



YEARS



IGNITING POTENTIAL  
2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**Aaliyah**  
Little Sister, Age 10



# SERVING CHILDREN THROUGHOUT ALL OF CONNECTICUT!

Treasure  
Little Sister, Age 12



## WHO WE ARE

In 2026, we're celebrating our **60th Anniversary!** Our organization sprang from a grassroots movement to support Connecticut children with mentors in the 1960's. Community leaders founded Big Brothers and Big Sisters agencies in Bridgeport, Hartford, Middletown, New Haven, and other towns. By 2022, they had all merged into Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut (BBBSCT).

Our team creates quality mentoring relationships between at-risk youth and professionally screened and supported adult volunteers. Our mission is to improve the lives of children and empower them to fulfill their highest potential and aspirations.

We achieve this through four core programs: Community-Based, School and Site-Based, Big Futures, and Foster Grandparent mentoring. Each one of these programs provides one-to-one support to young people, helping them to avoid negative behaviors, garner the skills and assets they need, and reach their highest potential.

## WHY WE ARE UNIQUE

With over 120 years of national Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring experience - and 60 years of Connecticut mentoring success - we create enduring, life-changing experiences for volunteers and the children they mentor using approaches our team has honed over the decades.

We create each match through a time-tested process focused on the interests of each child and volunteer. After making a mentoring match, our professional staff members monitor, support, and evaluate each match to ensure positive outcomes and relationship longevity. This is what makes Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut the state's premier youth mentoring organization.

