



CHALLENGERS

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

LOS ANGELES, CA

CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES  
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN  
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2006 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

## HIGHER ASPIRATIONS

For many parents in South Central Los Angeles, Wells Fargo and Citibank have recently become more than just names on prominent downtown skyscrapers. Together with the LA Credit Union, these banks are part of a Challengers Boys & Girls Club financial literacy program that equips parents with important money management and planning skills. Together with young people from the community, these parents become students for six weeks, learning strategies for budgeting, saving, establishing good credit and optimizing even limited assets. This opportunity supports a family's first efforts to find the economic stability needed to achieve major goals, such as homeownership or college education.

"Many parents don't trust banks and financial institutions. We're giving them that first push toward opening checking and savings accounts and making a household budget," says Corey Dantzler, Challengers Club's President and CEO. "When the kids, who are also gaining skills, see their own parents beginning to prioritize finances, it sets a good path for them as well."



FOR FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT MEANS OPENING UP FINANCIAL

OPTIONS FOR ALL PARENTS AND ENABLING THEM TO GIVE  
THEIR CHILDREN THE BEST GIFT: A PROMISING FUTURE.

—Corey Dantzler, President and CEO, Challengers Boys & Girls Club

## MODELING LONG-TERM SUCCESS

While these families may be new to using a bank for managing money, the Challengers Club staff often discover that debt, especially credit card debt, is a substantial factor in many of their lives. The program responds specifically to this challenge by helping parents take steps to repair their credit and build a good credit history. “It’s an area of great concern,” notes Dantzler. “Our goal must be helping parents replace long-term debt with long-term goals. We show them that waiting too long to save for college might lead to their child’s dropping out of school. Hope might be their most precious commodity.”

By engaging both parents and children, the financial literacy course is another Challengers Club program that helps families exercise active responsibility in their communities. While the Club designs some initiatives to target primarily young people—such as those in the SMART (Skills Mastery And Resistance Training) model that address issues such as drug and alcohol use—many more bring families together to begin dialogues around important problems impacting their neighborhoods.

These programs support the vision of Dantzler’s late father, Lou Dantzler, Challengers Club’s founder, who contributed countless hours and boundless energy to improving the lives of young people and their families for nearly four decades. “We know our kids learn by real-life experience,” says son Corey, who lives his own words. “When a parent becomes a role model—whether the situation has to do with saving money or just saying yes when it matters most—that young person has what he or she needs to succeed.”

## FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the FAMILIES COUNT Family Strengthening Awards recognize Club programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.

This year, Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) and its vital programs will reach nearly 4.5 million young people and their parents in 3,700 neighborhoods and rural communities. BGCA's professional staff will support and engage parents as their school-age children learn character and leadership development, vocational training, and healthy behaviors and benefit from a wide range of academic and cultural pursuits. "We not only change the trajectory of a young person's life today but also the trajectory of their children's lives tomorrow," says BGCA President Roxanne Spillet. "That's why we call our work family-strengthening and generation-changing."

## CHALLENGERS BOYS & GIRLS CLUB, LOS ANGELES, CA

Award-winning Program: Financial Literacy for Families

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