



Big Brothers
Big Sisters®

OF COASTAL & NORTHERN
NEW JERSEY

BIGS & LITTLES OF THE YEAR

2024

COMMUNITY-BASED MATCHES OF THE YEAR

Big Sister Jenica & Little Sister Megan

Big Sister Jenica has been an incredible support and constant, positive presence for Little Sister Megan over the last 7+ years. They rarely miss a bi-weekly outing and they've enjoyed so many fun activities together, from their beloved yearly traditions to stepping out of their comfort zone together trying new things as often as possible. Not only has their friendship grown since being matched in 2015 but Megan has also grown as an individual with Jenica's support, encouragement, and optimism. When they first met, Megan was a shy, nervous 10-year-old and now she is thriving academically, socially, and athletically in her Senior Year of high school. She recently committed to Gardner Webb University where she will continue her track and cross-country career as a Division 1 athlete. She looks forward to filling a leadership role on her future team and credits Jenica with helping her build the confidence to both lead her peers and pursue her dreams. With being a Big Sister comes many other roles that Jenica has perfected over the years- a listening ear, a safe space, a cheerleader, an adventure buddy, and so much more. She cannot wait to stand by Megan as she enters this next chapter at GWU. We can say with 100% confidence, this is a match made for life.



Big Brother David & Little Brother Dominic



Big Brother David and Little Brother Dominic have built a strong friendship since being matched over 9 years ago. The foundation of their friendship has been unconditional support from David and a well-founded trust from Dominic. David has always turned towards the moments where he could be a support to Dominic and has never shied away from a difficult conversation that could provide a meaningful teaching moment in Dominic's life. At the same time, David has woven an atmosphere of fun and friendly levity that fills their time together, even when tackling some of the more challenging trial-and-error aspects of the teenage years. David has continually emphasized Dominic's potential and ability, helping him to discover himself and the person he wants to be. David truly embodies what it means to be a Big Brother – someone who has allowed the ordinary, small, everyday moments to build into something profound.



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HIGH SCHOOL BIGS OF THE YEAR

Big Sister Leilaah | Bergenfield High School

Despite this being Big Sister Leilaah's first year as a big, she has been a familiar face at Big Brothers Big Sisters for quite some time. She has been a Little in our Bergenfield programs and is currently a Little in our Community-Based program. After experiencing the impact as a Little, she chose to become a mentor herself. Since our new Bergenfield High School + Roy W. Brown Middle School program launched this year, Leilaah has attended every session. She is reliable, kind, outgoing, and always arrives at the program with a smile. Her willingness to help is evident whether she is guiding her Little or assisting the team with cleaning up. Her contribution to this program has been invaluable. It is obvious that she takes great pride in being a Big Sister and we are grateful for her enthusiasm and motivation to be a part of this program.

Big Brother Divine | Keansburg High School

Big Brother Divine is an active community member and student at Keansburg High School. Keansburg mentoring program kicked off as a new program in 2022-2023 and Divine was excited from the start. Divine volunteered at a recruitment table for Back-to-School Night to help spread the word, told all his friends to sign up for this new program during lunch, and since launching he's never missed a session. Divine has been matched with his Little Javon for these sessions. When his Little reenrolled in the program he requested to be rematched with Divine which speaks volumes to the bond they have established. The two have formed a wonderful trusting friendship where Javon shared, he can ask Divine advice on anything with confidence. Divine is an outstanding role model for Javon, giving back to his community and younger generations.

WORKPLACE BIGS OF THE YEAR

Big Sister Gina Figliuolo | Morris County Bigs in Blue

Big Sister Gina has served as a liaison and a mentor for our Bigs in Blue program since 2019. She happily took on a double match this year, mentoring two Little Sisters, and always demonstrates the many aspects of being an officer effortlessly to all Littles in the program. Gina is always willing to help with an activity or demonstration and always brings smiles and laughter to her Littles. We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful supporter, who is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of young children.

Big Brother Dr. Michael Dyce | Monmouth Medical Center

Big Brother Dr. Michael Dyce has volunteered as a mentor in the Monmouth Medical Center Program mentoring Long Branch High School students since 2018. Dr. Dyce is an Emergency Medicine Physician at Monmouth Medical Center, and despite a busy schedule, he has still managed to attend every session. He will often attend our sessions at the hospital on his day off! Dr. Dyce has not only been an incredible mentor and teacher of the medical field to his individual mentees over the past 6 years but often provides useful tools and shared experience with the entire group. In his first year, Dr. Dyce was matched with Little Brother Amir. Amir was very interested in the medical field and was ecstatic to be paired with a physician. Dr. Dyce shared his wisdom with Amir and provided helpful support to him as he figured out his next steps post high school. Today, Amir is working at the same hospital as Dr. Dyce pursuing his own medical field career. Dr. Dyce continues to be a support and listening ear to each Long Branch High School student he meets. It is an honor to provide Dr. Dyce with this well-deserved award to show our appreciation.