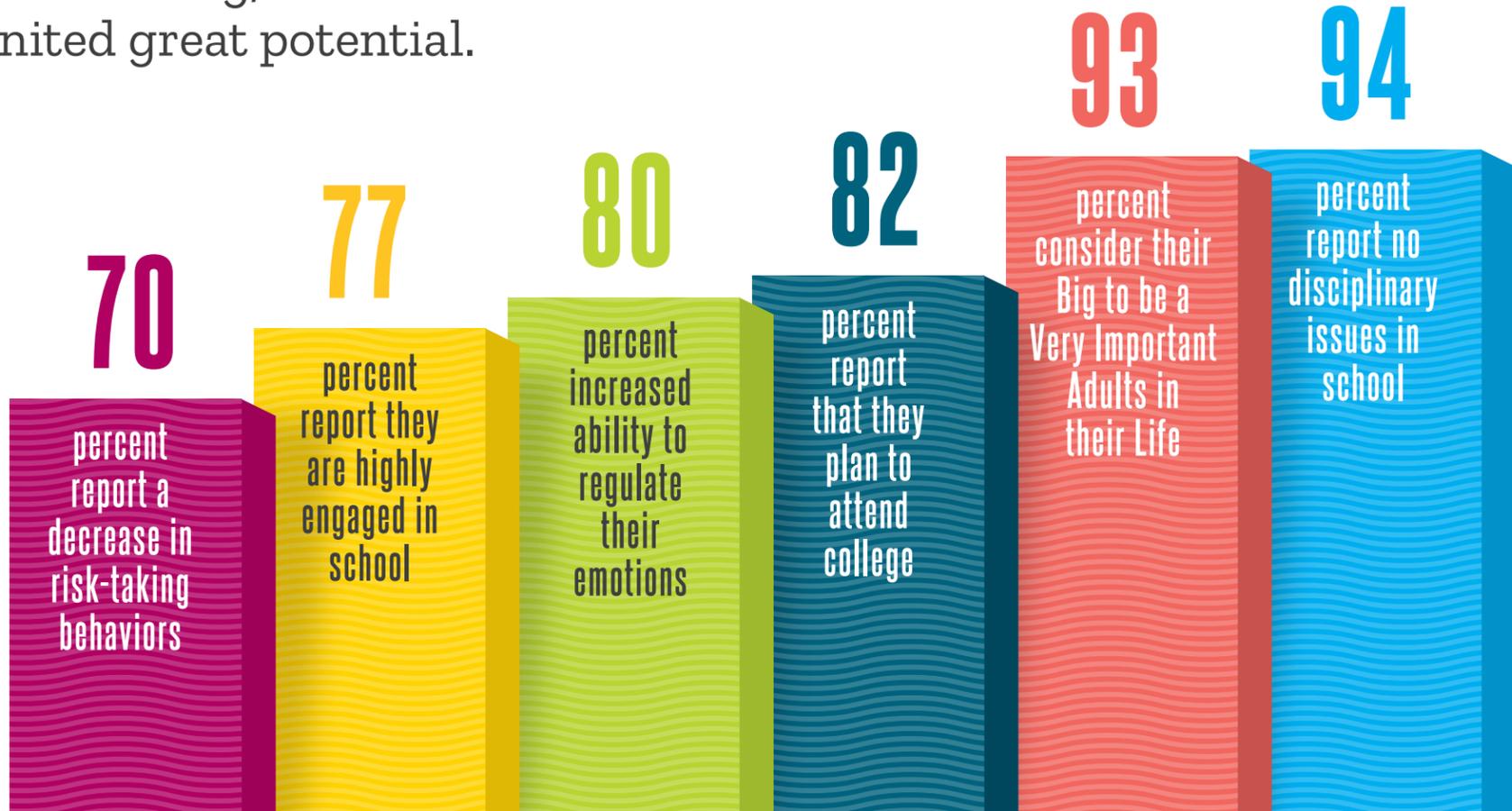
For the more than

# 100,000 KIDS

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

## From July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

- Our Community-Based Program served 488 children.
- Our School/Site-based Program operated at 23 sites and served 422 children.
- Our Foster Grandparent Program operated at 40 sites and served 344 children.
- Our Big Futures Program served 137 teens and young adults.
- Our staff spent over 43,000 hours creating and supporting life-changing matches between children in need and caring Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Our volunteers devoted more than 46,737 hours to inspiring, teaching, and mentoring their Littles.
- The time our Bigs spent with Littles this past year was worth over \$1.63 million – a huge value that your support made possible.



**Dyson**  
Little Brother  
Age 13

# When Bernie Fields & Arthur Director founded Big Brothers Big Sisters in Connecticut in 1966,

the agency just supported children in Middletown. As Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut celebrates its 60th year of helping children facing adversity succeed, we've expanded our service area to include all of Connecticut's 8 counties.

