



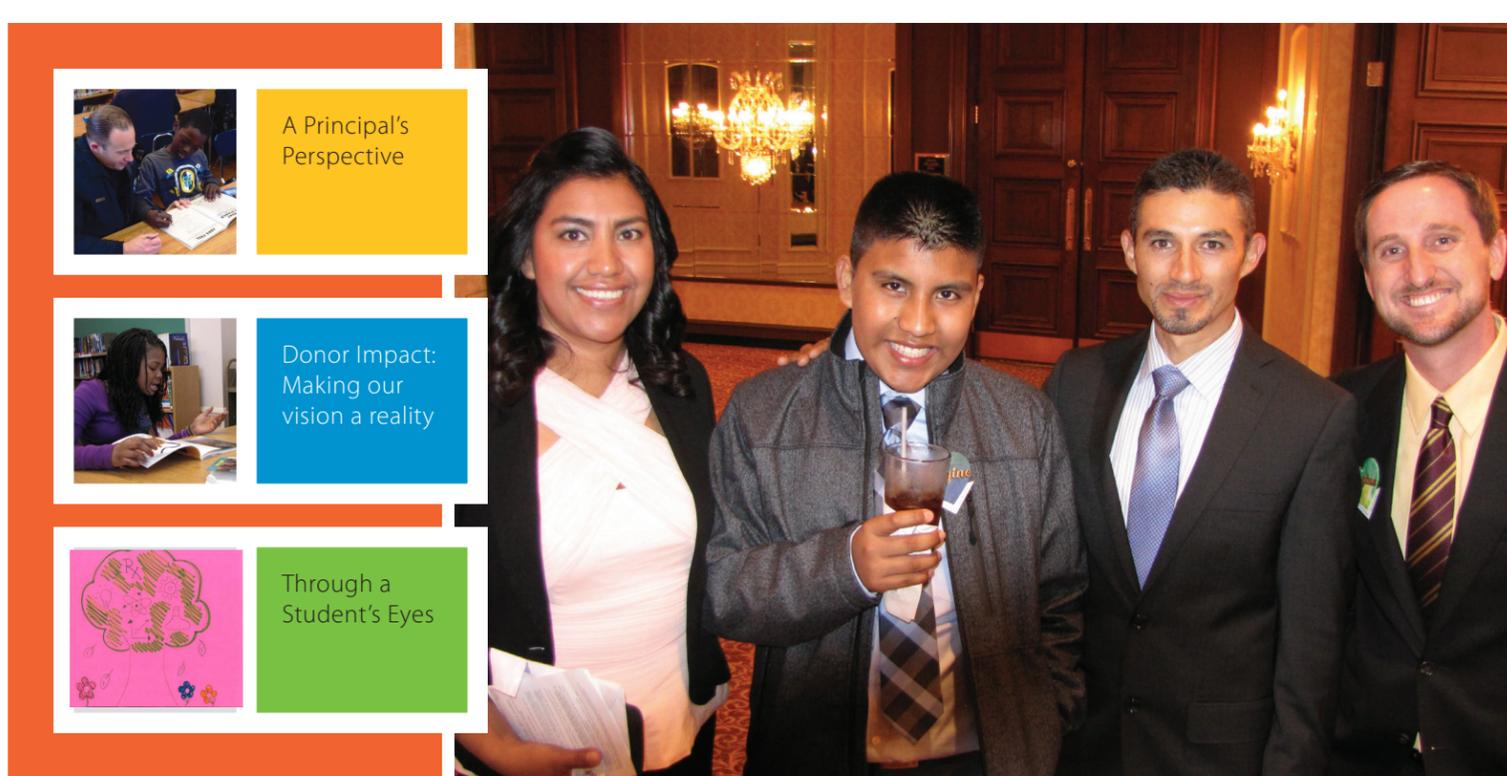
Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Metro Milwaukee

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A Principal's
Perspective



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Through a
Student's Eyes



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Metro Milwaukee

NEWSLETTER

WINTER
2016

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Through a Student's Eyes

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS' MENTOR2.0 PROGRAM SPECIFICALLY SERVES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND COMBINES IN-PERSON MENTORING WITH SAFE, SECURE ONLINE COMMUNICATION AND A COMPREHENSIVE WEEKLY CURRICULUM FOCUSED ON COLLEGE READINESS. Since Fall of 2014, we have partnered with Veritas High School in Milwaukee. Eighty percent of students at Veritas are Hispanic, and 85% of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. With the support and guidance of their volunteer mentors, 97% of the students in the mentor2.0 program want to go on to college after they graduate.

Jannett is in the Sophomore class at Veritas High School and has had a mentor since her Freshman year in our mentor2.0 program. "I come from a family of Hispanic descent and have grown up with strong morals and an appreciation for education," she said. Like many of her classmates, Jannett will be the first person in her family to have the opportunity to attend college. "My parents did not receive an education past high school," Jannett said, "but they want the best for me. They don't fully understand how to follow the path to college but through the help of my mentor, I am getting the resources and support needed to follow a strong educational path."

