

IGNITING

POTENTIAL

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Big Brothers
Big Sisters®
OF CONNECTICUT



WHO WE ARE

We're currently celebrating our 56th year in Connecticut! For many of those years, as Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters, we served three quarters of the state. Following a recent merger that transformed us into Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut, we now serve the entire state.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut initiates the highest quality mentoring relationships between vulnerable children and professionally screened and supervised adult volunteers. Our goal is to improve the lives of children from single parent and no-parent homes and enable them to become productive, responsible society members.

We achieve this by offering a Community-Based Program, a School-Based Program, and a Foster Grandparent Program – all of which help at-risk youngsters avoid destructive behavior and reach their highest potential.

WHY WE ARE UNIQUE

With more than 100 years of national Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring success to build on (combined with 56 years of Connecticut mentoring success), we invest our resources to create enduring, life-enhancing experiences for volunteers and the children they mentor.

We create each match via a time-tested six-step process. Once established, our seasoned professionals monitor, support and evaluate each match to insure positive outcomes and relationship longevity. This is why Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut is considered the state's premier youth mentoring organization.

On the cover:
Foreground from left, Leo, age 8; Nigel, age 7; Lennox, age 7. Background, Lawrence, age 10. All 4 are Little Brothers (mentees) in our Community-Based Program, and actual brothers as well.



We now serve all of Connecticut!

The children pictured above are current, or former, Little Brothers and Littles Sisters from our programs.

FOR THE MORE THAN
85,000 KIDS WE'VE
SERVED SINCE OUR
FOUNDING, WE'VE
IGNITED GREAT
POTENTIAL.

93%

consider their "Bigs" to be Very Important Adults in their lives

91%

have experienced an increase in feelings of happiness

71%

reduction in instances of school discipline

43%

reduction in antisocial behaviors

43%

reported a reduction in missed school days

21%

increase in feelings of self-pride and self-confidence

20%

increase in plans for college attendance

During 2020 - 2021:

Our Community-Based Program served 466 children

Our School-Based Program served 214 children.

Our Foster Grandparent Program operated at 19 sites and served 489 children.

Our volunteer mentors devoted more than 47,000 hours to inspiring, teaching and bonding with their "Littles".

Volunteer mentors' time spent with "Littles" this past year was worth over \$1.3 Million – a huge value that your support made possible.

Our staff spent more than 37,000 hours creating and supporting life-changing matches between children in-need and caring Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

Little Sister Kaelyn
age 6



WHEN FOUNDERS BERNIE FIELDS
AND ARTHUR DIRECTOR BEGAN
BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS
IN CT IN THE EARLY 1960S,

the organization covered just the Middletown area. Now, as Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut celebrates its 56th year of helping children facing adversity succeed, we've grown our service area to include all of Connecticut's 8 counties – Hartford, Tolland, Windham, Middlesex, Litchfield, New London, Fairfield and New Haven.



Big Brother Dan Fortes and his Little Brother Donte, age 13. Dan is the current recipient of our John M. Clapp Outstanding Big Brother of the Year Award.



IGNITING POTENTIAL

Dan Fortes from Manchester, an Account Executive for Sensible Auto Lending, has mentored Little Brother Donte for the past 2 years and is **helping to ignite his potential.**

Donte's legal guardian ignited his potential by enrolling him in our program and continuing to support him in our program.

Because generous individuals and organizations like **Bank of America**, represented by Joe Gianni, Hartford Market President and Jill Hutensky, Hartford Market Senior Vice President, continue to support our program, potential is being ignited for Little Brother Donte.

Joe Gianni & Jill Hutensky





Big Brother Jonathan
Solano and his Little
Brother Javan, age 11

IGNITING POTENTIAL

Jonathan Solano from New Britain, Director of Service Delivery at Voya Financial, has been matched with Little Brother Javan for a year and a half and is **helping to ignite his potential.**

Javan's mom ignited his potential by enrolling him in our program and continuing to support him in our program.

Because generous individuals and organizations like **Eastern Connecticut State University**, represented by Kemesha Wilmot, Eastern's Interim Dean of Students, continue to support our program, potential is being ignited for Javan.



Kemesha Wilmot



Big Sister Cassidy Elio
and Little Sister McKenzi
age 10

IGNITING POTENTIAL

Cassidy Elio from West Hartford, a Mental Health Therapist at Stokes Counseling in Norwalk, has mentored Little Sister McKenzi for the past 2 years and is **helping to ignite her potential.**

McKenzi's mom ignited her potential by enrolling her in our program and continues to support her in our program.

Because generous individuals and organizations like the **United Way of Greater Waterbury**, represented by Jason Martinez, Vice President of Community Impact, continue to support our program, potential is being ignited for Little Sister McKenzi.



Jason Martinez



Foster Grandparent
Estelle Rivera-Freeland
and Little Sister Yaniel
age 6

IGNITING POTENTIAL

Estelle Rivera Freeland from Newington, a Foster Grandparent (senior mentor) at the Fox Elementary School in Hartford has mentored Little Sister Yaniel for the past year and is **helping to ignite her potential.**

Administrators at the Fox Elementary School ignited Yaniel's potential when they determined the facility would take part in and support our Foster Grandparent Program.

