



For Immediate Release

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## **St. Xavier High School 'Big Buddies' win 2014 'Champions for Children: the Next Generation' Award**

Student mentoring program provides male role models for underserved boys

(Cincinnati—Nov. 4, 2014) St. Xavier High School's Big Buddies project, which involves nearly 100 students in providing positive male role models and emphasizing the importance of education to underserved boys at area Boys & Girls Clubs, is the winner of 4C for Children's fourth annual Champions for Children: the Next Generation Award.

During the 2013-14 school year, seven student-led volunteer teams visited five Boys & Girls Clubs on a bi-weekly basis in Avondale, Lower Price Hill, Northside, Over the Rhine and the Villages at Roll Hill. Each St. Xavier student was paired with a "little buddy" in kindergarten through sixth grade that the Club determined would benefit from a positive relationship with an older male.

Most of the kids who attend Boys & Girls Clubs "come from single-parent families and are raised by mothers and grandmothers," says Angela Giani, regional education coordinator for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Cincinnati. That's why the St. X volunteers are so important, she says, "providing positive male role models for our boys."

Each 90-minute Big Buddy visit usually began with one-on-one tutoring and homework help. This not only helped improve the academic achievements of the younger boys, says St. X project advisor J K Klaiber, but it provided "a great opportunity for the kids to see older, 'cool' boys who not only take their education seriously, but enjoy going to school."

The St. X. students were a real asset to the program, Giani says. While other groups sometimes volunteer for short-term projects, the St. X Big Buddies are the only group that makes a long-term commitment and follows through consistently, she says. "This award is well deserved!"

The goal of the Champions for Children: The Next Generation Award, is to honor high school students in grades 9-12 who are taking action on behalf of the children of our community—or of our world. "We want to reinforce in the leaders of tomorrow the importance of investing in the children of today--especially those from birth to age 8," says 4C President/CEO Sallie Westheimer.

4C for Children has long recognized adult community leaders who champion children—and will do so again this year at a Jan. 24, 2014, Champions for Children Celebration at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, honoring 2014 Champions for Children Kay Geiger, Christopher Lewis, MD, and United Way of Greater Cincinnati. The presentation of the 2014 Champions for Children: The Next Generation Award will also be made at this Jan. 24 event.

To be eligible for consideration, youth projects had to be nominated by Oct. 17, demonstrate the involvement of high school students and do one or more of the following:

- empower and educate young children through direct service
- provide leadership or raise awareness on an issue that impacts young children
- improve the quality of life of young children.

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[4C for Children](http://www.4cforchildren.org), the pioneering leader, advocate and resource for early childhood education and care, serves 40 counties from offices in Cincinnati, Dayton (Ohio) and Covington (Kentucky). Each year this not-for-profit assists over 7,000 families of all income levels in finding and choosing quality child care; educates over 12,000 child care providers in its workshops and trainings; works to increase the supply of high-quality early education and care; and advocates for children and families at the local, state and federal levels. For more information, [www.4cforchildren.org](http://www.4cforchildren.org).

