



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS  
OF ROCHESTER INC.**

## **HOURS**

**Monday - Friday**  
**2:30 - 8 PM\***  
**Saturday**  
**10 AM - 4 PM\***

\*Hours vary during holidays

**MAIN FACILITY**  
500 Genesee Street  
Rochester, NY 14611

## **SATELLITE LOCATIONS**

Rochester City School 29  
88 Kirkland Road  
Rochester, NY 14611

Rochester City School 45  
1445 Clifford Ave.  
Rochester, NY 14621

Industry Residential Center  
375 Rush-Scottsville Road  
Rush, NY 14543

**CASINO NIGHT**  
Club Supporters Hit it Big for Youth

**ISAAC COLLINS**  
Passion for the Club Still Strong

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**  
Mr. Kas and Mr. Ron

**LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**  
Honors Nelson Leenhouts and Late Brother Norman

**PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM**  
Developing Film & New Passions

**OUR NEW VAN!**  
Special thanks to our friends at The Davenport-Hatch Foundation, Inc.

**WINTER 2018**

**ISSUE #8**

[BGC Rochester.org](http://BGC Rochester.org)

**t** @BGC RocNY

**g** bgc\_roc\_ny



# **Club Supporters Hit It Big for Youth at Casino Night**

More than 200 Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester supporters tried their luck and hit it big in support of Club members and programming at the 2nd annual Casino Night Fundraiser on January 26. The event, held at The Wintergarden in downtown Rochester, raised \$68,900 (gross) for the youth development organization.

## Casino Night...continued

Presented by AT&T, the evening kicked off with a cocktail hour, followed by a strolling supper, gaming, silent auction, raffles and more. A special "Great Futures" cocktail, flashing pair of dice pin, prize wheel and cash call also helped raise funds for the Club. Glover-Crask Charitable Trust generously matched more than \$10,000 of the cash call that evening.

Other Casino Night sponsors included Premium Mortgage, Bond, Schoeneck & King, Harris Beach, PLLC, Lewis Tree Service, LeChase Construction, IVY Academia Group, Modular Comfort Systems, Nairy Mechanical LLC, Buckingham Properties, Bene-Care, The Steve Wrobbel Team with Howard Hannah Real Estate, Fairport Savings Bank, Insero & Co, Excellus BlueCross

BlueShield, Rochester RazorSharks, Allstate Your Family Agency, Evapco, The Harley School, and Cuomo, Winters & Schmidt CPAs, PLLC.

Doug Embilidge, news anchor for 13WHAM-TV and Fox Rochester, captivated the crowd as the event emcee. Blackjack, craps, roulette and other popular game tables covered The Wintergarden floor. Shouts of success could be heard throughout the night as guests raked in the chips for a great cause.

Gaming chips, with no cash value, were exchanged for tickets that guests put toward raffle items of their choosing. Raffle items included specialty baskets with gift cards to local restaurants, gym memberships, local

brewery packages and more. Attendees could also bid on silent auction items, from tickets to the Buffalo Sabres and Rochester Americans, to summer camp at The Harley School, a spa package and more.

In addition to playing games, guests had the opportunity to learn more about the impact of the Club from a special video premier featuring Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester staff. Robert Miller, Club member and Western New York Youth of the Year, also shared his positive experience at the Club and how the programs and mentors have changed his life.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, in-kind donors and guests for hitting the jackpot for our kids!

## Alumni Spotlight: Isaac Collins - Passion for the Club Still Strong



Isaac Collins joined the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester at the age of 14. He was placed at the Club in a youth informant position through Finger Lakes Developmental Disabilities Service Office and it was "love at first sight." Isaac saw the various programs the Club offered and was drawn to the engaging environment. He knew he had to become a Club member.

Some of Isaac's favorite programs at the Club included reading, Keystone Club – a national program based on community and leadership – and career exploration opportunities. In 1997, Isaac was recognized for his hard work and positive influence with the McCurdy Scholarship and Youth of the Year Award. Both accolades praised leadership, personal drive and academics. Isaac went on to become the runner-up in the Western New York Youth of the Year division.

One of Isaac's greatest influences at the Club was Executive Director Mr. Mahoney. Many of their conversations started on the basketball court when Mr. Mahoney, an avid basketball player growing up, would give Isaac and other Club members different pointers. "He was very visible and involved and I admired how he interacted with people," said Isaac. "I

wanted to know more about what he did for the Club – behind the desk."

