

# JASEN KELLY, GLEN ROSE ALUMNI CLASS OF 1993

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## A BRIGHTLY SHINING BLUE SPIRIT

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I'd like to start this post with a quote from Jim Clark, the Chairman and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA).

*Last year, we started a new tradition at the regional conferences... the Blue Spirit Award. It recognizes a Club professional whose tireless devotion has positively changed kids' lives, an individual who characterizes our pledge to create great futures. This year's winner is an alumni of the Club he currently leads.*

*He is a strong voice for Movement, working in the state capitol and with BGCA's GR team during the National Day of Advocacy. Through word and deed he demonstrates the impact Clubs have and highlights the need for additional support.*

*In 2015, he worked with board members, the State Department of Education, and community leaders to merge with another organization, completing the merger ahead of schedule, which resulted in renewed community confidence and support, led to an increase in average daily attendance, overall membership growth, and new dedicated teen programming.*

*He is viewed as the community's authority on youth issues. Later this year his organization will open a multi-million dollar, state of the art Boys & Girls Club in partnership with the City and individual donors and will convert the current Club into a standalone teen center.*

*He is the first CEO in his state to schedule a peer assessment and has led his team through the Advanced Leadership Program.*

*By driving incredible engagement from his board and staff, he has truly raised the bar for excellence in his community, state, and the southwest region.*

*Congratulations to Jasen Kelly, CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Saline County in Benton, Arkansas.*

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There is one, and only one, of these awards presented each year.

Jasen Kelly graduated from college and began work in the Boys and Girls Club until he could figure out what he really wanted to do. He has never left. Jim Handley, President of the Boys and Girls Club Board, said, "He is just an outstanding young man. As much as any pastor was ever called by God to preach, Jasen was called to be the director of our Boys and Girls Club."

The award was presented at the BGCA's Southwest Leadership Conference earlier this week. Fittingly, Jasen didn't want to attend, feeling that he had pressing matters at the club which needed his attention. Mr. Handley, who had heard about the award beforehand, said he practically had to force Jasen to go to the convention.

This is a very big deal, and well deserved. Though many of us don't say it as often as we should, I hope Jasen knows that we're all very grateful for what he does for the youth of our community and are eager to see the new heights to which he and his staff will take it in the new facility. Congratulations, Jasen!

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Jasen Kelly is the CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Saline County. He began his Boys & Girls Club career in 1998 as a Program Director and moved into the CEO position in 2006. He is a 1993 Graduate of Glen Rose High School and holds a B.S. in Health & Wellness with emphasis in Cardiac Rehab from the University of Arkansas at Monticello, where he was also a 4-year letterman on the Weevil Basketball team. Jasen then went on to UALR graduate school and studied Non-Profit organizational management.

Jasen is the son of Jim (Glen Rose Class of 1964) & Linda Kelly. Jasen is married to Jennifer and they have two sons Eli (12) and Colt (7). Jennifer is a teacher for the Benton School District.