Jannett's mentor Maggie works at GE Healthcare. With Maggie in her corner, Jannett is eager to pay it forward. She said, "I aspire to attend college one day, and to help those in need with the knowledge I acquire. It is because of mentor2.0 that I'm prospering. Thank you dearly!"



A Mother's Heart

FROM SHY TO CONFIDENT. FROM SOFT-SPOKEN TO SOCIALIZING. FOR LITTLE BROTHER EDSON AND HIS MOTHER NORMA, THE BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS MENTORING PROGRAM MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

Norma, Edson, and their family speak Spanish at home, while the primary language spoken at Edson's school is English. "I know some words in English but I am not able to help Edson with his pronunciation," Norma said. When seeking a mentor for her son four years ago, Norma described a sensitive child who needed help becoming more confident. "Before Edson was part of the program he was very shy and didn't socialize much with other people," she said. Additionally, Edson struggled with school work, especially reading.

About that same time, a recent college graduate named Paul decided to get involved in Big Brothers Big Sisters. Paul spoke some Spanish and had stud-

ied in Spain and El Salvador. Norma was thrilled when Big Brothers Big Sisters matched Paul with Edson.

"Paul has helped Edson with his English skills," Norma said. "Edson's classes are taught in English. If he doesn't understand all the words he hears at school he will contact Paul and ask him. Paul is kind



and responsive." Thanks to Paul's help, Edson is doing "really well in middle school." His grades and his reading skills have improved. Edson and Paul often study at Milwaukee Public Library, and they share a love for the Harry Potter series.

Norma has been impressed by other changes as well. "Since being part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, Edson has created better relationships with adults and other kids," she observed. "He has more confidence with talking to other people. He has grown and become a more responsible person. Paul has helped Edson express himself if he is upset or if he needs help."

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Milwaukee recently recognized Paul and Edson as the Brother Match of the Year. Together we are creating positive change in our community.

Pictured above (left to right): Mom Norma, Little Brother Edson, Dad Juanes and Big Brother Paul.

SPECIAL EVENTS



Our 2016 Big Gala: A Celebration of Mentoring was a huge success! This year's theme, "Imagine," envisioned a world where every child is supported by a dedicated mentor. Big Brothers Big Sisters proudly highlighted many amazing matches in our program who are working together to achieve brighter futures. Save the date for next year's Gala: Saturday, November 4, 2017.



Let's strike it BIG again in 2017! At Big Brothers Big Sisters, we love bowling – not only is it a great way to spend a fun-filled evening with friends and family, but it raises important funding for the children we serve every day! More information on Bowl for Kids' Sake is coming soon. We will post updates, including the 2017 schedule, on our Bowl for Kids' Sake website at gobowling.kintera.org.



A Big Brother and Little Brother work on homework together.

A Principal's Perspective

GREETINGS FROM TOWNSEND STREET SCHOOL! When asked to comment about the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program, Principal Redona Williams jumped at the chance to express how positive the mentors have been with her students.

"I am so grateful to have the Big Brothers Big Sisters program at Townsend," a Milwaukee Public School located just north of the Sherman Park neighborhood. "Our students need the support that the mentors bring to them weekly."

Principal Williams has noticed a difference in the classrooms. "The students enjoy the time spent with the mentors so much that they return to their classes happy and satisfied," she said. "This mentoring time seems to help build their confidence. They tend to do better in their classes and are just flourishing... all because someone is paying attention to them."

Mentors always start off by talking about school. Sometimes the matches work on homework together; the Bigs take an active interest in their Littles' grades and social life at school. Group games are popular at Townsend, and game time gives mentors the opportunity to talk with their Littles.

Recently, one of the Townsend Big Brothers came into Williams' office looking for his Little Brother. "His timing was great, because the child had a difficult time at recess and was upset," the principal said. Williams and the mentor discussed several ways to help the child.



Principal Williams concluded, "I hope the interactions and the relationships will last forever between the mentors and mentees."

DONOR IMPACT:

Making our vision a reality

OUR VISION FOR ALL CHILDREN TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN LIFE WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT DONATIONS FROM GENEROUS CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS LIKE YOU. Big Brothers Big Sisters guides local youth towards brighter futures by matching them with caring volunteer mentors. Each year we serve over 1,300 children, ages 6-18, who come from single-parent households, are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and/or have an incarcerated parent. Mentors, children, and dedicated Big Brothers Big Sisters match support specialists work together to set and achieve personal goals.

And it works! Our measured outcomes prove our mentoring is effective. Children stay in school and improve their grades. Teens focus on their futures, and avoid drug use and pregnancy. Youth consistently maintain or improve their socio-emotional skills, becoming well-rounded, capable citizens who contribute to our community.

Thank you to all our donors who help us create brighter futures for our children. If you would like to help change the life of a child facing adversity today, please visit bbbsmilwaukee.org/donate or designate Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Milwaukee in your United Way gift.



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