Because generous individuals and municipalities like the **City of Hartford**, represented by Kim Oliver, Director of the Department of Family, Children, Youth and Recreation, continue to support our program, potential is being ignited for Little Sister Yaniel.



Kim Oliver



In the foreground is Little Brother Aiden, age 13. Left rear is Big Brother Gavin Soraghan and Aiden's grandmother Theresa Rehberg.



IGNITING POTENTIAL

Potential has been ignited for Aiden because a Match Support Coordinator like Jackie Lundie (left) maintains ongoing contact with Aiden, Aiden's grandmother and Big Brother Gavin to make certain the match is progressing smoothly and adhering to the always-evolving guidelines of the Big Brothers Big Sisters Service Delivery Model.

Potential has been ignited for Aiden because an Enrollment Coordinator like Jessica Williams (right), drawing on 116 years of Big Brothers Big Sisters history and her own youth services experience, worked with Aiden, Aiden's grandmother and Big Brother Gavin to carefully create a match that is having a significant life-enhancing impact on all participants.

Kaelyn (middle) is 6-years-old and currently on our waiting list. She and her mother, who enrolled Kaelyn in our program, are hoping that she will soon be matched with a caring, inspirational adult mentor – just like Big Brother Gavin. Then, Kaelyn, like Little Brother Aiden, can broaden her horizons, develop her capabilities and fulfill her great potential.

Jackie Lundie, Jessica Williams, and Kaelyn, age 6



Chairman's Letter

The pandemic has taken a toll on everyone in our state, nation and world. And it's been especially challenging for children. Particularly those who've already experienced trauma, and who face racial, ethnic and economic injustice. They have had to deal with greater disruptions, more disconnection, and increased susceptibility to anxiety and depression.

From my point of view, the greatest benefit of our recent merger is that we can now reach and serve more children – who, more than ever, will benefit from Big Brothers Big Sisters' life-changing, time-tested youth mentoring.

We have a huge opportunity. Mentoring reduces anxiety and depression, cuts the likelihood of substance abuse or anti-social behavior, and increases school engagement, pro-social behavior and aspirations for the future. With your help, we will make sure that more children than ever experience these benefits in the year to come.



Ted Cutler
Chairman, , Board of Directors
CEO, Tecton Architects

Little Sister
McKenzi
age 10



Little Brother
Samuel
age 8



President's Letter

In early 2022, Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters joined with our sister agency in Southwestern Connecticut to form Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut. We now serve the entire state, and are positioned to offer mentoring to more children than ever before.

This historic step couldn't have happened at a more opportune moment. The pandemic has been hard on all of us, most of all the kids we serve. More than eighty percent come from one parent or no parent homes, seventy-five percent live in poverty, seventy-eight percent identify as coming from a minority background, and most have experienced childhood trauma.

This year, we will be hiring more professionals to support children, mentors, and parents, providing coaching and support. And we'll be putting more staff in the field to interview children, families, and adult volunteers, and create life-changing mentoring matches.

Our experience - and a wide range of third-party research - shows that children in lasting, high-quality mentoring relationships with Big Brothers and Sisters are more likely to stay in school, avoid risky behavior, pursue their aspirations and fulfill their potential.

We're excited about expanding Community-Based mentoring in New Haven, New London, Norwalk and Stamford, and Site-Based mentoring in Bridgeport. Statewide, we'll be broadening Big Futures, a new program that supports young people past high school into their mid-20's – providing resources around job training, higher education, internships and employment.

As we move ahead, we look forward to providing greater support to more deserving young people for longer than ever before. We couldn't do all this without your support and partnership – thank you!



Andy Fleischmann
President & CEO

The percentages and numbers below all add up to **IGNITED POTENTIAL** for so many kids across Connecticut.

CHILDREN

MALE:

52%

FEMALE:

48%

AFRICAN AMERICAN/
WEST INDIAN:

32%

ASIAN

1%

BI-RACIAL:

5%

CAUCASIAN:

16%

LATINX/PUERTO RICAN:

44%

OTHER:

2%

ADULTS

MALE:

34%

FEMALE:

66%

AFRICAN AMERICAN/
WEST INDIAN:

13%

ASIAN

3%

BI-RACIAL

3%

CAUCASIAN:

54%

LAT/PUERTO RICAN

26%

OTHER:

1%

AUDITED FINANCES
Fiscal Year July 1, 2020
– June 30, 2021

Support and Revenue	\$2,282,240
Individual Contributions	\$ 848,700
Federal Grants	\$ 909,019
Special Events	\$ 252,715
United Way Grants	\$ 72,665
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 112,692
Other Revenues	\$ 52,674
Investment Income	\$ 33,775

Expenses	\$1,848,627
Program & Program Management	\$1,662,602
Fundraising	\$ 186,025

Net Assets	
Net Assets – Beginning of Year	\$ 534,200
Changes in Net Assets	\$ 433,613
Net Assets – End of Year	\$ 967,813

Little Brother Nigel
age 7



Our Donors

Major Sponsors:
\$50,000 +

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Little Brother Wilfredo
age 11

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Little Sister Forever
age 7

BIG HEARTS

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BIG HEARTS

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Little Brother Jerimyah
age 10

BIG HEARTS

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Our Community and Site-Based Programs are continually IGNITING POTENTIAL.



