

Fort Walton Beach (October 13, 2016) – The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast is pleased to announce that next year’s Steak & Stake Dinner will feature Jackie Joyner-Kersey, arguably one of the greatest athletes in history, as the keynote speaker.

Mark your calendar for September 21, 2017, and get your tickets early as the room will sell out quickly.

This announcement comes off the heels of a very successful steak & Stake Dinner last month, where 415 people attended the dinner at the South Walton Boys & Girls Club in Santa Rosa Beach. Event proceeds benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast’s operations and will help support our 8 Clubs and more than 2,150 registered youth. Funds raised will help us serve additional youth, especially those that need us the most, in high poverty areas and neighborhoods throughout Northwest Florida. Proceeds will support and enhance specific programs covering our three Priority Areas of **Academic Success, Healthy Lifestyles** and **Good Character & Citizenship**.



"Teaching kids about health and fitness is important to me. It's about being fit for life."

Jackie Joyner-Kersey

A former member of the Boys & Girls Club of East St. Louis, Olympic gold medalist Jackie Joyner-Kersey wanted to give back to her hometown. The six-time Olympian track and field star did just that in 1999, when she established a new Club



facility to provide young people in East St. Louis with the

same experiences she had enjoyed. Often regarded as the world’s greatest all-around female athlete and the

all-time greatest heptathlete, Joyner- Kersey has also established herself as a champion of youth, serving as spokesperson for a NIKE initiative that brought sports and fitness to Club kids nationwide.

"You always want to feel like you belong. Boys & Girls Clubs help to make that difference."

Community support of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast allows us to open the door to a safe and caring place where kids can do their homework, learn life skills, work on a computer, play in the gym and participate in positive programs to help them succeed in today’s world.

The Steak & Stake Dinner provides an opportunity for every guest, including donors, community partners and volunteers, to meet with and hear from the direct beneficiaries of their efforts—our Club Members. Youth sit at every table and are given the chance to share their story of how Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast has a positive impact on their lives and what the Club means to them.

“The real meaning of the night is to celebrate the impact the club has on local youth and the opportunities it allots children for their futures. All of the Steak & Stake’s proceeds will allow the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast to continue providing **hope, impact** and **opportunity** to those young people who need us the most,” said Shervin Rassa, CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast.

Take a Stake in your community and join us for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast’s 4th Annual Steak & Stake Dinner.

For more information on sponsorships or tickets, contact Rob Engel, Director of Development at rengel@bgcec.com or call 850.862.1616.

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