

# NEWSLETTER



JULY 2022

## LETTER FROM ALUMNA BIG SISTER, LEAH

Dear Friends,

I've been a Big Sister for 20 years, and it all started over a plate of chicken and broccoli. My Little Sister Samantha and I met in August of 2002 and the first thing she wanted to do was eat at our local Chinese restaurant. Chicken and broccoli in our regular booth became "our thing." She was 7 years old at the time, and now 20 years later I still think of her every time I order that dish.



When I reflect on our two decades of friendship, I can honestly say it's the little things that really solidified our bond. The nights we split an order of chicken and broccoli, trips to the grocery store, bowling, movie nights, or picking out a Christmas tree – these are the moments that created a strong foundation for us. Of course, there were big moments too, like graduation ceremonies, milestone birthdays, camping trips, and so many BBBS events

(Halloween parties were always a favorite!). But the ordinary things we did together helped to form our bond, and now we consider each other family.

I became a Big because it's always been my belief that relationships are everything. It's what we're all here for, and good, supportive relationships can make all the difference in a person's life. I was excited to be able to extend that gift to Samantha all those years ago.

In honor of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I reached out to thank BBBS for the gift of this friendship and felt inspired to write this letter encouraging others to take that first step in becoming a Big. **If you've been thinking about it, now is the time. What are you waiting for? If you're waiting for a sign, this is it. If you're waiting because you think it takes too much time or you don't have the right skills – it doesn't, and you do.** Please visit their website at [www.mentornj.org/beabig](http://www.mentornj.org/beabig) to learn more about becoming a Big, the experience is life changing for all involved.

Thank you,

Leah

Big Sister to Samantha

P.S. Stay tuned for Little Sister Samantha's letter next month!

## MATCH HIGHLIGHT: BONDING OVER BIG & LITTLE MOMENTS



Over the past six years Big Sister Rachelle and Little Sister Maddie have celebrated a lot of milestones together. Rachelle got married and Maddie was there to celebrate. Maddie graduated from 8<sup>th</sup> grade and even though Rachelle couldn't attend, she was eager to see all the photos and hear all about the big day. Through it all, Color Me Mine has always been a place where Maddie and Rachelle connect and talk over their pottery creations. Rachelle said recently, "I remember when she was younger and would want to paint the whole store. I would have to set limits on how many objects we could paint. Now, we sit there for two hours talking and painting one mug. It has been beautiful to see Maddie and our friendship grow across the tables of Color Me Mine." We look forward to seeing this friendship continue to grow, and maybe a pottery showcase one day!



## YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: CELEBRATING LITTLE BROTHER DREVEON'S GRADUATION!

Little Brother Dreveon celebrated his high school graduation this year and will now head off to Monmouth University. He has been matched with Big Brother Ernest for six years. Dreveon's mother said having Ernest and his family attend the graduation ceremony was a beautiful, full-circle moment. During the final match support call, we asked Dreveon what the program and Ernest had taught him, he said, "He taught me you have to work hard to get things in life and he helped me be a better person." It is evident in all our conversations with Dreveon that Ernest's support and pride in his hard work means a lot to him and is something he'll carry with him for years to come. Even



though the match will be ending, they both plan to keep in touch. We wish Dreveon the best of luck in his future endeavors!

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2022!



Join us in celebrating and honoring all Littles in the Class of 2022! Whether the next step is continuing education or joining the workforce, we're so proud of the hard work they put into their education.

Special shout out to Big Brothers Big Sisters alumnus, Nadale, who you might recognize from our 2021 End-of-Year campaign. He recently graduated from Rutgers University with two Bachelor of Arts degrees – and his Big Brother Joe attended the ceremony!

## C.A.R.E.S. HIGHLIGHT: COOKING WITH BIGS & LITTLES



Our C.A.R.E.S. Program recently offered a Healthy Cooking Class hosted by Hackensack Meridian Health. The matches enjoyed nutritious and delicious veggie wraps with homemade hummus and made "apple donuts" using apples, yogurt, berries and granola. YUM! We are thankful to continue our partnership with Hackensack Meridian Health, as they offer our matches opportunities to learn about healthy living while having fun.