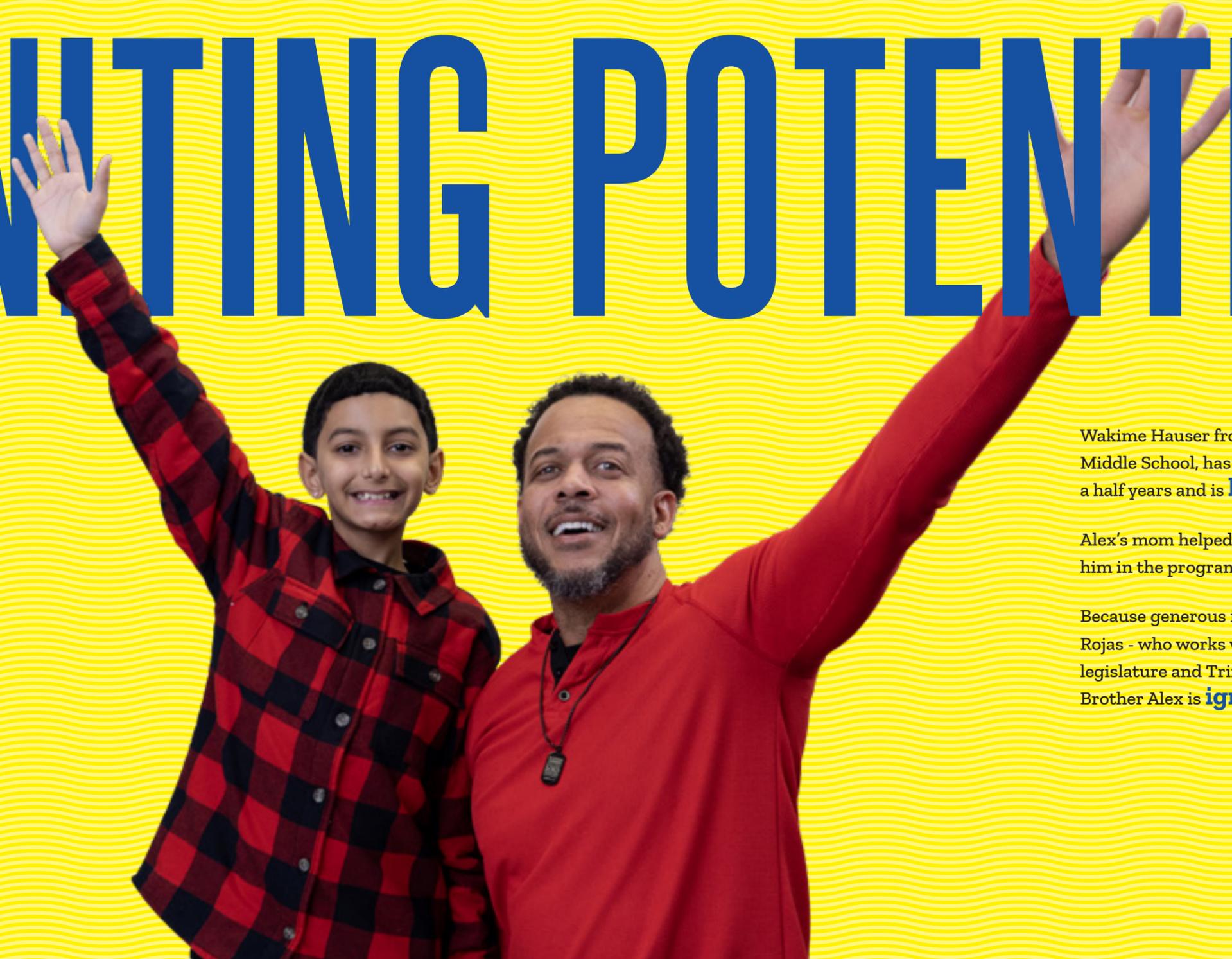
## OUR IMPACT

Our mentoring programs create healthier families, brighter futures, and stronger communities. The children we serve achieve better attendance and grades, higher graduation rates, and decreased use of drugs and alcohol compared to non-mentored peers. They also experience lifetime income gains of 15-20%, meaning \$260,000 to \$345,000 in Connecticut. Each time we pair a child with a mentor, we cultivate a one-to-one relationship that can blossom into a future of unlimited potential.

# IGNITING POTENTIAL

## Alex

Little Brother, Age 11 with  
Big Brother Wakime Hauser



Wakime Hauser from Manchester, a teacher at East Hartford Middle School, has mentored Little Brother Alex for one and a half years and is **helping to ignite his potential.**

Alex's mom helped **ignite his potential** by enrolling him in the program and continuing to champion his growth.

Because generous individuals and organizations like Jason Rojas - who works with us through both the Connecticut legislature and Trinity College - support our work, Little Brother Alex is **igniting his potential.**



Jason Rojas  
House Majority Leader  
Chief of Staff, Trinity College

# IGNITING POTENTIAL

## Ocean

Little Brother, age 13 with  
Big Brother Joe DeLutrie



Joe DeLutrie from West Hartford, an Implementation Manager at The Hartford, has mentored Little Brother Ocean for four years and is **helping to ignite his potential.**

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

Because generous individuals and organizations like **Greater Hartford Gives Foundation**, represented here by Community Impact Officer Alexis Safo-Agyeman, continue to support our work, **potential is being ignited** for Ocean.



Alexis Safo-Agyeman  
Community Impact Officer  
Greater Hartford Gives



# IGNITING POTENTIAL



**Benjalie**  
Little Sister, age 16  
with Big Sister  
Veronica Ciccarone

Veronica Ciccarone from Fairfield is a paraprofessional at RLMS Middle School. She has mentored Little Sister Benjalie for five years and is helping to **ignite her potential**.

Benjalie's mom **ignited her potential** by enrolling her in our program and continuing to support her and Veronica.

Thanks to the generous support of individuals and organizations like the Jeffrey P. Ossen Family Foundation, represented by its President, Carolyn Linkov, and Treasurer, Jacqueline Berkowitz, Benjalie is expanding her potential.

Jaqueline Berkowitz & Carolyn Linkov  
Board leaders of the Jeffrey P. Ossen  
Family Foundation



# IGNITING POTENTIAL



## Dyson

Little Brother, age 13 with  
Big Brother Chris Montesi

Chris Montesi from Guilford is a maintenance worker at Guilford Public Schools, and he's mentored Little Brother Dyson for over 3 years through the **Community-Based Program**.

Dyson's mom **ignited his potential** by enrolling him in our program and encouraging both him and Chris to explore new activities, including sports.

Big Brother Ryan Boutin from Coventry is a Civil Engineer at Gannett Fleming (GFT). He's mentored Little Brother Jomar for 2 years and is **helping to ignite his potential**.

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



**Jomar** Little Brother, age 9 with  
Big Brother Ryan Boutin



# IGNITING POTENTIAL

## Ellie

Little Sister, age 12  
with her mother,  
Jessica, and sisters



We've ignited potential for Ellie through the **School-Based Program**, which created a safe, structured environment for her mentoring relationship to begin. With encouragement from her mom, Jessica, our team matched Ellie with Big Sister Melissa, who fostered trust and early connection. They later transitioned to our Community-Based Program and are still going strong two and a half years later.

Inspired by Ellie's experience, Jessica looks forward to enrolling her two other daughters, knowing they will also benefit.

