

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2023



LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Even in the middle of summer, our minds wander to the new school year quickly approaching. While our Bigs & Littles enjoy the best this season has to offer, we know that each school year brings a range of challenges and opportunities for our youth. We also know that youth in our programs can count on their Bigs to help ease any worries, face any obstacles, and prepare for a successful school year.

We're also very proud to acknowledge our Littles who graduated in the spring and will begin their post-secondary education or early career path - BIG futures ahead for them all!

One way our agency supports youth and families at the start of each school year is our **Annual School Supply Drive**. We collect and distribute new backpacks filled with school supplies to youth in our program, including those on our waitlist for Bigs. The annual drive is also supported by our community and corporate partners who collect backpacks and supplies.

In the fall our team will launch group mentoring programs with more than 30 schools around the 10 counties we serve. We believe that together, education and mentoring help to elevate individuals as well as entire communities. I look forward to sharing updates from our school, college, and workplace mentoring programs throughout the year and encourage you to get involved if you can.

Sincerely,

William Salcedo
Executive Director

23RD ANNUAL SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

Help local children start the new school year off right by donating NEW school supplies.

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

Gift card donations to purchase school supplies are also appreciated!

For more information contact Marybeth at 732-444-3538 or myurkanin@mentornj.org

MATCH HIGHLIGHT Big Couple, Big Milestones



Big Couple Matt & Christina have been matched with Little Brother Lawson for just over a year and together they've explored a lot of new hobbies and activities. With the support of his Bigs, Lawson climbed to the top of a rock wall, hit his first golf ball, and learned to fish. Trying something new can be nerve-wracking but with Matt & Christina cheering him on, Lawson has been able to build up confidence with each new experience. "We look at our outings with Lawson as a part of our lives and something we will always prioritize. It is an easy thing to do because we truly enjoy our time together. It's been so special seeing him excel and be interested in new things like golf," said Big Brother Matt.

CARES Corner!

Creating Access to Resources, Events, and Support



Bigs & Littles had the opportunity to attend the 4th Annual **CAMP KIWANIS** earlier this month! Everyone enjoyed games, crafts, lunch & tons of fun! Thank you to the Kiwanis Club of Point Pleasant, NJ for making this event a memorable day for our matches!

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: Little Sister Leilaah becomes...a mentor!

Little Sister Leilaah has enjoyed being a mentee so much, she's ready to pay it forward! At the start of the school year, she will be among a select group of upper classmen chosen to mentor incoming Freshman. Leilaah is excited to "be that person" who can help the incoming students navigate the building, connect with the right teachers and coaches, and all the adjustments that come along with starting at a new school. "High school is that last step before you get into the real world so learning to communicate can help so much with the future," said Leilaah. She said she's been inspired to take on this role after being matched with Big Sister Katelyn who often gives her advice on how she can improve her study habits and how to prepare for college. It's not all academics for them though, they also enjoy going out to eat, ice skating, getting ice cream, going to Broadway shows, and most recently to the Holland Ridge Tulip Farm!



The BIG Wait

Jah'Sire is a friendly 7-year-old who just finished 1st grade. For fun he likes playing basketball and football. He wants to be a police officer when he grows up. Jah'Sire's looking forward to spending time with a "strong" Big Brother at the park playing sports or at Sky Zone.



Happy Anniversary to our July Matches!

- | | |
|--|---|
| 9 Years
Big Brother Christopher &
Little Brother Logan | 2 years (cont.)
Big Sister Nichole &
Little Sister Brookelynn |
| 8 Years
Big Brother David &
Little Brother Dominic | Big Sister Olivia &
Little Sister Emily |
| 6 Years
Big Brother Nicholas &
Little Brother Messiah | Big Sister Kathryn &
Little Sister Cataleya |
| 4 years
Big Brother Edward &
Little Brother Jeremiah | Big Brother Stephen &
Little Brother Aiden |
| Big Sister Napis &
Little Brother Christopher | Big Sister Christi &
Little Sister Lola |
| Big Sister Casey &
Little Sister Khloe | Big Brother John &
Little Brother Noah |
| 3 years
Big Sister Kellie &
Little Sister Janaya | 1 year
Big Sister Meg &
Little Sister Melania |
| 2 years
Big Brother Neil &
Little Brother Kamari | Big Sister Linda &
Little Sister Jacina |
| Big Sister Anne &
Little Sister Shaniyah | Big Sister Shira &
Little Sister Layla |
| Big Sister RoseMarie &
Little Sister Delaney | Big Brother Jeffrey &
Little Brother Brenden |
| | Big Sister Shanta &
Little Brother Ryan |
| | Big Brother Joseph &
Little Brother Maliki |
| | Big Sister Christine &
Little Sister Juliet |

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Sandi Mangino
Senior Case Manager &
Quality Assurance Specialist

Sandi has worked for Big Brothers Big Sisters for 20 years! One of her primary responsibilities at the agency is to conduct interviews with parents, children, and volunteers during the enrollment process. She admitted that the children are often funny and entertaining without even knowing it. *When asked for her most memorable interview Sandi said there's too many to count but one that stuck out was a 9 year old girl who said she wanted a Big that was ... "funny with blonde hair, and her name starts with 'J' like mine (but doesn't have to); and someone to learn how to do gymnastics with me and I could teach her to draw people."*

While the interviews can be fun and entertaining, the impact is what Sandi loves the most about working for Big Brothers Big Sisters. "Too many stories to tell! I love seeing the graduates each year and knowing some of them since the time they were very young. It's great seeing how much our youth grow and what they accomplish with the help of their Big(s)."

FUN FACT: Sandi's favorite book is I Am Malala: The Girl who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban

Our **MISSION PARTNERS** support the fundraising efforts, mission, and vision of BBBSCNNJ throughout the year.

