



MARCH 2022

## LETTER FROM BIG SISTER OF THE YEAR: SANDY KUTZING

Dear Friends,

My best childhood friend was a Big which is how I learned about Big Brothers Big Sisters. I kept meaning to sign up but continued putting it off telling myself I was too busy. One day I was listening to a podcast about the importance of mentoring and the impact it can have in a child's life. I was really moved by the stories in the podcast and realized I could be that stable, supportive adult for a child in need. Fast forward to today, I have been happily matched with my Little Sister, Eleanor, for almost 9 years.



Eleanor and I have done a variety of activities in our years together and it has been incredible watching her grow and embrace trying new things. There have been some monumental outings – her first time in New York City, seeing her favorite band in concert, going to Rutgers Day for her first college campus visit, and going on the BBBS fishing trip. The repeat outings that we particularly enjoy are baking together while listening to music or grabbing a coffee and going for walks just to chat.

“Eleanor is an extremely caring soul and always looking for ways to help others. She has been a major influence on me. Spending time with her is the perfect reason for me to stop working and enjoy some local fun, culture, and nature.”

One thing Eleanor and I really enjoy doing together is volunteering. During the start of the pandemic, we brainstormed how we could help and came up with the idea to put together goody bags

for the heroes at a local hospital. We raised \$2,700 and put together totes filled with snacks, candy, gift cards, lotions, hand sanitizer, and some cards from the community.

Since I've known Eleanor, she has gone from a timid and emotional kid to a bold young woman who knows there is a future out there for the taking and she is determined to find her success. I don't take credit for her accomplishments; she was always capable of achieving, she just needed a little push to realize her potential and some exposure to more of the world. Sometimes it's hard to tell if I'm making an impact as a Big or if her growth would have happened regardless of my presence, but it does feel amazing when Eleanor talks about paying it forward someday by becoming a Big.



Thank you, Big Brothers Big Sisters, for the honor of being named Big Sister of the Year. **My success as a Big would not be possible without Eleanor, so I share this honor with her. We are proud to represent the agency and the organization, and we hope our story will inspire and encourage others.**

Gratefully,  
Big Sister Sandy

March is **Women's History Month** and what better way to celebrate than by signing up to **Be a Big!** Our Big Sisters, provide Littles with consistent support and friendship to help them achieve their full potential. No special skills required, just a few hours of your time and the desire to help a child achieve their full potential.



To learn more, attend one of our upcoming infoSessions at [www.mentornj.org/infosessions](http://www.mentornj.org/infosessions) or apply to **Be a Big** on our website at [www.mentornj.org/beabig](http://www.mentornj.org/beabig).



## THE GALA BACK IN BLACK

Join us on Friday, June 3rd at  
The Berkeley Hotel in Asbury Park.

Tickets & Sponsorships  
now available!

Register at [mentornj.org/thegala](http://mentornj.org/thegala)

## C.A.R.E.S. HIGHLIGHT: BAKING WITH LA PROMENADE BAKERY

La Promenade Bakery in Tenafly recently opened their doors to our Bigs and Littles for a private baking lesson. Everyone baked and decorated sugar cookies together while enjoying refreshments provided by



La Promenade. This event had been on a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, and we were thrilled to have the bakery invite us to return. Our matches will continue to look forward to this annual event!



## MATCH HIGHLIGHT: A POSITIVELY GOOD MATCH!

Big Sister Ilana has been matched with her Little Sister Nora for a year and a half! Ilana, who is in graduate school to become a teacher, has been a source of encouragement in Nora's life since they met, and has always done her best to frame school in a positive light. On a

recent phone call with her Case Manager, Nora said that Ilana has taught her "to be kind, to do [her] homework, to like school, and to always do [her] best." For their one-year anniversary, they created a scrapbook of all their favorite memories including a recent outing at iPlay America!



## THE BIG WAIT

Jacob is a smart, loving and kind 7<sup>th</sup> grader with a heart for helping others. He loves to read, is interested in STEM activities as well as building and creating things. Jacob cannot wait to go to the park to play Pokémon Go or to an arcade with his Big Brother. He looks forward to expanding his interests and hobbies and making a meaningful connection.

Become A Big at [mentornj.org/beabig](http://mentornj.org/beabig)

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO OUR MARCH MATCHES

- Big Sister Donna & Little Sister Stephanie **9 Years**
- Big Sister Jessica & Little Sister Tyrah **7 Years**
- Big Brother Ernest & Little Brother Dreveon **6 Years**
- Big Brother Bill & Little Brother Brett **6 Years**
- Big Brother Anthony & Little Brother Torin **6 Years**
- Big Sister Eileen & Little Sister Sophia **6 Years**
- Big Brother Thomas & Little Brother Yaden **5 Years**
- Big Brother Jim & Little Brother AJ **4 Years**
- Big Sister Dawn & Little Sister Erin **4 Years**
- Big Sister Charlayne & Little Sister Alexandra **3 Years**
- Big Brother Omari & Little Brother John **3 Years**
- Big Brother Stephen & Little Brother Joseph **3 Years**
- Big Sister Heather & Little Sister Nariyah **3 Years**
- Big Brother Andrew & Little Brother Jacobe **2 Years**
- Big Brother John & Little Brother Trevor **2 Years**
- Big Sister Janae & Little Sister Jayla **2 Years**
- Big Sister Ashley & Little Sister Kayla **1 Year**
- Big Brother Christopher & Little Brother Owen **1 Year**
- Big Sister Victoria & Little Sister Lindsay **1 Year**
- Big Sister Aja & Little Sister Emily **1 Year**
- Big Brother Evan & Little Brother Anthony **1 Year**
- Big Sister Irene & Little Sister Hailey **1 Year**
- Big Sister Jacki & Little Sister Maleah **1 Year**
- Big Brother Luke & Little Brother Caleb **1 Year**
- Big Brother Matthew & Little Brother Mehki **1 Year**
- Big Sister Alexis & Little Sister Allison **1 Year**

## OUR MISSION PARTNERS



Want to become a Mission Partner? Call us at 732.544.2224 ext. 321.

TOGETHER, WE ARE DEFENDERS OF POTENTIAL

732.544.2224 • [info@mentornj.org](mailto:info@mentornj.org) • [mentornj.org](http://mentornj.org)

Main Office  
305 Bond Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Asbury Park, NJ 07712

Regional Offices  
21 Western Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Morristown, NJ 07960

2-4 Kirkpatrick Street  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901