Because Every Kid Matters

Different **strengths**. Different **dreams**. One place to **belong**.

Dear Friend,



"The Club meets each of us exactly where we are."

Every kid has different strengths and different dreams. For the Ogugua family, the Boys & Girls Club is that one place to belong - four times over. Amarachi, Chinasa, Chima, and Chike range from 4th grade to 9th grade. Their parents both work in healthcare, doing important work for this community every day. And every day after school, the Club is where their kids belong.



Amarachi, 14, has been a Club member for three years. In that time, she has grown from a Club kid into a Club leader. Last year she took part in the Junior Youth of the Year program. This past summer, she became a Youth Worker - mentoring the youngest Club members, kids in grades 1 through 3, and helping support their programs and social-emotional learning. She plans to compete in Youth of the Year this year, and one day she wants to work in child psychology. When asked what she loves most about the Club, Amarachi doesn't hesitate: the chance to share her ideas and opinions, and to be part of mentoring others. She is exactly the kind of young leader the Club helps grow.



Chinasa, 12, prefers a quieter environment while at the Club. She has found her place in the gym, practicing volleyball with friends. When homework needs to get done, Club staff have helped her work through it, breaking it down step-by-step. She doesn't have to explain herself or keep up with anyone else. She just gets to be Chinasa.

Then there are the boys. Chima, 10, and Chike, 9, can usually be found in the gym playing football. But this summer, the Club took them beyond those four walls. Through partnerships with community organizations, they went on fishing trips and caught perch. They explored Lake Bemidji State Park. They visited Headwaters Science Center. And they both got their hands in the dirt through the Club's garden program - and into the mint. Chima was a fan of the chocolate mint. Chike held out for the classic spearmint. Small moments, but the kind kids remember.

Give by **December 31st** and your gift will be **MATCHED** up to **$60,000** by our generous donors.

Chima has also been doing some growing of a different kind. When something feels unfair - as things often do at age 10 - Club staff have helped him slow down, take a breath, and think before he acts. It hasn't always been easy. But over time, it has become part of who he is. Chike has been trying new things and finding that he can do more than he thought, with a little encouragement from staff who believe in him.

This is what the Club does. It does not offer one program and ask every kid to fit into it. It meets Amarachi in her hunger to lead. It meets Chinasa in her quiet need for support. It meets Chima where his emotions are still catching up to his heart. It meets Chike with open hands and an invitation to try. Four kids. Four paths. One Club.

Across Bemidji and Blackduck, families need this. Working parents need to know their kids are safe, fed, and growing - not just watched. When quality afterschool care is out of reach, families feel it. Kids feel it. The whole community feels it. The Boys & Girls Club makes sure that never has to be the case.

Every kid matters. Every future matters. Every gift matters.

Because every kid matters. A group of generous donors is matching every gift - dollar for dollar - up to $60,000. That means your gift today goes twice as far for kids like Amarachi, Chinasa, Chima, and Chike. You make it possible for the Club to keep our doors open, our staff showing up, and our programs running for every kid who walks through them - whether they come in looking to lead, to learn, to play, or just to belong. You make sure every kid in Bemidji and Blackduck has a safe place, a healthy meal, and someone who cares.

Through **December 31st** your gift will be matched thanks to friends & family of Sue Engel, Paul & Jody Benshoof, and Sanford Health.

Will you help make a difference this holiday season?



Amarachi
Amarachi
Club Teen

Chike
Chike
Club Junior

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF THE BEMIDJI AREA

Chinasa
Chinasa
Club Teen

Chima
Chima
Club Junior