

# Igniting Potential



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters®**  
OF CONNECTICUT

**2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

*Kaden*

Little Brother  
Age 9



## Who We Are

We're currently celebrating our 57th year in Connecticut! For many of those years, as Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters, we served three quarters of the state. Following a 2021 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, a Big Futures 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 57 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.

Serving children  
throughout all of

*Connecticut!*



*Paris*  
Little Sister  
Age 11



For the more than

*100,000 kids*

we've served since our founding,  
we've ignited great potential.

95%

of youth report  
enjoying  
a strong  
mentoring  
relationship

89%

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

64%

reduction in  
anti-social  
behaviors

59%

reduction  
in school  
discipline

46%

reduction in  
substance  
use

22%

reduction in  
depressive  
symptoms

19%

increase in  
emotional  
self-  
regulation

16%

increase  
in school  
engagement

**From July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023**

- Our Community-Based Program served 485 children.
- Our Site/School-Based Program operated at 15 sites and served 271 children.
- Our Foster Grandparent Program operated at 37 sites and served 224 children.
- Our Big Futures Program served 75 teens and young adults.
- Our volunteer mentors devoted more than 37,075 hours to inspiring, teaching and bonding with their "Littles".
- Volunteer mentors' time spent with "Littles" this past year was worth \$1,178,997 – a huge value that your support made possible.
- Our staff spent more than 42,770 hours creating and supporting life-changing matches between children in need and caring Big Brothers and Big Sisters.



*Alejandro*  
Little Brother  
Age 16

When founders

*Bernie Fields &  
Arthur Director*

began Big Brothers Big Sisters  
in CT in the 1960s,

the organization covered just the Middletown area. Now, as Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut celebrates its 57th year of helping children facing adversity succeed, we've grown our service area to include all of Connecticut's 8 counties.

## Have you heard about our **BIG FUTURES PROGRAM!**

When mentees – like Little Brother Alejandro at left – approach the end of high school and start planning for what's to follow, we have them covered. Our **Big Futures Program** supports young adults from high school through their mid-20's – helping them develop clear post-secondary plans, and garner the experiences, connections, and opportunities they need to make that a reality. Like a GPS device with a young adult in the driver's seat, we help them get where they aim to go – in terms of education, training, career, and life.

Learn more at: [ctbig.org/bfp](https://ctbig.org/bfp)





*Titus*

Little Brother, Age 14  
with Big Brother Rahkim



# *Igniting Potential*

Rahkim Sabree from New Britain, a financial coach, accredited financial counselor and financial consultant, has mentored Little Brother Titus for the past 2 1/2 years and is **helping to ignite his potential.**

Titus'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 **the Governor's Prevention Partnership**, represented by Project Manager Brittany Baines, continue to support our program, **potential is being ignited** for Little Brother Titus.



Brittany Baines





*Kaden*

Little Brother, Age 9  
with Big Brother Saurabh

# *Igniting Potential*

Saurabh Bohra from New Britain, a web engineer and Big Data advisor at Aetna, has been matched with Little Brother Kaden for about a year and is **helping to ignite his potential.**

Kaden'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 **CATIC**, represented by its Senior Vice President & Chief Impact Officer Damon Carter, continue to support our program, **potential is being ignited** for Kaden.



Damon Carter





*Ireland*

Little Sister, Age 8  
with Big Sister Julia



# *Igniting Potential*

Julia Matteson lives in East Windsor and is a Field Application Specialist at QuidelOrtho. She's mentored Little Sister Ireland for just about 2 years and is **helping to ignite her potential.**

Ireland'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 **Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation**, represented by Executive Director Jacqueline Ossen Berkowitz, continue to support our program, **potential is being ignited** for Little Sister Ireland.

Jacqueline Ossen Berkowitz







*Mikela*

Little Sister  
Age 6  
with Foster  
Grandparent  
Elizabeth

# *Igniting Potential*

Elizabeth Nieves is from Manchester and has volunteered with our Foster Grandparent Program for the past nine years. Since September of 2021, Elizabeth has been a Foster Grandparent (senior mentor) at the Franklin H. Mayberry Elementary School in East Hartford, where she **helps ignite the potential of kindergarten students.**

Administrators at the Mayberry Elementary School **ignited the potential** of their students when they determined the facility would take part in and support our Foster Grandparent Program.

Because generous individuals and organizations like the **United Way of Greater Waterbury**, represented by Jered Bruzas, Chief Impact Officer, continue to support our program, **potential is being ignited** for many Little Brothers and Little Sisters in the Foster Grandparent Program.

