



VISTA
COLLEGE
PREPARATORY



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE VALLEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lisa Noble
602-317-1589
lisa@noble-media.com

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE VALLEY, VISTA COLLEGE PREP INVESTING IN YOUTH
WITH A NEW CLUB AND GRADE SCHOOL IN REIMAGINED METROCENTER AREA**

PHOENIX (April 21, 2022) – Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley (BGCAZ) and Vista College Preparatory (“Vista College Prep”) are investing in youth in the reimaged community surrounding Metrocenter mall with a new grade school (K-8) campus and Club.

The organizations are completing an adaptive reuse of a 64,000-square-foot commercial building at 21st and Peoria Avenues in preparation for the opening in August 2022.

“The Metrocenter area’s renaissance created a unique opportunity to bring a high-quality charter school and Boys & Girls Club into this community. We look forward to bringing our signature after school and summer programs to kids and families who live and work in the Metro North neighborhood and those who will be moving to the area,” said Marcia Mintz, BGCAZ’s President and CEO.

Mintz and Julia Meyerson, Vista College Prep’s founder and executive director, chose the Metrocenter area for the new Club and campus to create equity for kids in under-resourced communities. At the core of Vista College Prep’s learning are best-in-class teachers who use data and analytics to identify strengths and areas of opportunity for each scholar. Literacy is also a top priority – Vista College Prep scholars spend nearly half of the school day on reading and writing.

“Every kid deserves access to exceptional learning opportunities, regardless of their ZIP code. Vista College Prep brings a long history of delivering high-quality academic programs into under-resourced communities, where families are looking for educational opportunities for their students,” Meyerson said.

“That’s critical,” Mintz added, “because today’s youth face unprecedented obstacles. And parents need support and after care for students. Opening this school and Club together will give parents an opportunity to enroll their student in a high-performing school and an after school program that will meet the needs of working parents.”

Studies show that a lack of access to technology, positive mentors and guidance, as well as food insecurity and other factors can cause long-term setbacks and trauma for millions of young people.

Vista College Prep will add to its community of tuition-free, public charter schools with Metro North Elementary and Middle School. Initially, the campus will serve students in Kindergarten through second grade, and fifth grade, but will add a grade level each year until reaching full-scale status – 820 students in grades K-8 – in 2025.

“Our scholars will work in a structured and supportive environment where they can experience rigor and joy, while working toward success in high school, college, and beyond,” Meyerson said.

This will be the first Boys & Girls Club in this community, with after school, summer, and sports and recreation programs. Initially, the Club will serve Vista College Prep students and will grow to serve the greater community over time.

“We expect that the Metro North Branch will be like our other Clubs – a second home where kids can get academic support and explore the arts, STEM, and sports in ways that advance their learning and build their social-emotional skills,” Mintz said. “The new Club will also give parents peace of mind by providing a healthy and safe after-school experience for their kids.” Members will also enjoy a snack and hot dinner at the Club.

The collaboration between the two organizations is an expansion of their work during the pandemic. During the height of the crisis in 2020, Vista College Prep shared its virtual learning modules with BGCAZ in return for programming for its students. The organizations are also piloting a new transportation model as part of a \$1 million grant awarded to Vista College Prep by A for Arizona, with federal relief dollars provided by Gov. Doug Ducey.

Applications for the 2022-23 school year are open. To learn more about Vista College Prep Metro North, visit vistacollegeprep.org or call 209-782-0233. Information on the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley Metro North Branch is available at bgcaz.org.

About Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Valley offers affordable after-school and summer programs for 13,000-plus young people in grades K-12. At Clubs across the Valley, BGCAZ provides award-winning programs designed to change the lives of young people. For more than 75 years, BGCAZ has been creating equity and opportunity for youth through academic, social, and workforce opportunities. We help young people make healthy decisions and focus on social and emotional development to build resilient young adults. Most importantly, we work to develop strong character and leadership skills by creating positive connections with caring adults and their communities. For more information, visit bgcaz.org or on social media at [@BGCARizona](https://www.instagram.com/BGCARizona).

About Vista College Prep

Vista College Prep is a community of five tuition-free, public charter schools serving more than 1,000 students. The award-winning organization puts the needs of students first, ensuring that every student has access to an exceptional teacher, spends nearly half of their day immersed in literacy, and has the tools to build a strong character alongside their academics. For more information, visit vistacollegeprep.org.