



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF THE LOWER NAUGATUCK VALLEY

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Celebrating Excellence: Boys & Girls Club LNV Wins National Award for Education**

**Shelton, CT, May 20, 2008** – Boys & Girls Clubs of America and Staples Foundation for Learning, Inc. announced today that the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley has won a Staples Torch Club Award for their program excellence in education. The Club received a \$2,500 cash prize for Recycle for Life Fun Day. Torch Club members made games out of recycled goods to raise awareness about recycling in their Club.

The Staples Torch Club Award for Education recognizes programs that help Club members enhance their academic skills, and learn how to set personal goals and solve problems.

“BGCA takes academics very seriously, understanding that a good education is the cornerstone of success,” said Judith J. Pickens, senior vice president of program and youth development services at BGCA. “We are grateful to Staples Foundation for Learning, whose support allows us to teach Club members how to excel in and out of the classroom.”

Staples Torch Club Awards are presented for the most outstanding programs developed by and implemented in Boys & Girls Clubs across the country. Each year, hundreds of entries are submitted in five categories: Education, Service to Club and Community, Health and Fitness, Social Recreation, and National Service Project. Winners are selected based on their creativity, relevance to Torch Club members or the community, and the demonstration of Torch Club members’ character and leadership skills during the project’s planning and implementation.

“The creativity, talent, and dedication displayed by torch Club members to develop and implement these programs are truly inspiring,” said Briana Curran, manager, Staples Foundation for Learning. “Staples Foundation for Learning supports the Torch Club program because it meets the special needs of pre-teens at a critical stage in their development.”

Torch Clubs are chartered, small groups for Boys & Girls Club members, ages 11 to 13, which focus on the development of character and leadership skills. Under the direction of professional staff advisors, Torch Clubs help young people realize their full potential by fostering positive self-esteem and personal growth, building communication skills,; reinforcing academic achievement, and encouraging the development of conscientious citizenship.

Staples Foundation for Learning is the national supporter of BGCA’s Torch Club program, which serves more than 10,000 youth across the United States and on military bases overseas.

### **About the Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley**

The Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley provides, in a safe environment, programs that inspire, educate, guide and eable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as product, responsible, and caring citizens.

### **About Boys & Girls Clubs of America**

Boys & Girls Clubs of America ([www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org)) comprises a national network of more than 4,000 neighborhood-based facilities, with 4.8 million youth served through Club membership and community outreach, in all 50 states and on U.S. military bases worldwide. Known as “The Positive Place for Kids,” the Clubs provide guidance-oriented character development programs on a daily basis for children 6-18 years old, conducted by a full-time professional staff. Key Boys & Girls Club programs emphasize leadership development, education and career exploration, financial literacy, health and life skills,

the arts, sports, fitness and recreation, and family outreach. National headquarters are located in Atlanta.

### **About Staples Foundation for Learning**

The mission of Staples Foundation for Learning, Inc. is to tech, train, and inspire. Founded in 2002, the foundation has contributed more than \$12 million to national and local charities that provide educational opportunities and job skills for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. Staples Foundation for Learning has also developed lasting relationships with Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Earth Force, Hispanic Heritage Foundation and the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. In addition, Staples Foundation for Learning supports Ashoka, an organization that develops and supports social entrepreneurs around the world, in eight countries: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Spain, and the United States. For more information about the foundation or how to apply for a grant, please visit [www.staplesfoundation.org](http://www.staplesfoundation.org).

**Caption:** Boys & Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley Torch Club Members

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