Jered Bruzas







*Trey*

Little Brother, Age 18  
with Trey's mother, Casey  
Roy and Trey's Big Brother,  
Mike Isko. Mike and Trey  
took part in our Community-  
Based Program for 6 years.  
They've recently transitioned  
to our Big Futures Program.



# Igniting Potential

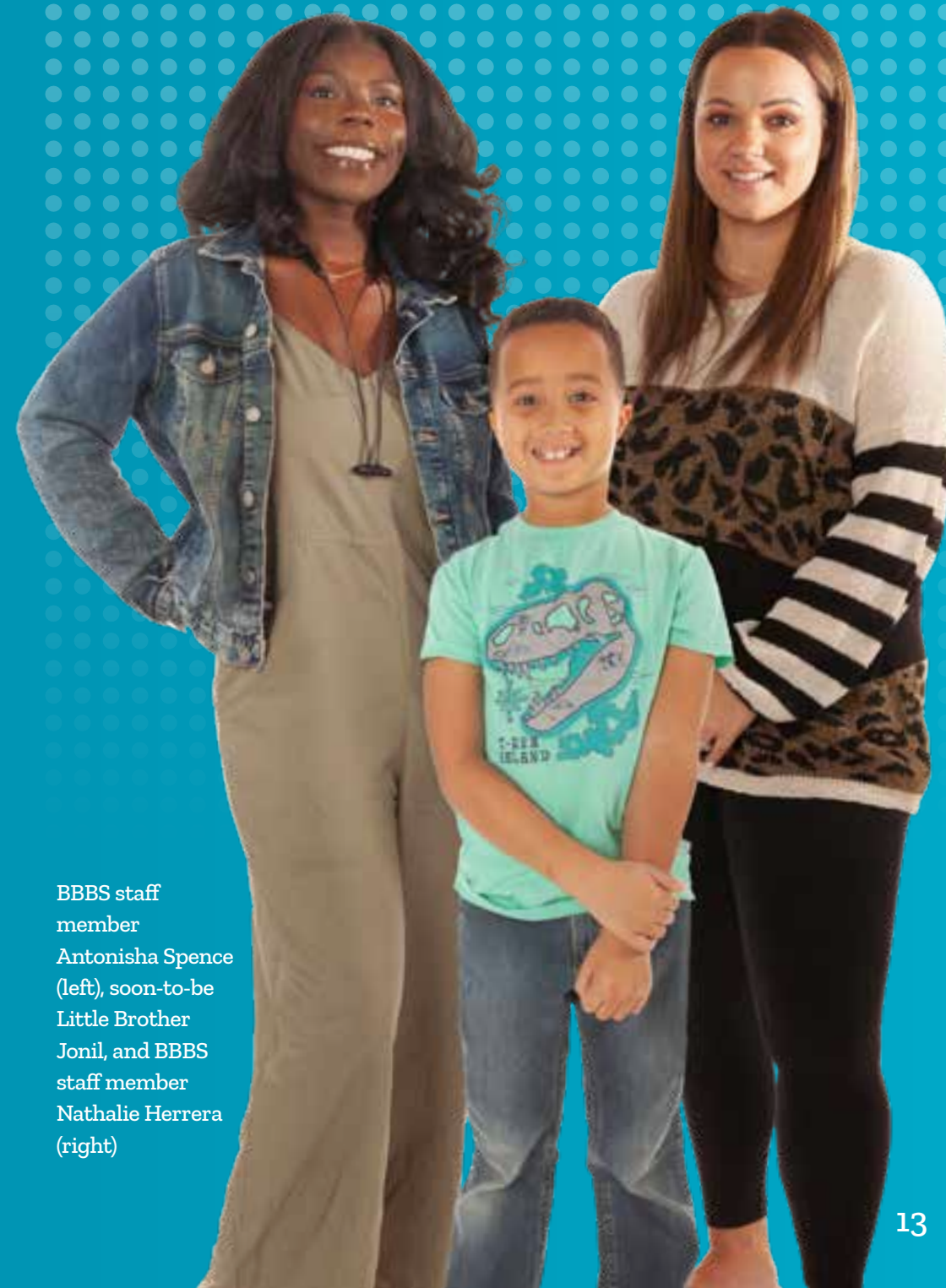
## Potential has been ignited for Trey

because a Match Support Coordinator like Antonisha Spence (left) maintains ongoing contact with Trey, his mother Casey and his Big Brother Mike 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 Trey

because an Enrollment Coordinator like Nathalie Herrera (right), drawing on 118 years of Big Brothers Big Sisters history and her own youth services experience, worked with Trey, his mother Casey and Big Brother Mike to carefully create a match that is having a significant life-enhancing impact on all participants.