Conversations between Mr. Mahoney and Isaac soon went beyond basketball and focused on career. "My Club experience and talks with Mr. Mahoney led me to want to work in human services," said Isaac.

Isaac attended the University at Buffalo to study social work and human services and received his Master's in Social Work. With experience working at Community Place, Hillside Family of Agencies and in the Rochester City School District (RCSD), Isaac went on to pursue his master's in Educational Leadership at the University of Rochester. He is now the assistant principal at Northeast Northwest College Preparatory School in the RCSD.

With a passion for the power of education, mental health counseling and wanting to serve his home community, Isaac continues to have a great impact on Rochester youth. Isaac hopes to help the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester with its mission of becoming a trauma-informed organization and serving the whole child. "The Club really transforms lives and I hope to help establish that missing piece so that the impact can be even greater."

## Mr. Kas and Mr. Ron – A Dynamic Volunteering Duo

For almost a year now, Mr. Kas and Mr. Ron have traveled about 40 minutes together every Monday and Wednesday to read with Club members at Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester. Both retired, Mr. Kas (who also volunteers on Thursdays) and Mr. Ron were interested in giving back to the community and working with youth at a place that was making a difference.

When choosing an organization to volunteer at, Mr. Kas, a retired physician and director of the emergency department at Lakeside Hospital in Brockport, felt especially connected to the 19th ward area. He spent the first 10 years of his career in medicine as the Director of the Emergency Department at St. Mary's down the street from the Club.

"Rochester gave me an opportunity to grow in my career, so I wanted to help in return," Kas said.

Mr. Kas and Mr. Ron were already volunteering together at Food Shelf in Brockport. That's where Mr. Kas shared his positive experience in the Accelerated Reading (AR) Program at Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester with Mr. Ron. He knew that he too had to get involved. Although Mr. Ron, a retired biology and

physics teacher, can sometimes be found answering questions in the homework room, his main spot is also the AR room.

"I really enjoy the AR room because if you can't read, you can't survive in society," said Ron. "It gives kids a head start so they can succeed in school and adulthood."

"I enjoy connecting with the children and seeing them progress is very rewarding," said Kas. "You can talk with the members and really learn about different issues they're facing."

Both gentlemen were recognized at last year's Accelerated Reading and Homework Award Night for their contributions and dedication, not only to the success of the program, but more so the children. Mr. Kas even dressed up as Cat in the Hat for National Read Across America Day!

From the moment they get in the car together, Mr.

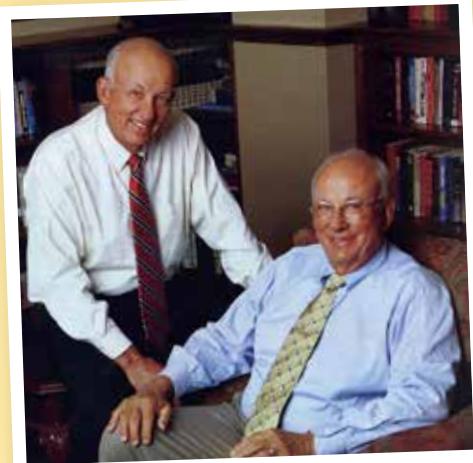


Kas and Mr. Ron continue to look forward to each time they come. They enjoy the friendship and conversation they have to and from the Club, and have established lasting bonds with Club members and staff.

"Mr. Kas and Mr. Ron get it," said Mr. Ricks, the Accelerated Reading Program coordinator. "My co-workers and I call them the 'dynamic duo' of Accelerated Reading. These gentlemen have become permanent fixtures in AR and, more importantly, our kids' lives."

We sincerely appreciate Mr. Kas and Mr. Ron for all they've done for the Accelerated Reading Program and the tremendous impact they have on each Club member they spend time with. Thank you!

# Lifetime Achievement Award Honors Nelson Leenhouts and Late Brother Norman



Join us in honoring Home Leasing's Nelson Leenhouts and the memory of his dear brother, Norman, with the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award at 6:30 p.m. on May 4 at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

When you walk into Home Leasing, Inc., located at 180 Clinton Square, you'll find the words "There's No Place Like Home" warmly embossed on the wall, followed by their mission "to improve the lives of our residents." These are the values and mission that Home Leasing founders and twin brothers, Nelson and Norman Leenhouts, believed in when the company began 50 years ago.

