

# Toyota and Boys & Girls Clubs of America Announce National Partnership to Help Combat America's High School Dropout Crisis

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BALTIMORE, (April 5, 2012) — Toyota and Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) announced today a national partnership through the establishment of a college readiness initiative, which will help fund youth education and improve high school graduation rates. As a founding sponsor of D2D – Diplomas to Degrees, Toyota is providing a \$1.5 million grant over three years to help provide tools, resources and support to Boys & Girls Club teens to help prepare them to move from high school to college graduation.

The announcement was made at an education celebration event on the campus of Bowie State University in Bowie, Md., where more than 150 local Boys & Girls Clubs teens from the Baltimore and Washington, D.C. region were joined by Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, former NBA player and Boys & Girls Club alum A.C. Green, as well as representatives from Toyota and Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

"I am pleased to join Toyota and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America to announce a new national partnership to prepare our children for the future," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "To move forward in this changing new economy, we must create jobs and expand opportunity – and education is the best tool we have. In Maryland, we have set a goal to improve student achievement and school, college and career readiness by 25 percent by 2015 because we believe in giving our children the tools they need to succeed. Together, with innovative partnerships like this, we can return to the urgent work of building up our children's future."

Studies have shown that students who fail to graduate high school prepared to obtain a postsecondary education are less likely to gain full access to our country's economic, political and social opportunities. Therefore, Toyota and BGCA are dedicated to ensuring Club members receive the support needed to succeed in their academic careers and in life.

Piloted in ten cities over the past year, [D2D – Diplomas to Degrees](#) will now be available in more than 1,000 Boys & Girls Clubs across the country. The program is designed to help youth develop short and long-term goals; explore post-secondary institutions to familiarize teens with the college lifestyle; pursue and secure essential financial assistance; and foster supportive relationships with caring adults who can provide ongoing advice and mentorship throughout the teens' academic experience.

"Toyota is committed to helping improve the quality of life in the communities where we live and work," said Mike Groff, vice president, Sales, Marketing and Product Planning, Toyota Financial Services. "Our partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs is an extension of our focus on education and a key component of the new D2D program is engaging our associates to volunteer as mentors and college coaches through their local clubs. The ultimate goal of this program is to increase the number of youth who graduate from high school and enroll in a college, university or other postsecondary institution."

In addition to D2D – Diplomas to Degrees, Toyota has provided close to \$1 million in academic scholarships for more than 225 Boys & Girls Club alumni and staff and supported thousands of middle and high school youth with mentorships, internships and financial or career programs to help them become productive and caring adults. Toyota has worked closely with BGCA to support Boys & Girls Club of East Los Angeles,

investing toward the local organization's Formula for Impact Grant.

"BGCA is committed to working with youth to ensure they are prepared for post-secondary education, but we can't do it alone," said Jim Clark, president and CEO at BGCA. "With the help of corporations like Toyota, we now have the opportunity to provide targeted programs for youth through key transition periods between high school and college. Schools, families and community partners are all vital parts of the education equation and we must work together to improve the outlook for our nation and secure more great futures for our youth."