Jonil (foreground) is 9-years-old, and is currently on our waiting list. He and his mother, who enrolled Jonil in our program, are hoping that he will soon be matched with a caring, inspirational adult mentor – just like Big Brother Mike Isko. Then, Jonil, like Little Brother Trey, can broaden his horizons, develop his capabilities and fulfill his great potential.



BBBS staff  
member  
Antonisha Spence  
(left), soon-to-be  
Little Brother  
Jonil, and BBBS  
staff member  
Nathalie Herrera  
(right)



# Chairman's Letter

In the spring of 2022, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut's management team and Board of Directors reviewed all our programs, operations and opportunities. Our goal was straightforward. Build a new three-year growth plan to help us reach more children in need.

We're halfway through the plan and on track to meet the bold goals we set. During 2023, we reached 5% more children than the prior year and, we're on track to reach 11% more kids this year! We aim to accelerate growth still further in the coming years.

These results reflect the hard work that staff, Board, volunteers and families have done together to expand our reach. And we have more to do. Post-pandemic, there are more Connecticut children with needs than ever before, and we will do all we can to reach as many as possible.

With your help, we know we will.

Thank you for all your support. We look forward to working with you in the year to come to help all Connecticut children to thrive!



Jay Buth  
Chairman, Board of Directors  
Vice President, Controller & Chief Accounting Officer,  
Eversource Energy

Ty Arabia  
Little Sister  
Age 10



Fon  
Little Brother  
Age 11

# President's Letter

The past two years brought major changes: A merger that made us a statewide organization, the launch of Big Futures, the opening of mentoring programs at schools, universities and workplaces across Connecticut – the list goes on.

We're now moving on to our next transformation: Focusing staff, mentors, parents/guardians and kids alike on The Search Institute's Developmental Assets model to better help all of our Littles thrive.

Put plainly, the Developmental Assets are 40 supports and strengths - identified by The Search Institute through analysis of hundreds of thousands of data sets – that help a young person to succeed. Half relate to external factors, e.g., support from caring adults, families and schools. Half relate to internal factors, e.g., social-emotional skills, commitments and values. Countless studies show that a young person with 30 or more assets is most likely to achieve their key life goals and thrive.

We train all staff in this model. In the coming months, we will begin training Bigs as well. Later this year, we'll have every child entering our programs take an assessment giving us sense of assets they have and those they're seeking. We'll help ensure that youths' annual goals in our programs align with areas where they can benefit most. We'll do follow-up assessments annually to track progress and promote further growth.

The end goal is simple: Help every young person we work with garner the assets they need to thrive in life. We look forward to working with you to make this vision a reality. We couldn't do this work without your support and partnership – thank you!



Andy Fleischmann  
President & CEO



# Igniting Potential

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

## CHILDREN

### MALE:

46%

### FEMALE:

52%

### NON-BINARY:

2%

### AFRICAN AMERICAN/ WEST INDIAN:

33%

### ASIAN:

2%

### BI-RACIAL:

13%

### CAUCASIAN:

17%

### LAT/PUERTO RICAN:

32%

### OTHER:

2%

## ADULTS

### MALE:

32%

### FEMALE:

67%

### NON-BINARY:

1%

### AFRICAN AMERICAN/ WEST INDIAN:

12%

### ASIAN:

8%

### BI-RACIAL:

6%

### CAUCASIAN:

63%

### LAT/PUERTO RICAN

9%

### OTHER:

0%

## AUDITED FINANCES

**Fiscal Year July 1, 2022  
– June 30, 2023**

### SUPPORT AND REVENUE \$2,843, 975

Individual Contributions	\$ 1,023,537
Federal Grants	\$ 1,192,124
Other Grants	\$ 31,128
Special Events	\$ 377,469
United Way Grants	\$ 54,309
Other Revenues	\$ 42,373
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 97,457
Investment Income	\$ 25,578

### EXPENSES \$2,680,571

Program & Program Management	\$ 2,447,303
Fundraising	\$ 233,268

### NET ASSETS

Net Assets – Beginning of Year	\$ 1,420,793
Changes in Net Assets	\$ 163,404
Net Assets – End of Year	\$ 1,584,197



*Ireland*  
Little Sister  
Age 8

# Our Donors

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*Titus*  
Little Brother  
Age 14



