

Jordan Boys & Girls Club named finalist in national service competition

Gerald and Darlene Jordan Boys & Girls Club has been named a finalist for its efforts to help other children in a national service competition from Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Staples Foundation for Learning, a private foundation created by Staples, Inc. The Club brought smiles to faces of children by preparing holiday packages (Fun Kits For Fun Kids) for children who are cared for at the Children's Boston Hospital. Kits included coloring books, crayons, puzzles, and much more. Members of the organization's Torch Club, a character and leadership program for Boys & Girls Clubs members age 11 to 13, spearheaded the service project, which was selected out of more than 275 entries from across the country.

The national service competition is held annually to inspire and reward youth for helping others. Each year, there is a theme for the national contest that deals with an important issue. Then, Club members work together to plan and implement an activity to address the issue in their community. This year, Torch Club members across the country chose the theme of "children helping children," so the contest encouraged members to complete service projects that benefited other children in need. By participating in the contest, called Linking Hearts & Hands, Club members learn the value of giving back and seeing a project to completion. In the process, they gained a better understanding of the needs of other youth – locally, nationally and globally – and shared their knowledge with others.

Developing strong character and leadership skills is integral to helping children grow into conscientious members of society. Through the Linking Hearts & Hands national service initiative, our members learned lessons about compassion, kindness and hard work which will help them become positive citizens and leaders in their community and school!"

Torch Clubs are small

groups within Boys & Girls Clubs designed for the development needs of children age 11 to 13 that encourage positive self-esteem and personal growth; build communication skills; reinforce academic achievement; and encourage the development of conscientious citizenship. Torch Club's mission is to motivate pre-teens to become role models and ambassadors for promoting good character, tolerance, diversity and inclusion among peers. With the guidance of adults who mentor and empower them, Club members develop essential character traits and leadership skills as they learn to influence others in a positive way.

As a finalist, Jordan Boys & Girls Club received \$500, one of 50 cash awards, to benefit their organization from Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Staples Foundation for Learning.

"Staples has a long-standing relationship with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and we're proud to support programs that encourage and reward civic engagement and community service," said Amy Shanler, director of community relations for Staples. "Through Boys & Girls Clubs initiatives like the Torch Club national service competition, we're able to help fulfill our mission to make a positive impact on the communities we serve, and spark a lasting passion for character and leadership in our youth."

About Staples Foundation for Learning

Founded in 2002, Staples Foundation for Learning has contributed to nearly 1,000 global, national and local charities that provide educational opportunities and job skills for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. The foundation is the private charitable arm of Staples, Inc. and is an integral component of Staples Soul, which recognizes the connection between long-term business success and the impact Staples has on associates, communities and the planet.