Of all the activities Big Brother Zachary Rinaldi and his Little Brother Jerimyah have experienced this year, carving Halloween pumpkins was a definite highlight. Zach, from Wallingford, and Jerimyah, from Meriden, are participants in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut **Community-Based Program**. A close runner-up to the pumpkin-carving were the free tickets they and other "Bigs" and "Littles" received courtesy of the Hartford Wolf Pack. Zach and Jerimyah have been matched for about a year.

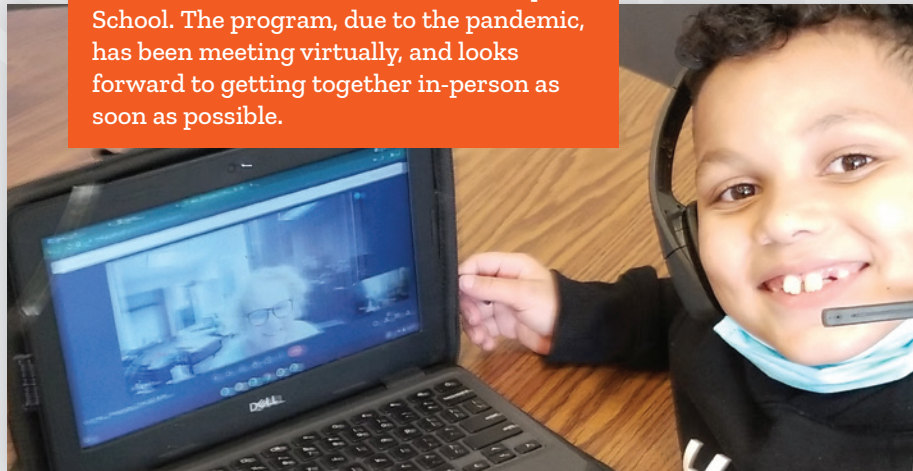


Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Foster Grandparent Program has been meeting virtually each week at many of its **Site-Based** locations in Greater Hartford and Eastern Connecticut. Our program at Catholic Charities' Paraiso Infantil (Children's Paradise) has returned to meeting in-person. The site has won our Orelia M. Barnaby Memorial Award for working so proactively with us during the health crisis. Pictured is Foster Grandparent Sonia Rivera-Vargas, a 5-year program veteran, with two of the Paraiso Infantil "Littles" she mentors.



One of our amazing **Community-Based** Matches, Big Brother Dan Fortes and his Little Brother Donte, are pictured just after their modeling session for the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut Annual Report. Dan is married and has a grown son. He's an auto financing executive and lives in Manchester. He was recently named our John M. Clapp Outstanding Big Brother of the Year. Besides being a standout Big Brother, Dan has been busy recruiting other great "Bigs" on multiple Connecticut media platforms.

Our Beyond School Walls **Site-Based Program** is now in its 13th successful year. It's sponsored by Comcast and is held at its Berlin facility with Comcast employees – like Big Sister Eileen Leahy, shown on screen - serving as mentors to children in the program – like Little Brother Samuel from New Britain's Lincoln Elementary School. The program, due to the pandemic, has been meeting virtually, and looks forward to getting together in-person as soon as possible.



Big Brother Charlie Gamble – our Big Brother of the Year – has been a mentor in our **Community-Based Program** to two boys from a large New Haven family. From 2015 through 2020, he mentored Little Brother T.J. until T.J. aged out of the program. Then, Charlie began to mentor T.J.'s younger brother Rell. Charlie and Rell are pictured just before starting out for a recent visit to a local adventure park. Charlie, the COO at New Haven's Inbox Health feels closer to the community as a Big Brother in the program.

Our Big Sister of the Year, Emily Rosen, and her current Little Brother, Colby, and former Little Sister, Angie, posed for the photographer a couple of years ago at a Big Brothers Big Sisters summer outing. Emily, a 23-year veteran of the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), is now semi-retired. She's a Certified Mindfulness Educator and a Yoga 4 Classrooms Licensed Trainer. Emily has been a Big Sister with the Big Brothers Big Sisters **Community-Based Program** since 2013.



Our **Site-Based Program** at CIGNA has been meeting virtually since the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic. This hasn't deterred Big Sister Lisa Bonner from taking part. Lisa is pictured during a Zoom session with her current Little Sister, Dionna. Lisa – a marketing executive with CIGNA's Evernorth, has been a Big Sister twice before to two other "Littles". For her stellar mentoring history, Lisa has been named the recipient of our Victoria L. Soto Memorial Award.



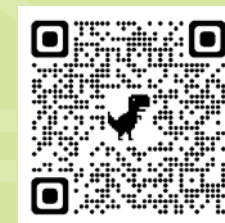
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Little Sister Yaniel
age 6

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