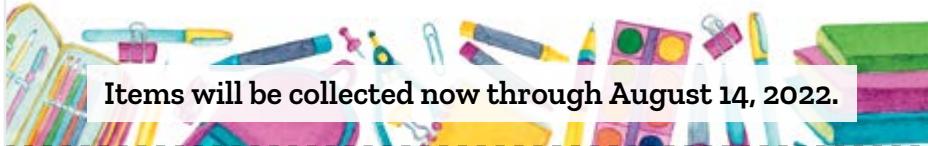


## 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

Please help children in the BBBS Program  
by donating NEW school supplies!

- |               |           |                |                   |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|-------------------|
| ▶ Backpacks   | ▶ Markers | ▶ Glue Sticks  | ▶ Pencil Boxes    |
| ▶ Calculators | ▶ Rulers  | ▶ Loose Leaf   | ▶ Pens/Pencils    |
| ▶ Notebooks   | ▶ Binders | ▶ Sharpeners   | ▶ Colored Pencils |
| ▶ Crayons     | ▶ Folders | ▶ Dictionaries |                   |

Gift card donations to purchase school supplies are also appreciated!



Items will be collected now through August 14, 2022.

For more information call **732.544.2224**.

## THE BIG WAIT

Jace is an energetic child looking forward to being a 4<sup>th</sup> grader in the new school year. He loves animals and likes to be active. He plays on a local soccer team and takes jiu-jitsu and guitar lessons. His sister has been matched with her Big Sister for several months, so he's excitedly waiting for his own Big. He can't wait to spend time with a Big Brother who likes bowling, fishing, and mini golfing.

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

## CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT TO BENEFIT BBB A HUGE SUCCESS!



The first-ever Cornhole Tournament to benefit BBBSCNNJ was a huge success! Fun in the sun was had by all and winners included 1<sup>st</sup> Place Team, Dynamic One, who received a \$500 cash prize donated by Kearny Bank; and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Team, Jake's Tacos, who received a \$250 cash prize donated by RMHSC Attorneys at Law. The Highest Fundraising Team was Baggin' & Braggin' from Collier's Engineering, they received a Merrell gift card and a custom cornhole board by Built by Laba.

Erik Gaines, Financial Planner with Creative Financial Group, hosted the tournament as part of his annual Summer Carnival event for friends and clients at Oak Tree Lodge in Wall, NJ. Additional sponsors of the event included Fortune Title Agency, Colliers Engineering & Design, Industrial Cooling Corporation, Dynamic Engineering, HFA CPAs, Investors Bank, and KD Law. See you all again next year!

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO OUR JULY MATCHES

### 8 Years

Big Brother Christopher & Little Brother Logan

### 7 Years

Big Brother David & Little Brother Dominic

### 5 Years

Big Brother Nicholas & Little Brother Messiah

### 4 Years

Big Brother Michael & Little Brother Christopher

### 3 Years

Big Brother Park & Little Brother Jeremiah

Big Sister Napis & Little Brother Christopher

Big Sister Casey & Little Sister Khloe

### 2 Years

Big Sister Kellie & Little Sister Janaya

Big Brother Michael & Little Brother Jabar

### 1 Year

Big Sister India & Little Sister Katy

Big Sister Anne & Little Sister Shaniya

Big Brother Neil & Little Brother Kamari

Big Sister RoseMarie & Little Sister Delaney

Big Sister Nichole & Little Sister Brookelynn

Big Sister Kathryn & Little Sister Cataleya

Big Sister Olivia & Little Sister Emily

Big Sister Christi & Little Sister Lola

Big Brother Stephen & Little Brother Aiden

Big Brother John & Little Brother Noah

## UPCOMING EVENTS: SUPPORT BBBSCNNJ WHILE HAVING A GOOD TIME



Learn more at  
[mentornj.org/volleyball](http://mentornj.org/volleyball)

Not just another day  
at the beach!

Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022 • 10 AM-2 PM  
Main Street Beach, Manasquan, NJ

Join us for a fun day at the beach  
and compete against friends,  
family, or co-workers to support  
our one-to-one mentoring  
programs that ignite the power  
and promise of youth.



Learn more at  
[mentornj.org/bigshots](http://mentornj.org/bigshots)

A day on the course to support  
our youth.

Monday, Oct. 3, 2022 • 10 AM-6:30 PM  
Fairmount Country Club, Chatham, NJ

Join us at Fairmount Country Club  
in Chatham for a day of golf for a  
great cause. Proceeds benefit our  
one-to-one mentoring programs  
that help children realize their  
potential and build their futures.

## OUR MISSION PARTNERS



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TOGETHER, WE ARE DEFENDERS OF POTENTIAL