



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WITH FUNDING FROM KNORR-BREMSE GLOBAL CARE NORTH AMERICA,
BOYS HOPE GIRLS HOPE OF NORTHEASTERN OHIO
FURTHERS QUEST TO HELP YOUNG ADULTS ADVANCE THEIR CAREERS

*\$48,000 Grant Helps Organization Meet Mission to Increase Resources for At-Risk Students;
Additional Support Comes from Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems*

ELYRIA, Ohio – Aug. 9, 2021 – Navigating the formative years after high school can be overwhelming for any young adult, let alone those from low-income households. And the challenge becomes exponentially harder when you're the first generation of your family to attend college.

Understanding those difficulties and building a bridge to rise above them are the reasons Boys Hope Girls Hope (BHGH) exists. The international organization is focused on helping young people in need break the cycle of poverty by guiding them through the pursuit of postsecondary education and the launch of their careers.

This year, BHGH's Northeastern Ohio chapter received a boost in accomplishing these goals thanks to a \$48,000 grant from Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America (KBGCNA), a foundation created by Knorr-Bremse, the Munich, Germany-based parent company of Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC. Bendix, headquartered in Elyria, Ohio, near the Boys Hope Girls Hope campus in Garfield Heights, offers additional support to the organization.

Boys Hope Girls Hope provides a range of programs for middle school, high school, and postsecondary students – all referred to as scholars. However, the organization is using its KBGCNA grant to enrich services especially for the students who graduated from high school this year and are pursuing postsecondary education in support of their careers.

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“That is the fastest growing part of our programming because each year we have more high school seniors graduating and moving into their postsecondary life,” said Julie Griffiths, director of grants for BHGH of Northeastern Ohio.

To that end, Griffiths said a portion of the grant is helping BHGH to coach scholars about their options, whether those are four-year degrees, trade opportunities, or apprenticeships. The grant is also helping the organization to invest in additional residential property that can house some scholars while they’re pursuing postsecondary education.

Emphasis on Education

For Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America, meanwhile, the gift is advancing its strategic mission to promote both education and social engagement by supporting charitable organizations focusing on these areas in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. KBGCNA centers its investments in the local communities of Knorr-Bremse’s three North American companies: Bendix, Knorr Brake Company, and New York Air Brake.

KBGCNA is the North American arm of Knorr-Bremse’s global nonprofit philanthropic giving foundation, Knorr-Bremse Global Care. Bendix is the North American leader in the development and manufacture of active safety, air management, and braking solutions for commercial vehicles.

“Through Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America and Bendix, we are proud to support Boys Hope Girls Hope’s mission to coach, mentor, and equip young adults from low-income or at-risk populations as they pursue postsecondary education, even as they’re dealing with a lack of resources and other challenges,” said Maria Gutierrez, president of KBGCNA and director of corporate responsibility and sustainability at Bendix. “Our parent company, Knorr-Bremse, remains dedicated to advancing education and social engagement in the face of these kinds of challenges, as are all of our team members at Bendix.”

Along with the grant, Bendix is offering its support by watching the organization’s activities with an eye for future assistance and volunteer opportunities that may arise for Bendix employees. William Schaffeld, project leader for antilock braking systems at Bendix and project champion for the initiative on behalf of Bendix and KBGCNA, has kept close to the organization’s plans throughout 2021, offering input as needed.

“It’s very rewarding to see the work they’re doing and how well it fits in with the KB Global Care North America concept,” Schaffeld said. “The two things they’re specifically looking at are helping to make people successful who don’t necessarily have the opportunity and helping to put them in an environment where they can succeed.”

Support That Begins in Middle School

Boys Hope Girls Hope of Northeastern Ohio serves more than 220 students ranging from sixth graders to college students, coaching them through high school and into their career launch. That includes providing both middle school and high school students year-round academic programming and mentorship at the organization's 5-acre campus. The complex also includes residential facilities that provide safe and stable year-round housing for grade-school and high-school-aged students.

Meanwhile, BHGH's work with postsecondary scholars is focused on guiding young adults through the six-year window that begins after high school graduation. These are the critical years, Griffiths observed, when many scholars are navigating college or vocational school decisions and planning for their careers. Currently, some 73 scholars are enrolled in BHGH's postsecondary programming, including 12 high school graduates from the class of 2021.