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*Mikela*

Little Sister  
Age 6

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TD Bank
- Wayne Holcombe**  
eNdoto
- Michael Mahoney**  
RLM Co.
- Russ Mills**  
Alteryx
- Hugh F. Murray, III**  
McCarter and English
- Gene Rosenberg**  
Gene Rosenberg Associates
- Zach Sawtelle**  
Compass Diversified

*Alejandro*  
Little Brother  
Age 16



# Big Hearts

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Site-Based Program Specialist



Our community and site-based programs are continually

# Igniting Potential

Our **Site-Based Program** at the Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School in Hartford is relatively new, but it's already showing great promise. It meets every Tuesday during the academic year from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mentors first enjoy lunch with their mentees. Then they might engage in a STEAM-related activity (science, technology, engineering, art, math). Next, they might discuss a societal or emotional issue. And, if there's time, they might even play a game or two. Big Sister Annemarie Holly (left) calls the program one of her week's highpoints. She always looks forward to Tuesdays and her get-togethers with 13-year-old Little Sister Brooklyn (right).



At a recent session of the Big Brothers Big Sisters **Site-Based Program** at the CREC Montessori Magnet School in Hartford's Learning Corridor, Big Sisters Emma Xhoxhie (far left) and Tess Gobel (far right) are clearly impressed by the rock decorating skills of Little Brothers Josiah (middle left) and Eric (middle right). Josiah and Eric are students at Montessori Magnet School. Emma and Tess are Trinity College undergrads. Emma's and Tess's volunteerism goes a long way in igniting the spark that will help Josh and Eric maximize their potential.



The featured speakers during the evening program at our Annual Golf Classic were Little Brother Nehemiah, from Windsor, and his Big Brother Dan Tolman, from Simsbury. Dan and Nehemiah rocked the mike on the Golf Club of Avon's patio as they talked to the event's attendees about their **Community-Based Program** match and the benefits of mentoring. Nehemiah, 10, charmed the audience of golfers when he volunteered to answer any questions they might have about his experience as a Little Brother. Dan (left) and Nehemiah (middle) posed for a photo with the evening's Emcee, Tim Lammers (right), a co-host of the Fox 61 weekday Morning Show.



Thanks to the generosity of The Mount Southington Ski Area, many matches over the last 20 years from the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut **Community-Based Program** have thrilled to free admission, equipment usage and skiing/snowboarding at one of the state's premier winter recreational facilities. During their 5-year match, Big Brother Joey Redmond, from Higganum, and his Little Brother Denzel, from Bristol, have visited Mount Southington often. Denzel has become such an expert downhiller that he's now a Ski Ambassador at the facility, and teaching others the sport he's mastered.

11-year-old Nathaniel from Torrington is a Little Brother in our **Community-Based Program**. His Big Brother is Bob Weiss from Harwinton. One of their notable match activities this year was a warm weather visit to the Lake Compounce Amusement Park in Bristol, where they toured the attractions and sampled the tasty park food. Their favorite thing? Taking on the challenge of the triple launch Phobia Phear roller coaster. Bob and Nathaniel and other lucky "Bigs" and "Littles" received free admission to iconic Lake Compounce thanks to a very generous ticket donation to Big Brothers Big Sisters from the Mike and Mary Morning Show on WRCH-FM's Lite 100.5.



At our annual Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Year Awards event, Little Brother Mekhi, foreground, and his Big Brother Alex Beck, background, spoke to the audience about their 10-year-old Community-Based Program match. Mekhi, 18 and from Hamden, had just been named Youth of the Year by us. Alex, an Orange resident and veteran Big Brothers Big Sisters Board Member, looked on with pride and admiration. To help Mekhi reach his post-secondary school goals, he and Alex have enrolled in our Big Futures Program and are looking forward to continuing their mentoring adventure.



Our Foster Grandparent Program meets at 37 Site-Based locations each week in Greater Hartford, Eastern Connecticut and Southeastern Connecticut. Senior mentors, like Rafaela Corchado (left), who's stationed at the Natchaug Elementary School in Willimantic, pass along their love, knowledge, and life experience to adolescents in schools and early education centers needing their guidance and attention, like 5-year-old Daniela (right).





# Help Ignite a Child's Potential

Join Big Brothers Big Sisters  
In Saving Young Lives By  
Volunteering, Donating  
Or Partnering With Us.



Offices in  
Hartford/Bridgeport/Norwich

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ctbigs.org

programs@ctbigs.org  
events@ctbigs.org



*Ty Arabia*

Little Sister  
Age 10



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