

**LOS ANGELES SPARKS AND DISNEY SPREAD LOVE OF READING TO CHILDREN AT
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF VENICE**

(Venice, CA) August 22, 2005 – In an effort to promote literacy and the importance of reading, Disney hosted an event featuring Los Angeles Sparks players Tamecka Dixon and Nikki Teasley, who read stories to children at the Boys & Girls Club of Venice on August 18, 2005. Disney Publishing Worldwide, the world's largest publisher of children's books and magazines, gave each child a book and donated a library of books to the Boys & Girls Club of Venice. The event culminated in a special visit from Minnie Mouse.

DisneyHand Worldwide Outreach for the Walt Disney Company, the Los Angeles Sparks and Radio Disney AM 1110, joined forces to make this a very special day for the members of the Boys & Girls Club of Venice. DJ Adam from Radio Disney, excited the crowd of 300 youth ranging in age from six to eighteen, with music and prizes before Los Angeles Sparks players Tamecka Dixon and Nikki Teasley entered the packed gymnasium. The players spoke to the youth about the importance of reading and achieving their goals. Minnie Mouse made a surprise appearance and joined Dixon and Teasley as they read various Disney stories to the kids.

"It was a great day for our kids," said JR Dzubak, Chief Professional Officer of the Boys & Girls Club of Venice. "Making reading fun is one of the best ways to get young people interested and excited about literacy."

Boys & Girls Club programs help young people find positive alternatives to negative influences, especially during the critical after-school hours from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. when juvenile crime doubles. The number of young people victimized by violent crime – including murder, sex offenses, robbery and assault – also goes up during after-school hours. At least 7 million children are left alone after school each day, according to U.S. Department of Education estimates, which makes the work of organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club of Venice so important. Youth who attend after-school programs, are not only less likely to commit or be victims of crime, but also they are also less likely to use drugs, alcohol or tobacco; or engage in

Read to Achieve - 2

other risky behaviors; and they are more likely to get good grades and graduate from high school.

The Boys & Girls Club of Venice has played an integral role in the community for over 35 years, providing daily programs and services to approximately 4,000 young people. With core program areas in character and leadership development; education and career; health and life skills; the arts; sports, fitness and recreation; and special initiatives, the Boys & Girls Club of Venice offers a safe environment for youth ages 6-18 in the hours they are not in school. For more information on the Club please visit www.bgcv.org or call 310-390-4477.

#