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Through the grant, the cost for families who register for the summer by June 15 will only have to pay \$25 per week, as opposed to \$225 a week

"The kids will be able to come all day, five days a week, for \$25 a week," Trent said. "That's all day, all their meals and all the programs."

In addition, some families are eligible for a further scholarship which would bring their cost to \$0.

According to Trent, the 12 Boys and Girls Clubs in Oregon have been lobbying with federal and state legislatures for funding for the emergency childcare the clubs have provided throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This grant is one of the ways that the state is working to bring needed money to the clubs.

"The Oregon lawmakers clearly understand the impact the pandemic has had on children and the potential long-term impact if we don't intervene," Trent said.

The second grant BGCWLC received is through a settlement with Boston Scientific, related to a surgical mesh for women. Through this, Boston Scientific will pay \$188.6 million to 47 states and the District of Columbia.

"Out of that settlement, the Attorney General of Oregon allocated dollars that went to a number of organizations, including the 12 Boys and Girls Clubs in Oregon. This grant is specific for girls of all ages," Trent said.

Up until now, the club has been operating as emergency childcare, which limited enrollment due to social distancing requirements. The club is following the guidelines of the Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education, as well as Oregon Health Authority and Lane County Public Health.

This summer will see an increase in the number of students the BGCWLC will be able to enroll. The Elementary Program can expand to 60 kids, with 25

able to attend at the Teen Center. Space is limited, however, so families are encouraged to sign up quickly.

The summer's core programs include Smart Moves, Brain Gain, Smart Girls, Passport to Manhood and Write Brain. The programs cover emotional wellness, coping skills, life skills, learning opportunities and a lot of fun.

Elementary Site Director Samantha Gauderman said, "These are all hands-on activities and are age-appropriate curriculum."

At the Teen Center, Program Manager Jessica Knapp talked further about the programs and how they work for the teens.

"We have a really full schedule for the summer," she said. "We're going to be doing culinary, STEM, art and the garden, which we've already planted. Plus, a ton of outdoor activities that so they get the chance to hang out and have fun, too."

BGCWLC emphasizes summer learning to help prevent the loss of kids' knowledge during the summer. Part of that is through Brain Gain, an eight-week evidence-based curriculum that focuses on STEM and experimenting.

"What we're doing here is all learning disguised as fun," Trent said.

A new part of this year will be the addition of Write Brain Books, a literary course where the kids will become authors.

"These books are already illustrated, but the kids write the story," Trent explained. "They put themselves, their families and their friends into the stories, which are just absolutely incredible. Then, they work on spelling, sentence structure, critical thinking and problem solving."

Gauderman added, "They get to use their imagination, which is really important."

The books will then be bound, and every kid will get a copy. Some of the books will also make their way around town so the community can read them.

"It's helping kids tell their story," Trent said. "Once they understand that they can learn while having fun, it changes their whole outlook."

The teens are also getting real-life experience as they manage their organic garden and learn to prepare their home-grown foods in the club kitchen.

According to Knapp, "We've gotten a lot of them their food handlers card, so they're allowed

have fun."

The students' emotional state has been important for BGCWLC to address during the pandemic.

"We've definitely seen the impact on the emotional stability and the well-being of our kiddos, and oftentimes with the parents as well," Trent said. "Many of them have been isolated for such a long period of time and have been exposed to a lot of the chaos in the country today. So kids are totally confused. That's why we think this summer program, more than any other time that we've had programs, is the most critical one."

He directed people to look into upcoming legislation to address long-term student needs related to COVID-19, where research shows the challenges people have faced as well as what can be expected next.

"This year, because of COVID and the challenges with distance learning, we've seen the isolation of children as a major negative impact," Trent said. "This is well documented and well understood across the education community, that our low-income families and our special needs, families typically lose two to three months of learning, every year during the summer months. When you couple that with the impact of COVID, you've got a really serious issue with kids from low-income families and special needs families that really have a major inequity in learning."

BGCWLC is just one component in helping local kids regain equilibrium.

The club itself has had a tough 15 months during the pandemic, with a reduction in funds caused by the cancellation of several events and people in the community being unable to give as much in donations. Through the payroll protection plan (PPP),

the club was able to get a loan to keep staff employed the whole time.

Now, with programs just around the corner, the club is seeking summer staff members to help retain the 1:15 ratio of staff to kids. The club provides training through the Boys and Girls Club of America, as well as first aid, CPR and other safety training.

Gauderman said, "We're looking for somebody that can handle being in a room with lots of kids and has a passion to be a good role model."

She added, "These kids are 100% worth it. Some days, I'm walking in and having a bad day and those kids say, 'Miss Sam, I missed you. I love you.' Then it's just like, 'Oh, what problem did I have?' I have these kids and they're important and so awesome. They just make our day."

People will get to learn more about the BGCWLC during the Fore! Kids Golf Classic on Saturday.

"The golf tournament is so much fun, but it's the impact that it has for all these things," Trent said. "That, coupled with the two grants, will make this the best summer program we've ever had."

BGCWLC is working on plans for other fundraisers later in 2021, such as Homecoming and Fraudville. More information will be available as the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

"We're so fortunate because of the community that has stepped up to help us and make sure that we survived COVID and to fund these kinds of programs," Trent said. "We do what we do because this community and our board are so generous, and the businesses, foundations and individual folks that we have in the community help us. I am just thrilled and grateful that we've got a community that loves kids and wants to see every kid succeed."

"Every child is important, and every child gets the opportunity for a great future here."

For more information, visit bgcwc.org or call 541-902-0304.

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— Chuck Trent,

Boys and Girls Clubs of Western Lane County Board of Directors

to work in our kitchen, which gives them the experience for when they can go get job. They know how to do the dishwasher and help cook."

It's an important component to BGCWLC's message.

"We want to equip our kids, not only for school, but for when they go out into the workplace," Trent said. "When they have life skills, coping skills and critical thinking skills, it opens the doors for opportunities that they would not have otherwise."

Students are also developing leadership skills and building self-confidence as they interact with their peers.

At the Elementary Program, "We made group agreements on how we wanted to feel while we were doing lessons," Gauderman said. "My kids picked to be safe — which is Boys and Girls Club's No. 1 rule. The second one was be respectful of each other and feel respected. Three was they all want to feel included and want to feel like their opinions matter. Four was feeling loved, ... and then last was to be happy and

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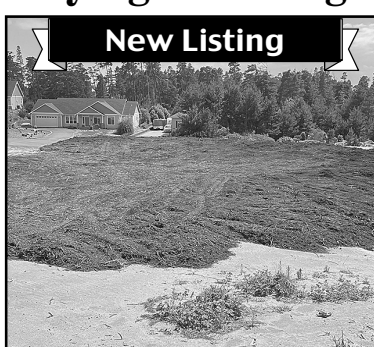
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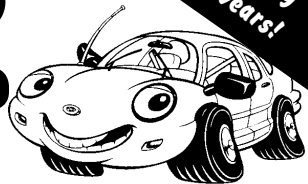


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