Home Leasing, Inc. was founded in 1967 when Nelson and Norman's mother sold her dairy business and gave her sons \$50,000 to start a business of their own. Both brothers had a passion for property and development and had previously purchased apartment buildings on their own, so they decided to start a business centered on leasing homes to people, with an option to buy. Home Leasing, Inc. was a family-focused company from

the beginning, with their mother helping to get the business up and running. Within the first two years, after facing both challenges and successes, Nelson and Norman were able to work at Home Leasing, Inc. full time.

The brothers' first purchasing ventures included apartments, shopping centers, medical office buildings and professional office buildings. Today, Home Leasing, Inc. owns 22 properties, with five under construction. Most of these are rental apartments for senior residents, serving more than 3,000 people with over 100 employees across New York, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

When asked about his business success and its family ties, Nelson humbly says, "I'm the most blessed guy in the world. It means everything to keep it in the family."

Currently Nelson's son, Jeff, his daughter, Cathy, and three of his granddaughters make up some of Home Leasing's employees – though Nelson says all

## Save the Date

Friday,  
May 4, 2018  
6:30 p.m.

Joseph A. Floreano  
Rochester Riverside  
Convention Center



employees are "treated like family."

Giving back and helping the community were always important to Nelson and Norman. Nelson continues these philosophies today. With a mission to improve the lives of its residents, Home Leasing prides itself on listening to its occupants, understanding their needs, and being empathetic. Many of Home Leasing's projects are built in the center of high poverty neighborhoods, but remain affordable and of a higher quality. By addressing more than the basic needs of its residents, Home Leasing is making a lasting impact and creating positive change in its communities at large.

Philanthropy is a passion for Nelson and was possibly even more so for his brother Norman, "the most giving guy he's known," who passed away in January 2017. In addition to the anti-poverty initiative, Nelson has supported the Spiritus Christi Church, United Way of Greater Rochester, Connected Communities – and most recently, Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester.

"I continue to be amazed by all of the different programs and opportunities the Boys & Girls Clubs offers," said Nelson. "It seems that there are many more ways to get into trouble these days and the Club provides a safe haven for kids to get off the streets and find success."

Home Leasing, Inc. was recently certified as a B-Corporation, signifying its commitment as a for-profit company to meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. Home Leasing is the first affordable housing company and construction company to earn the title in New York State.

**Make your work a pleasure.**  
—Nelson Leenhouts

"I am very proud," said Nelson. "The more you give, the more you receive. We do all that we can to treat everyone fairly and honestly, from our residents to our employees."



It all started 15 years ago with a goal of doing something special. Bruce Bennett, photography instructor at Norman Howard School, started a photography program with Boys & Girls Clubs of Rochester that would open Club members' eyes to a newfound passion and a different way to discover the world around them. Now, years later, the program has kicked off again. The students may be new, but Bruce's passion behind the program and goals are the same.

Club members travel to Norman Howard School on a weekly basis to learn the ins and outs of photography and developing film. The five girls in the program started with black and white and will eventually move to using digital cameras. From week to week, members are given assignments that require them to explore and capture what they see around them in photographs and then bring them back to the dark room. So far, they've learned how to process and dry film and print on an enlarger. A special, and fundamental, aspect of the program is that they are always working with students at Norman Howard School, learning from and teaching one another.

## Photography Program – Developing Film & New Passions

"It has always been kids teaching kids," said Bruce. "I think it's important to encourage working together. The program really opens up many opportunities for both groups of kids."

As the program continues, participants can graduate to different titles – from assistant to senior executive chair. These are determined by their mastery of various techniques, including camera and dark room techniques, picture matting, working a digital camera, Photoshop and more.

Club members involved in the program are really enjoying learning something new and making friends along the way.

"The program has helped me develop more of a passion for photography," said Miracle, Club member and Photography Program participant. "We are always taking pictures, but it's usually on our phones. This is a fun way to see all you can do with photos."



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Rochester, NY 14611

NON-PROFIT MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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ROCHESTER, NY  
PERMIT NO. 271



## Our New Van!

[BGC Rochester.org](http://BGC Rochester.org)

Special thanks to our friends at The Davenport-Hatch Foundation, Inc. for our new 15-passanger transit van! Your support has opened many doors for more Club members to experience their community, expand their horizons in career exploration and much more. Because of you, more kids will be able to attend Red Wings games, learn how to cook at culinary camp, play tennis at Genesee Valley Park and countless other activities. We can't thank you enough!

