



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF NEWARK**



Kimberly Alfonso, LSW
Wellness Coordinator/Psychotherapist

Kimberly joined BGCN in March 2022 as the Wellness Coordinator for BGCN's READY Family Wellness Center. As a Licensed Social Worker, she has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with minor in Social Work from Montclair State University, and a master's in social work from Rutgers University with a certificate in Violence Against Women and Children. Utilizing a strength-based approach, she has been able to lead and continue Wellness initiatives and programs at BGCN allowing clients and members to be heard, validated and helping them find their full potential through healing.



Roselle Arenas
Director of Engagement & Volunteering

Roselle "Rosa" Arenas has been a part of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Newark family for over 27 years. She was first a member and then joined the BGCN staff as a camp counselor. Her responsibilities grew within the organization, leading our team as the Clubhouse Manager. Today, Rosa serves as the Director of Engagement and volunteering, overseeing partnerships and volunteer opportunities for our Clubhouse facility and external school-based sites. Rosa is a dedicated employee of the Boys & Girls Club of Newark and is passionate about the care and nurturing of our Club Members and their families.



Portia Askew
Boys & Girls Site Coordinator of Seek Academy

Portia's journey with the Boys and Girls Club of Newark began when she was fresh out of college in 2017. After graduating from William Paterson University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics, Portia knew that her critical thinking and problem-solving skills would be beneficial to the Boys & Girls Club of Newark family. Starting out as a Youth Development Professional, to becoming a Team Lead and now a Site Coordinator, Portia has grown into the strong leader that she is today because of this great organization. Portia encourages everyone from young to old to "do what you love and love what you do."



Cynthia Banks
Vice President of Operations

Cynthia has served the Boys & Girls Club of Newark with distinction for over 30 years in several leadership roles, though no single title could ever contain the full force and scope of her impact on the children who have been in her care. Cynthia encourages all youth to aim for the stars and to do their best. She has been recognized with numerous awards, including the 2009 Ms. BGCN Award and selection as a 2011 Professional of the Year for Outstanding Service by the Garden State Chapter for her work with women and minority professionals. Cynthia currently serves on the Youth of the Year Committee for Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey, working with colleagues across the state. Cynthia's leads with Michelle Obama's motto "When they go low, we go high."



Tiffany Brown
Tier-II Trainer for Staff & Volunteers

Tiffany Brown attended BGCN as a young child. She went on to study Human & Social Services at Essex County College. With a background in Non-Profit, she began her career at BGCN in 2015 as a Youth Development Professional. Dedicated to professional growth, she was promoted to Team Leader for the Clubhouse. She then held the position as Site Coordinator at Life Academy. Currently as a Tier 2 Trainer recognized by Boys and Girls Club of America, she serves as BGCN Organizational Trainer and Professional Development Manager dedicated to expanding the training experience for all BGCN staff.



Nohely Campos, BA
Teen Program Coordinator

Nohely is an experienced Boys & Girls Club professional, first joining the Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula in San Francisco in 2018 and then BGCN in June 2023 to lead the teen program as the Teen Coordinator. Nohely has a dual bachelor's degree in Ethnic studies and Human Development and Spanish from Washington State University. She has over ten years of experience working with high schoolers and advocates for higher education. Nohely is a big advocate for mentoring as she had a mentor who believed in and supported her throughout high school and college.



Amanda Gonzalez, LSW
Development Associate and Alumni Coordinator

Amanda began with BGCN in March 2023, coming to us with a strong background in research and advocacy for at-risk populations and their involvement in the Criminal Justice system, specifically survivors of domestic violence. With a Masters in Criminal Justice and a Master of Social Work, along with experience across two prosecutors' offices, two domestic violence advocacy agencies, and a charter school, Amanda has sharpened her career focus in non-profit management, fundraising, program building, and grant writing. With a macro lens, she strives for the betterment of programs geared towards our youth to bridge the gap in community resources, because she believes that all adults and adolescents should be set up for success.



Anastasia Hale
Aquatics Coordinator

Anastasia has recently joined the Boys and Girls Club of Newark, with over 12 years of professional swimming experience and 6 years of coaching experience. She was first introduced to the Boys and Girls organization when she worked as a Tribal Wide Event and Programs Coordinator at the Boys and Girls of Seminole Tribe of Florida. Prior to that she was an Aquatics and Recreational Coordinator at the Winter Park Racquet Club for over 5 years, as well as the Head Age Group Swim Coach and Assistant Director at the Gulliver Prep School.



Ade'Kamil Kelly
Boys & Girls Club of Newark Site Coordinator

Ade Kelly is a Boys and Girls Club of Newark alum, having started at 13 years old. During high school, Ade served as Keystone President for two years and was the 2013 Youth of the Year. Before re-joining the organization in January, Ade spent time in several industries including real estate, sales, accounting and finance, and politics. It was during his time at the Boys and Girls Club he developed a passion for serving the Newark community. This resulted in him championing many local education advocacy initiatives over the years. Currently, Ade is a site coordinator at one of BGCN's school-based sites. Ade also serves as Vice-President of the Boys and Girls Club of Newark Alumni Association.



Catherine Plymel
Chief Operating Officer

Catherine has dedicated over eight years of her life to the Boys & Girls Club Movement and is currently the Chief Operating Officer overseeing After School & Summer Programming, People Operations (Human Resources), and Membership / Registration. She successfully completed her Bachelor of Arts in Public and Non-Profit Administration. She obtained a master's degree in public administration and Non-Profit with a concentration in Leadership. Catherine's experience spans over 15 years in organizational leadership, providing her with a wealth of knowledge and expertise in effectively managing and guiding teams. Her unique background and education have equipped her with the necessary skills to navigate the complexities of the non-profit sector while fostering an environment that promotes growth and success.



Gardan Speights, LCSW
Executive Director of Community Wellness

Gardan began her tenure at BGCN in 2017. With over 12 years of service working with children and families with mental health challenges, Gardan is a passionate mental health and youth advocate, consultant, and educator. As the Executive Director of Community Wellness, Gardan ensures that children and families of all intersectional identities have equitable access to trauma-informed mental and health services in the afterschool program. Gardan is passionate about the well-being of people and communities and is especially inspired to help young people see the value in their voices and lives. Gardan earned her MSW from Columbia University and anticipates completing her Doctorate in Social Work in December 2023 from Simmons University. Gardan leads her life and seeks to inspire the diverse communities she serves with the Nelson Mandela quote, “May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.”



Samara Trindade, BA
Trauma-Informed Intensive Experience Administrative Assistant

Samara joined BGCN in May 2023 as a Wellness Intern. She is also excited to be a part of the Trauma-Informed Intensive Experience team as an Administrative Assistant. She has a Bachelors in Psychology and has a background in research. She is currently a student at New York University pursuing her Masters in Social Work and hopes to be involved in macro-level social work in the future.



Ameer Washington
Chief Executive Officer

Ameer Washington grew up at Boys & Girls Club of Newark, having joined the Club as a six-year-old in 1989. By his senior year in high school, he was elected Keystone Club President and Youth of the Year for the state of New Jersey. Ameer went on to earn a bachelor's degree in economics from Temple University, and then returned to the Club to hold numerous leadership positions in the organization, including coordination of BGCN's first school-based site at First Avenue School. He currently serves as BGCN's Chief Executive Officer, leading the charge of Building Great Futures in Newark's youth and families. [Click here for more about Ameer and his mission for BGCN.](#)