

Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua honored



Members of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua receive the Excellence in Health and Life Skills Honor Award for Camp Mariposa in San Diego.

NASHUA – At Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s 112th National Conference recently in San Diego, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua received the Excellence in Health and Life Skills Honor Award for Camp Mariposa, a drug prevention and mentoring program for youth, ages 9-13, who have been hurt by a loved one’s substance abuse. This award acknowledges programs that help members develop the capacity to engage in positive behaviors that nurture their own well-being, help them set personal goals and live successfully as self-sufficient adults.

Launched at the start of 2016 at the height of the Opioid Crisis, most of the program’s participants have lost a parent or sibling to a fatal drug overdose. The purpose of the camp is to help these kids grieve, heal, develop hope, and avoid addiction themselves. It also aims to reduce

their experience of depression and anxiety as well as health and learning challenges, for which, like addiction, they are at a greater risk than their peers.

At bimonthly weekend overnight camps, the children enjoy fun, traditional camp activities, such as arts & crafts, which are combined with education and therapeutic exercises led by licensed mental health professionals and trained mentors. Additional educational and social activities are offered throughout the year for both campers and their family members. These engaging activities build their knowledge, coping skills, and confidence. Most importantly, they give family members a chance to connect with one another.

“There are few life events more devastating to a child than losing a family member, especially when the loss is drug related,” said Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua CEO Norman Bouthilette. *“Among the Club’s hundreds of programs, Camp Mariposa gives our staff and volunteers the strongest sense that we’re saving children’s lives.”*

The award was presented by Boys & Girls Club of America President and CEO Jim Clark to Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua CEO Norman Bouthilette, Chief Operating Officer Kurt Norris, Camp Mariposa and Clubhouse Director Eric McCambly, Development Director Sally Stanton, Assistant Development Director Ashley Fudala and Moyer Foundation Director of Addiction Prevention and Mentoring Programs Brian Maus.

“There are over 4,000 Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide and overseas and we are proud to be recognized. We’re especially grateful to the Moyer Foundation for their five year commitment to our organization. We also thank our donors, supporters and amazing staff and volunteers,” Bouthilette said.

In recognition of this outstanding program, the organization received a \$5,000 award from MetLife Foundation, sponsor of the annual recognition program, which honors local Clubs for innovative, effective programming leading youth to great futures.

“In communities nationwide, Boys & Girls Clubs play a vital role in providing young people with safe places to learn and grow,” said Dennis White, president and CEO of the MetLife Foundation. *“We are pleased to recognize the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua for providing exemplary programs and making a positive difference in the lives of local young people.”*