

Community Impact—After School Care

Jamila's mother, a single parent of three, remained hopeful for her daughter's future. The lack of leadership Jamila had received as well as her record of spending time in the Department of Juvenile Justice would have had most groups giving up on her. However, The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands believed in Jamila and provided their support when most would have turned their backs.

In the Midlands, there are nearly 110,000 children ages 5-17, of these children, and only about 6,000 attend after-school programs. With most parents working to meet the financial needs of their families, the after-school hours of 3-6 p.m. are peak hours for teens to commit crimes and innocent kids to become victims. Quality after-school programs provide children a safe and healthy environment to flourish and grow.

According to the Rose Institute, every dollar that is invested in after-school programs saves taxpayers approximately three dollars in reduced costs related to welfare, crime and education. United Way of the Midlands supports these after-school programs and, in 2005, awarded the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Midlands with a Community Impact grant.

Jamila, the BGCM 2005-2006 youth of the year, overcame her circumstances and now plans to attend college. BGCM hired Jamila as a junior staff member in 2005, and she still continues to help with their summer camps. She is an honors student and a member of her high school's choir and the speech and debate team.

"The Club staff never gave up on me. They could see I was a good person even when I was acting badly," she said.

The BGCM has had a strong presence in our community since its charter in 1959 as it has primarily served urban, at-risk youth. By instilling a sense of competence, usefulness and belonging in their youth, the BGCM has helped many young people realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens. Every year over 5,000 children are served, and over 2,000 youth attend one of the seven Clubs regularly.

By funding after-school programs like the BGCM, United Way of the Midlands creates lasting changes in peoples' lives and our community. Without funds provided by United Way of the Midlands, success stories like Jamila's wouldn't be possible.

United Way of the Midlands is donors, partners and volunteers discovering and responding to the crucial needs of our community—then finding resources to address those needs and following up to make sure the work gets done.

1800 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29201
803-733-5400