



# From Vision to Reality: Teen & Community Center

For nearly 70 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond (BGCMR) has invested in improving the odds for youth from historically marginalized communities to succeed in life. Today, the organization operates five Clubs, a teen space, and a new, highly-anticipated, Teen and Community Center, strategically located in the East End, Northside and Southside of Richmond, and Petersburg.

“In 2015, we partnered with the Forum For Youth Investment on a new programmatic strategic plan and discovered the need for more out-of-school programs and services created specifically for teens, our alumni and opportunity youth,” said Todd McFarlane, President & CEO of BGCMR.

“Our middle and high schoolers have needed their own larger space to foster their developmental growth and to provide access to culturally-relevant experiences with their peers. Our alumni and opportunity youth have needed a place to touch down, regroup, identify and manage any barriers to their continued achievement. Fast forward to 2021, our vision to fulfill these needs is becoming a reality.”

In January 2020, with help from many partners and generous donors, BGCMR purchased the Eastlawn Shopping Center property in Richmond’s Creighton Court. During the Covid-19 pandemic, BGCMR renovated, furnished, and outfitted the facility with technology.

Now open, the Center is a flexible space for teens and BGCMR alumni to advance academically, prepare for post-secondary education, explore their interests and careers and develop social and emotional skills for life-readiness. The Center will also serve as a community asset for parents and adults from the community during hours when teens are in school.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Richmond has intentionally left space for teens’ needs, interests, and voices to continue to define the Center.



## Boys & Girls Clubs OF METRO RICHMOND

The Center features spaces designed to host a variety of programs and activities:

**Meeting/Performing Arts:** Auditorium for studying and performing arts, holding career fairs, and hosting meetings and events for the broader community (includes stage; seats 80-100).

**Home Theatre:** Multi-media space for showcasing artwork, presentations, documentaries; hosting guest speakers and smaller community events (seats up to 25).

**Digital Arts Suite and Sound Studio:** Dedicated technology hubs to increase digital access and foster digital literacy, create digital art, and produce video, audio and multi-media projects.

**Kitchen/Cafe:** Pantry, kitchen, and cafe for food access, culinary skill-building and healthy habits; to facilitate community food drives and events.

**Huddle Spaces:** Individual rooms for completing homework, accessing educational support, college preparatory help, and career training with an emphasis on developing technical and soft skills.

**Maker Suite:** Collaborative crafting space/machine shop for entrepreneurial activities, hands-on workshops, and coaching on how to create and operate a successful business.

**Mindfulness Spaces:** Private spaces for meditating and mindfulness activities.

**Board Room:** Formal meeting room for member, staff, and community use.