Broncos' VP of Community Development, Cindy Kellogg, approached

Joe Ellis and Pat Bowlen, Owner & CEO of the Denver Broncos, and outlined criteria for supporting deserving community partners in Denver. "Cindy outlined key components of our involvement; it began with impact. We looked at many choices and found that Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver was the most respected and best entity of its kind and has more impact on more kids than anyone else," says Ellis.

Kellogg commented, "We wanted a legacy investment that transcended the dollars and had impact through staff service days, player involvement, co-branding, partnership introductions, and advocacy. There is no question where the dollars go and that they yield maximum, positive impact."

CONTINUED on pg 3

**IN THIS
ISSUE:**

PG 2 *Impact of Your
Investment*

PG 4 *Anatomy of a
Club Member*

PG 5 *The Cost of
Child Poverty*

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



**"WE NEED TO BE BOLD,
DECISIVE, AND COURAGEOUS
WITH VISIONS OF FIRE FOR
OUR NEXT GENERATION."**

JOHN L. BARRY
President and CEO

Dear Friends,

Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver has been serving youth in the metro Denver area for more than 50 years, and we value both tradition and innovation. As the new President and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver, I plan to respect both of these concepts. I feel very fortunate to begin my work with such a trusted organization that has positively shaped the lives of thousands of youth, and continue fighting to defend the right of children in our community to achieve their maximum potential.

As we start the next phase of our journey, we are proud to present you with our new newsletter format. To better serve you, we'll be providing you a more in-depth look at the wide variety of issues that affect our Club members and stand as obstacles to their success. We'll also be introducing you to today and tomorrow's leaders: our inspiring supporters and Club members.

Right now is a very exciting time for Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver. Not only are we nearing the close of another successful school year, but we are also beginning the next chapter of our history in our community. We need to be bold, decisive, and courageous with visions of fire for our next generation. I am honored to be part of this team, which helps our children and teens build great futures for themselves and our country.

Very respectfully,

YOUR INVESTMENT MAKES AN IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF OUR CLUB MEMBERS.

In 2013, Boys & Girls
Clubs served:

10,000+
CLUB MEMBERS

AGES
6-18

90%
are economically
disadvantaged

55%
live in single parent or
non-traditional homes

Through our services, Boys & Girls Clubs bettered the lives of Club members and their communities.



Club members were **half as likely to try unhealthy substances** like tobacco products as their peers across Colorado.



Club members that participated in service learning activities were **significantly less likely to get into trouble at school.**



Over **237,880** balanced meals were served to Club members.



Club members who participated in homework help programs **earned higher GPAs** in school.

JOE ELLIS

CONTINUED from cover

"WE'VE SEEN RESULTS IN MEANINGFUL WAYS. THE KIDS LEARN THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS, CHARACTER AND VALUES EACH AND EVERY DAY."

FOCUS

In 2001, Bowlen and Ellis signed off on the plan that Kellogg would execute: to open and fully support the operation of one location of the Clubs, now known as the Denver Broncos Boys & Girls Club in Montbello.

In 2007, success with this location led to the addition of the Broncos Teen Center. "The best part has been watching the effect of putting our name and resources towards supporting the Clubs," says Ellis. "We've seen results in meaningful ways. The kids learn the importance of relationships, character and values each and every day."

CONSISTENCY

"The core values of the Clubs are set in stone; they never vary," says Ellis. "Those values are embodied in the Clubs' Directors, Managers and staff: commitment, stability and responsibility. These ideas are constantly reinforced."

LESSONS

To hear Ellis tell it, there are two things in a career that are fundamental: "The first is to empower your people to do their work. Talk little and listen a lot. And the second thing Mr. Bowlen taught me is to have fun with what you're doing – but take what you're doing at work really seriously."

The same values that Ellis learned – empowerment, communication, joy and a sense of purpose – are the same values passed on to Club members through its programs, Directors, Managers and staff, ultimately resulting in positive change in the kids and communities they serve.

Ellis' message to anyone who may have an interest in making the Denver community stronger? *"Go visit a Boys & Girls Club and see for yourself. Then ask some questions of the kids and the staff, and you'll quickly understand why Boys & Girls Clubs have such a profound effect."*

MEET CLUB MEMBER DAU



Dau is one of those truly amazing individuals whom everyone, of all ages, races and walks of life, can look to for inspiration. Born in South Sudan, he lived at the center of the second Sudanese Civil War until he was three years old when his family was displaced to Kenya, but not before his father was killed in the war. The grueling journey of 1,000+ miles took nearly two months to complete. In Kenya, Dau lived in the refugee camps with his extended family for six-and-a-half years. Over this time, Dau was lucky to get the start of an education, learning the alphabet and math; however, his school was "under the trees – we sat on the ground, our materials were a notebook, pencil and chalk board," says Dau.

Thanks to a Christian refugee program, Dau's family migrated to the U.S. on March 17th, 2005, a date forever stamped in Dau's memory. The next day, they arrived in Colorado. The first two years in the U.S. were hard. "The only English we knew was 'Hi. How are you?' and how to spell our names," says Dau. "We learned the rest through Sesame Street and Clifford the Big Red Dog." It was nearly two years later that Boys & Girls Clubs opened their doors in Cole Arts and Science Academy, the middle-school in which Dau was enrolled, and from there, Dau's journey changed from one of struggle and suffering to acceptance and joy.

