Big Brothers Big Sisters
OF COASTAL & NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2020

A LETTER FROM MONTHLY VISIONARY MEGHAN ARMBRECHT

"Why are you always doing boring work instead of just doing fun stuff?" My 3½ year old nephew and I were sloshing plastic safari animals around in a bubble filled tub last week when he hit me with this unintentionally existential query. Way to ask the tough questions, kid. *"Well,"* I replied, *"When you grow up, you have to work. And sometimes work is boring... but if you're lucky, sometimes work could be fun too."* I dunked a giraffe below the bubbles. *"What if taking care of animals is your work when you get bigger?"*

I watched in real time as his mind churned, as possibilities he had to this point never even dreamed of, crept slowly into his brain and planted a seed. *"My work can be...giving a giraffe a bath?"*

This is what mentoring is. It's the planting of a seed. It's giving a child the gift of possibility, of seeing beyond their circumstance, their neighborhood... even beyond the limits of their own imagination. It's giving a child the space to dream of what *could* be, and the security and support to turn what *could* be into what *will* be.

> "Each child belongs to all of us and they will bring us a tomorrow in direct relation to the responsibility we have shown to them."
>
> – *Maya Angelou*

As anyone who has a kid (or a niece or nephew, or a goddaughter or godson, or literally any child in their life in any capacity...) knows, consistency is paramount. Mentoring is every day, every week, every month kind of work... And BBBSCNNJ shows up. Not just when Bowl For Kids' Sake rolls around each March or when the Gala comes in the fall. They show up *every single day* for the kids they serve.

I have been lucky enough to support BBBSCNNJ over the past decade and to see the tenacity with which they take on this work. I have made donations, I have given of my time, I have spread their messaging. But I haven't been one thing... consistent.

Becoming a Monthly Visionary means just that - providing consistent, ongoing support every month so that BBBSCNNJ can continue to guide our next generation of important voices. Now more than ever, we have an opportunity and an obligation to champion our collective community of children, to lift these little humans up as they navigate through the world.

If you have the means and the heart, I encourage you to join me. To show up. To be consistent. To plant a seed.

Meghan Armbrecht

Monthly Visionary

MONTHLY VISIONARIES

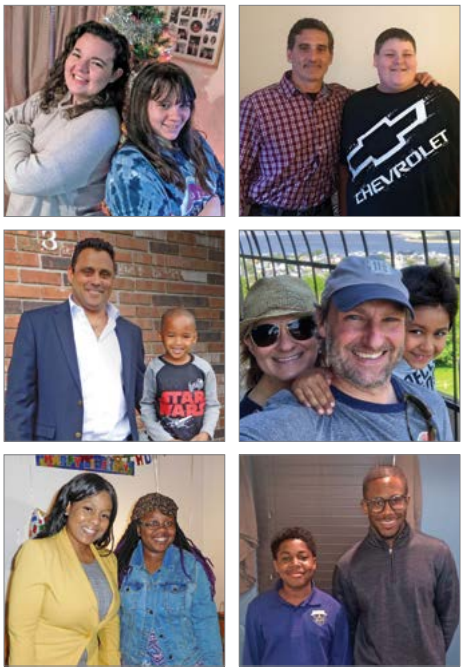
We have launched our Monthly Visionaries program! Monthly Visionaries provide ongoing, consistent support so that all youth achieve their full potential.

As a Monthly Visionary, you will enjoy:

- Special perks throughout the year
- Exclusive monthly update delivered to your inbox
- Recognition on the Monthly Visionaries web page
- An invitation to the Monthly Visionaries Mixer once a year with one guest
- And more!

Your monthly donation will help develop more graduates, community leaders, and entrepreneurs. Today is the day to make a big impact for local kids.

Become a Monthly Visionary at mentornj.org/monthlyvisionaries.



TOGETHER, WE ARE DEFENDERS OF POTENTIAL

CELEBRATING 2 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

For many, July 28th, 2018 was a typical hot summer day. For Little Sister Zarriah, it was so much more, as she met her Big Sister Jennifer for the first time. Although Zarriah was reserved and timid during the meeting, it didn't prevent a smile from appearing on her face. They have since enjoyed jumping at the local trampoline park, roller skating, hiking on a trail, painting pottery, attending a food truck event, and attending BBBS events like the Back to School Party, Halloween Party, and cooking class.

Zarriah's mom shared, *"I think her seeing Jennifer and overall, their whole relationship has been a big help to Zarriah."* She describes Zarriah as *"over the moon"* about her relationship with Jennifer and remarked how important the friendship is to Zarriah's emotional health. Zarriah's mom knows that Jennifer provides Zarriah with a space to express feelings she doesn't share at home, and she is so happy her daughter is comfortable talking to her Big Sister about those feelings.