Providing One-on-One Mentorship

Griffiths said BHGH has used part of its 2021 KBGCNA grant to expand its capacity to coach postsecondary scholars, as the funding allowed the organization to hire two additional part-time coaches to work with this year's 12 high school graduates. The organization is strongly committed to a one-on-one coaching model, but rising numbers of graduates each year had brought those services to capacity.

"We know it's really important to have that one person they know they can turn to with whatever challenges they're facing to help them maneuver and figure out what resources they need," Griffiths said.

With two new coaches, BHGH is able to provide individualized case management services to the organization's graduates. Each student receives three structured meetings with their coach to discuss issues like coursework, financial aid, and what to expect of their postsecondary education. The meetings also include a debriefing session with family members. And the coaches continue to be available to students on a remote or virtual basis as needed.

"They were able to start building that relationship as a result of this grant and making that face-to-face connection before a number of our scholars go off to campuses outside of the local region," Griffiths said. "So now they have that relationship when they are working with the coach remotely. There's a connection there."

Griffiths noted that many scholars need extra help when it comes to financial literacy and planning, as well as knowing what to expect from their chosen program.

“The coach plays a really valuable role, just making sure they have that wrap-around support,” she said. That may include encouraging students to seek extra help through the college if they need it, as well as lending encouragement in dealing with the day-to-day stresses of postsecondary education.

Housing for Postsecondary Scholars

The support of Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America is also assisting the organization when it comes to providing needed housing for postsecondary scholars. Some funds will be used to help BHGH secure additional properties where scholars can reside while attending college or vocational school.

“If you don’t have stable housing, that is a huge barrier to being able to focus on your training,” Griffiths observed.

Up until now, BHGH has offered postsecondary housing on a limited basis through a pilot program. Acquiring property, such as existing single-family homes, will allow the organization to add this housing option as an ongoing permanent resource. The plan is that BHGH scholars can live in the housing for anywhere from six months up to two years as they’re pursuing their postsecondary education or completing a degree program.

Setting Up Scholars for Success

Griffiths noted that with the enhancements to both coaching and residential services made possible through the KBGCNA grant, Boys Hope Girls Hope will be able to capitalize on its already powerful success rates: More than three-fourths of its scholars who start college go on to graduate within six years, compared to 55% of students overall and 11% of students in low-income populations.

And, she said, the importance of helping scholars stay the course when things get difficult is one aspect of BHGH’s services that shouldn’t be underestimated.

“There have been times over the years where it gets tough and some scholars are facing a class that they’re just not doing well in, for example,” Griffiths explained. “And the coach can provide what seems like simple support, but it’s really important. It’s letting them know, this happens, and many others face the same challenges. That it doesn’t have to be a make-or-break situation.”

Offering this support was especially important over the past year, Griffiths added, when the pandemic made college and educational programming even more challenging for just about all students.

“A big part of what we do, and with the support from KBGCNA and Bendix, is that we don’t give up on our kids,” Griffiths said. “We – and the coaches – work in a really purposeful way to continue working them down the road of their postsecondary launch in a way that works for them financially and works for them as far as what their strengths are, and what they’re able to do with their life situation.”

About Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America

Knorr-Bremse Global Care North America Inc. (KBGCNA) is an independent organization operating as the North American arm of a global nonprofit organization – Knorr-Bremse Global Care. With an aim to address local social challenges more effectively, KBGCNA investments are centered in the surrounding communities of KB’s three largest North American companies: Elyria, Ohio-based Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems; Westminister, Maryland-based Knorr Brake Company; and Watertown, New York-based New York Air Brake. Funding activities are championed and supported by the employees of each of the three local companies. Follow us on LinkedIn at [linkedin.com/company/knorr-bremse-global-care-north-america-inc](https://www.linkedin.com/company/knorr-bremse-global-care-north-america-inc).

About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,100 people, Bendix – and its wholly owned subsidiary, R.H. Sheppard Co., Inc. – is driven to deliver the best solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit [bendix.com](https://www.bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](https://www.knowledge-dock.com). Follow Bendix on Twitter at twitter.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at [brake-school.com](https://www.brake-school.com). And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit [bendix.com/careers](https://www.bendix.com/careers).

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