"THROUGH THE CLUBS, I LEARNED NOT TO CARRY MY PAST WITH ME BUT TO WALK IN THE PRESENT. WHEN THINGS GET HARD, I TELL MYSELF: IF I CAN OVERCOME MY PAST, THEN I CAN OVERCOME THIS. MY MENTALITY IS NOT GIVING UP ON LIFE, BUT FIGHTING THROUGH."

CONTINUED on pg 4

Anatomy of A CLUB MEMBER

MIND

Taught that “education is the way” by his mother, Dau learned to make the most of every opportunity he had and made it his goal to be the first in his family to graduate high school. But initially, he had some troubles. Through the Clubs, Dau learned the importance of values and setting goals. “A staff member asked me, ‘What is your goal?’” Dau says, “They taught me how to identify all the little steps involved in graduating high school, and this started a path for a brighter picture of my life.”

Now a senior at Arrupe Jesuit, high school is all but complete. Dau’s new goal? To get a degree in International Relations: “I want for those who don’t have peace to have peace – I want to be on the international stage.”

HANDS

“I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for others wanting more for me,” Dau says. “I have no idea where I’d be without them; that’s why I volunteer for others like me.” In Dau’s words, “You can waste time, or do something with your time,” so Dau spends most of his free time volunteering with Arrupe Jesuit High School, Denver Rescue Mission, World Vision, and his Boys & Girls Club. “I like to be a man for others, it’s my motto: being selfless, giving for those who are in need even when you are in need yourself. Be humble. Look at others as human beings. Don’t see the color. Don’t see the race. You are helping another person, a brother or a sister.”

HEART

“When I was little, I felt like everything rotated around me, I was self-centered. I was angry because of the trauma my family experienced, and I took it out on others. I had a quick temper and would explode. Most of all, I was just there, going through the motions of the day, never wanting to be bothered.” Joey and Mike, two staff members at the Club, helped wake Dau up; they quickly realized that Dau wasn’t a talker and found other ways to get Dau to open up. By getting involved in sports, Dau began to come out of his shell and see a world of possibilities around him.

LEGS

“I don’t know where I would be without sports – the Club introduced me to basketball and baseball, but I couldn’t play for the Club unless I changed my grades and my attitude.” Through the power of sports, Dau slowly began to heal and overcome the pain of his past. He learned that sports are not about the final score, but about the team, relationship building, communication and conflict resolution. Nobody likes losing, especially Dau, but “there are many values to be learned through losing...I was taught modesty, humility, how to be humble and how to take a loss.”

CHILD POVERTY RATE IN COLORADO RISES ABOVE PRE-RECESSION YEARS

In Colorado, a family of four lives “in poverty” if their total household income is less than \$23,000 per year. According to a recent Denver Post article, about 224,000, or 18%, of the state’s more than one million children were living in poverty in 2012, which marks a rise from pre-recession rates. Though it’s no surprise that the lowest rate of child poverty is found in Douglas County, with just 4.9% of children affected, many Coloradans are surprised to learn that the highest rate of childhood poverty, a dismaying 26.2%, is found right here in Denver County. That’s one in every four children in Denver living in poverty.

Ask most parents what they want for their children, and you’ll likely get very similar answers: they want their children to thrive – they want them to graduate from high school; they want them to take care of themselves; and they want them to develop into happy, honest and helpful adults. However, families living in poverty face extra challenges in working toward those goals. For poor families, graduating from high school isn’t just about studying hard. When you’re worried about putting food on the table and you work until 11pm every day to do so, you’re not worried about whether that table is a quiet space where your child can do her homework. Forget thriving – you’re fighting to survive.

For individuals raised in wealthier families, it’s difficult to understand how the disadvantages of poverty accumulate and overlap over time. So let’s take a closer look at some of the many, often surprising, ways that poverty impacts a child’s ability to learn and grow.

Kids born into poverty miss out on 1,395 hours of education when they don’t attend pre-school, which many do not. This gap in learning grows bigger as wealthier kids spend their time after school and during the summer attending camps, learning instruments and playing on teams.

Low-income kids miss out on being a part of the community: by the time they reach 6th

grade, middle-and-upper-class children have likely spent 465 more hours doing things like reading and talking with their parents and taking trips to places like the zoo.

Children who are food insecure are two times more likely to be obese than their peers who have access to enough food at all times. Plus, a child who goes hungry just once in her life is 2 ½ times more likely to have poor overall health 10-15 years later.

Along with poverty come the predictable challenges like unstable housing, a lack of access to healthy food, and increased crime. But it’s more than that: it’s the embarrassment of hand-me-down clothes that are two sizes too small, it’s the fear of an unsafe walk home from the library, and it’s the fact that no adult is there to greet you with a smile when you arrive.

Governor John Hickenlooper stated to The Denver Post, “It’s up to all of us — parents, leaders, lawmakers, educators and community members — to make sure Colorado’s children are equipped with the skills they need to have successful futures.”

Go to greatfuturesdenver.org to learn how Boys & Girls Clubs build great futures or to schedule a tour of a local Club.

The above statistics are cited from the following sources:
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Students who attend school in high-poverty areas **TEST LOWER THAN THEIR PEERS** in higher-income schools and **ARE 6X MORE LIKELY TO DROP OUT.**



Low-income neighborhoods are often food deserts (*locations without convenient access to fresh food*) and they often **LACK SAFE PLACES FOR KIDS TO PLAY AND BE ACTIVE.**



Children surrounded by concentrated poverty are **MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM HARMFUL LEVELS OF STRESS** and to demonstrate behavioral or emotional problems.



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Program Support Center

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE



*An exclusive interview with Joe Ellis,
President of the Denver Broncos*



*The cost of child poverty on
Colorado's children*