Zarriah's favorite memory was when they went to get ice cream after first meeting, as it was a *"special moment."* Zarriah shared how Jennifer is a good role model - *"She tells me to be honest, to keep my head up, and be positive."* Zarriah thanks Jennifer *"for actually being there for me and giving me time to talk and bond together."* On a scale of 1-10, Zarriah would rate her Big Sister a 10 because they *"get to talk a lot, and she listens. When I have a problem, she has appropriate responses."* Overall, Zarriah feels Jennifer is a *"really fun person to hang out with, and I'd totally go to her if I need to."* These two recently celebrated their 2-year match anniversary with a mini photo shoot in the park, and they are truly a perfect match!

9TH ANNUAL FORE! THE KIDS GOLF OUTING

Our annual golf outing looked different this year, but it was a BIG success for our agency in support of our one-to-one mentoring programs. Thank you to Manasquan River Golf Club, all golfers, and our sponsors for being defenders of potential!

LUNCH & LEARN

Join us for a 30-minute webinar on August 27th at 12:00 PM to learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters of Coastal & Northern New Jersey and the different ways you can get involved.

Email info@mentornj.org to register!

OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Want to be a Mission Partner? To learn, more contact us at 732.544.2224

Mission Maker
THE Morris & Clara Weshnak Family Foundation

Vision Maker
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DELTA DENTAL · Hackensack Meridian Health · SEAVIEW ORTHOPAEDICS · Super Foodtown · CIRCUS fresh foods

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

This month, we are proud to highlight Little Brother James. James is 10 years old and will be entering 5th grade this upcoming fall. While being matched with his Big Brother Michael, James has enjoyed many different activities, some that he had never done before. Recently, James and Michael went fishing, and James caught his first fish! James has also visited Michael's job and got a sense of what it's like to own a business. James aspires to one day open his own lemonade stand with Michael's help. Michael shared that

James is very smart, and Michael has been impressed with his hard work and determination. He has no doubt that James will be successful in everything he puts his mind to.

FUN ON SHARK RIVER

Thank you Paddle Time Kayaks and John's Cracker Barrel for an amazing day! Our Bigs and Littles enjoyed kayaking on Shark River and a tasty lunch.

THE BIG WAIT

Camron is a bright, polite, and very social 10-year-old boy. He loves playing sports (especially basketball) and riding bikes. His favorite part of school is gym class, and he hopes to be an NBA player someday. His favorite video game is Fortnite, and his favorite foods are pizza, burgers, and cheese fries. He would like a Big Brother to look up to and have fun with and who also has a good sense of humor like he does. With a Big Brother, Camron would love to go to the park or play sports together.

Become A Big at
www.mentornj.org/be-a-big

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO OUR AUGUST MATCHES

- Big Sister Janace & Little Sister Julie **8 Years**
- Big Brother Joseph & Little Brother Emarri **8 Years**
- Big Sister Gaynella & Little Sister Brittney **5 Years**
- Big Brother Jason & Little Brother Jaden **5 Years**
- Big Sister Patricia & Little Brother Izaiah **5 Years**
- Big Sister Pamela & Little Sister Jelinez **5 Years**
- Big Brother Dwight & Little Brother Jeremiah **4 Years**
- Big Brother Michael & Little Brother Robert **4 Years**
- Big Brother Luke & Little Brother Josiah **4 Years**
- Big Sister Ellie & Little Sister Hailey **3 Years**
- Big Brother Michael & Little Brother Nasir **3 Years**
- Big Brother Seth & Little Brother Brody **3 Years**
- Big Sister Jessica & Little Sister Natalia **2 Years**
- Big Brother Rick & Little Brother Divine **2 Years**
- Big Sister Kathleen & Little Sister Ava **2 Years**
- Big Sister Nicky & Little Sister Jailynn **1 Year**
- Big Brother Ron & Little Brother Colin **1 Year**
- Big Sister Gia & Little Sister Geraldine **1 Year**
- Big Sister Brenda & Little Sister Tiana **1 Year**
- Big Sister Lauren & Little Sister Maria **1 Year**
- Big Brother Bryan & Little Brother Jaiden **1 Year**
- Big Brother Mike & Little Brother Blake **1 Year**
- Big Brother Anthony & Little Brother Joseph **1 Year**
- Big Sister Marybeth & Little Sister Alliana **1 Year**