Aaliyah has ignited her potential because of the ongoing support of **School-Based Program** Facilitator Mikhel Pagan, who stays connected with both Aaliyah and her Big Sister, Lira, a UConn student, to guide curriculum-based activities that build Aaliyah's confidence, self-awareness, and social-emotional growth.

## Aaliyah

Little Sister, age 10 with Big Sister Lira Magloire  
and Program Facilitator Mikhel Pagan



# IGNITING POTENTIAL

## Mekhi

Little Brother, age 20  
with Big Brother  
Alex Beck



When mentees like Little Brother Qwanell prepare for life after high school, they don't have to go it alone. Through **Big Futures**, young adults like Qwanell receive consistent support through their mid-20s as they work toward educational, training, career, and life goals. Andrea Caldwell, a Fairfield-based event producer and business owner, has mentored Qwanell for the past four years and continues to help **ignite his potential**.

Alex Beck of Orange, an attorney with the Ansonia–Milford Judicial District, has mentored Little Brother Mekhi for more than 13 years and is helping to **ignite his potential**.

Mekhi's mom enrolled him in our program when he was eight years old, and as he became a teenager, he chose to transition to the Big Futures Program, maintaining his connection with Alex and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Today, Mekhi serves on BBBS of CT's Youth Advisory Council, using his voice to inspire other young people.

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



## Qwanell

Little Brother, Age 17  
with Big Sister  
Andrea Caldwell

# IGNITING POTENTIAL



## Katalina

Little Sister, Age 13 with  
Big Sister Lisa-Marie Bellmore

Lisa-Marie Bellmore of Wallingford, a Traffic Manager at the advertising agency 7 Miles Global, became a Big Sister to Katalina in 2021 and has been helping her **ignite her potential.**

Katalina's mom **ignited her potential** by enrolling her in our program and continuing to support her in her growth.

## Foster Grandparent Program

Patricio Tejeda-Diaz from New London has volunteered with the program for the past seven years. He is a Foster Grandparent – a senior mentor – at C. B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School, where he **helps ignite the potential of kindergarten students.**

Administrators at C. B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School recognized the value of intergenerational support and **ignited the potential of their students** by partnering with BBBS of CT and supporting the Foster Grandparent Program to enhance children's academic and social-emotional outcomes.



## Neslihan

Little Sister, age 5 with Foster  
Grandparent Patricio Tejeda-Diaz, and  
FPG Senior Manager Rosalin Alcantara



## Treasure

Little Sister, age 12 with  
Big Sister Ebony Gaines

# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

We are in year one of our new three-year strategic plan, and we are excited about the work now underway.

The Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut team is using new tools to assess young people's strengths, challenges, and growth, and we believe this work will have broad implications. Our findings can inform the work of other mentoring teams - and any organization or individual focused on helping young people grow and thrive.

We are leveraging the Search Institute's Developmental Assets (DA) model to support youth development. The model identifies 40 strengths that help young people succeed, based on analysis of thousands of data sets.

Half of these assets are external; they include support from caring adults, families, and schools. The other half are internal; they include social-emotional skills, values, and positive identity. Research shows that young people with 30 or more assets are far more likely to achieve their life goals and thrive.

We are incorporating training, assessments, and programming on DA into all of our programs. We're using pre-match and annual surveys to measure growth, aligning each young person's activities and goals with their assessment results. We're using follow-up assessments to track progress and encourage continued development.

Our goal is straightforward: We want every child and young person we serve to gain the assets they need to thrive. And we're helping other organizations adopt this approach as well.

We're able to set such audacious goals thanks to collaboration. Our staff, Boards, volunteers, and families make this work possible, and their shared commitment drives our progress. Still, much work remains. Many children in Connecticut still face significant challenges, and we will do all we can to reach as many as possible.

With your help, we know we can succeed. We look forward to making this vision a reality and couldn't do it without you. Thank you!



Andy Fleischmann  
President & CEO  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut



Jay Buth  
Chairman, Board of Directors  
Vice President, Controller and CAO  
Eversource Energy

# IGNITING POTENTIAL

The information below adds up to potential ignited for children across Connecticut.

## CHILDREN

### MALE:

46%

### FEMALE:

53%

### NON-BINARY:

1%

### AFRICAN AMERICAN/ WEST INDIAN:

33%

### ASIAN:

3%

### MULTI-RACIAL:

10%

### CAUCASIAN:

17%

### LAT/PUERTO RICAN:

34%

### OTHER:

3%

## ADULTS

### MALE:

33%

### FEMALE:

65%

### Non-Binary:

2%

### AFRICAN AMERICAN/ WEST INDIAN:

16%

### ASIAN:

9%

### Multi-Racial:

6%

### CAUCASIAN:

51%

### Lat/Puerto Rican

17%

### OTHER:

1%

## AUDITED FINANCES

**Fiscal Year 2025**  
**7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025**

### REVENUES

Individual Contributions	\$ 268,511
Government Grants	\$ 2,148,250
Corp & Foundation Grants	\$ 750,119
Special Events	\$ 392,890
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 116,069
Investment Income	\$ 167,853

### EXPENSES

Program & Program	\$ 3,484,281
Management	\$ 2,886,835
Other	\$ 352,596
Fundraising	\$ 244,850

### CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

Net Assets – Beginning of Year	\$ 1,997,391
Net Assets – End of Year	\$ 2,356,802



**Ariiana**

Little Sister, age 13  
with Big Sister  
Pahola Almonte

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**Jared** Little Brother, age 8 with Big Brother Thomas Albino rocking a Spiderman pose.



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**Imani** Little Sister, age 18 with  
 Big Sister Donna Wnuck



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# BIG HEARTS

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### Rebecca Arther

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Senior Partnerships & Inquiry  
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Manager, Match Support

### Alexia Bourbeau

Program Specialist, Facilitation  
& Match Success

### Julie Correia

Program Facilitator

### Ryan Elgin

Development & Events Specialist

### Emma Espitia

Program Specialist, Foster  
Grandparent Program

### Linda Gonzalez

Program Specialist, Match Success

### Nathalie Herrera

Lead Match Support Specialist

### Lauren Kilcourse

Program Specialist, Big Futures

### Margarita Laboy

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### Cecilia Lopez

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### Melissa Tritinger

Grants Administrator

### Kimberley Wood

Data & Evaluation Manager

### Elizabeth Zetina

Program Specialist, Site & School-  
Based Programs



### Hispanic Mentorship Making A Difference For Youth

Big Sister Seyennah Lopez and Little Sister Gianni from our **Community-Based Program** shared in an NBC interview how their bond has blossomed over the past 3 years as they've tried new experiences and built a friendship rooted in their shared Puerto Rican heritage. Gianni says having a mentor who understands her culture has helped her embrace who she is and feel more self-confident.

# Our programs are continually **IGNITING POTENTIAL**



### Wolf Pack Game Night

Big Brother, Jim Creighton, and Little Brother Kyrin connected instantly through their shared love of sports. With his own kids away at college, Jim chose to become a Big, offering time, support, and encouragement.

With free tickets donated to BBBSCT by the **Hartford Wolfpack**, they enjoyed a Wolfpack game with other Bigs and Littles, creating lasting memories.



### Off To A Bright Future

Little Brother Adjorni's mentoring journey began in a school-based match with his Big Sister, River Morin. From there, he transitioned into the **Community-Based Program** and then Big Futures. Over time, he developed increased confidence and found his voice. Today, he is attending UConn on a full scholarship, pursuing engineering, and serving on BBBS of CT's Youth Advisory Council.



### The Fall Mentor's Classic

Big Brother Joe DeLutrie of West Hartford and Little Brother Ocean of New Britain were featured speakers at our **Mentors Classic**, held in Greenwich in September. The event raised over \$170,000 in support of one-to-one mentoring. Joe and Ocean inspired all present as they shared stories showing the lasting impact of their mentoring match.



### Stanton School Site-Based Program

Our **School-Based Program** at Stanton Elementary in Norwich is strengthening community connections. The program meets every Monday afternoon during the school year and supports 10 mentoring matches.

Grants from foundations help us to sustain this program. Mentors from Electric Boat and the Connecticut Sun engage with Littles through a variety of activities, many tied to science, tech, engineering, the arts, and math.



### Foster Grandparents Helping Youth Thrive

Grandma Lucy (Luz Pensante), Mrs. Osladia Warner, and their Littles shared a special moment at C.B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet School during a Foster Grandparent Program reading event.

At the end, our team gave all students gift bags with books and school supplies. Foster Grandparents work one-on-one with students needing help with school and/or SEL, helping to build their confidence, engagement, and academic skills.

# HELP IGNITE A CHILD'S POTENTIAL

Join Big Brothers Big Sisters Life-Changing Work By Volunteering, Donating Or Partnering With Us!



**Neslihan**  
Little Sister, age 5



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Hartford, CT 06106

1.860.525.5437  
ctbig.org

To volunteer: [programs@ctbig.org](mailto:programs@ctbig.org)  
For event info: [events@ctbig.org](mailto:events@ctbig.org)  
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