

Making Connections

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A N N U A L R E P O R T



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Central Mass/Metrowest



Our Mission

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Mass/Metrowest enhances the quality of life of children through professionally supported mentoring relationships with responsible and caring volunteers.

January 18, 2011

Dear Friends,

This year has been one of both reflection and forecasting — recognizing the connections that are so critical to the important work we do with each and every child we serve. We are truly humbled by the number of volunteers, partners, donors and families who are committed to changing a child's life — forever. And for that, please accept our sincerest thanks.

In 2010, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Massachusetts/Metrowest supported 1,389 at-risk children in our communities with quality and consistent mentoring relationships with responsible volunteers. This includes 536 children who had not received our services before. Through the volunteerism of our 'Bigs', the support at our program sites, and the dedication of our staff, at-risk children are able to overcome barriers and achieve positive life trajectories. 'Bigs' teach them life skills, support their education, expand their horizons and improve their perspectives on their futures. This, in turn, creates better-educated and safer communities.

Despite the uncertain economic times, we have steadied our fiscal position and are forging ahead with our agency growth plans to serve 2,000 children per year by 2014. To support this growth, we have recently announced a capacity building campaign that was jump-started by a significant, multi-year matching investment made by Ted and Maureen English. We will be forever grateful for their trust in our ability to make a BIG difference not only in the lives of children, but also in the communities in which we all live.

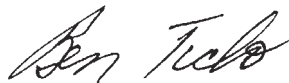
In the coming year, we expect to widen our connections that provide support to those children who need us most. This will be done by recruiting and engaging more individual volunteers as well as adding and expanding mentoring partnerships with locally-based businesses and universities.

Our work is driven by our vision which is to "never say 'no' to a child in need of our services." We believe that every child has the inherent ability to succeed and to thrive — especially when provided with support and guidance. And with your ongoing support — we can do just that.

Sincerely,



Kevin W. Martin
Board President



Benedict J. Ticho, Jr.
Executive Director

Lasting Connections

Reflecting on the Evolution of Our Community Partners

2000

- Holy Cross College Men's Lacrosse Team at Canterbury Street School/Worcester

2001

- Holy Cross College Student Projects for Urban Development members at Canterbury Street School/Worcester; added Boys & Girls Club of Worcester in 2003; added Sullivan Middle School/Worcester in 2004; added Quinsigamond School/Worcester in 2005

2002

- Unum employees at Elm Park Community School/Worcester

2003

- Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) Men's Basketball Team at Elm Park Community School/Worcester
- Holy Cross College Deaf Studies at ALL School/Worcester; transitioned to Community-Based Program

2004

- WPI Zeta Psi fraternity at Elm Park Community School/Worcester
- Assumption College Reach Out Center students and Men's Basketball Team at Flagg Street School/Worcester

2005

- Holy Cross College Women's Soccer Team at Quinsigamond School/Worcester; transitioned to Seven Hills Charter School in 2008
- Hudson High School students at Hudson Boys & Girls Club; transitioned to CHAPS Afterschool Program at C.A. Farley School/Hudson in 2008
- Framingham High School students at Barbieri School/Framingham; transitioned to Framingham Boys & Girls Club and Potter Road Elementary School/Framingham in 2008
- WPI Women's Basketball Team at Elm Park Community School/Worcester



“Big Brothers Big Sisters’ site-based program is one of the greatest assets we have at our school. It is well organized, and goes above and beyond to support the unique needs of our children.” — Rob Pelczarski, *Vice Principal*, Elm Park School



2006

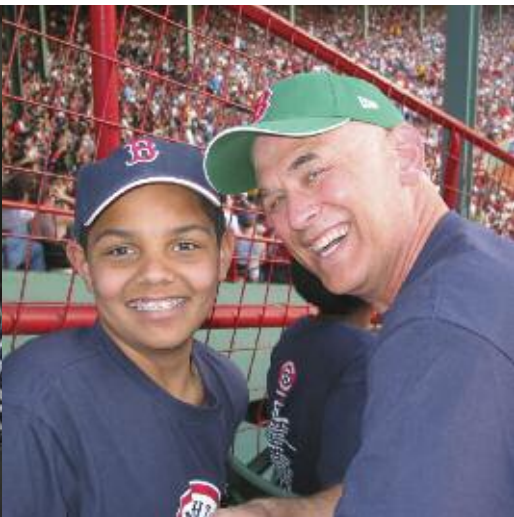
2007

2008

2009

2010

- WPI Phi Gamma Delta and Phi Sigma Sigma at Wawecus Road School/Worcester, Women's Softball and Track and Field Teams at Belmont Street Community School/Worcester
- Hanover Insurance employees at Worcester Arts Magnet School/Worcester
- Holy Cross Football Team at Boys & Girls Club of Worcester Clubhouses
- TJX Companies employees at Cameron Middle School/Framingham
- Middlesex Savings Bank employees at Lilja Elementary School/Natick and Mill Pond School/Westborough
- WPI Men's Crew Team and Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity at Elm Park Community School/Worcester
- Holy Cross College Cheerleading Squad and Women's Field Hockey team at Boys & Girls Club of Worcester
- Acton-Boxborough High School students at Boys & Girls Club of Assabet Valley/Maynard
- Holy Cross Men's Baseball Team at Seven Hills Charter School/Worcester
- WPI Swim Team at Belmont Street School/Worcester, Alpha Xi Delta Sorority at Elm Park Community School/Worcester
- Clark University Women's Tennis Team and Men's Lacrosse Team at Goddard Elementary School/Worcester
- EMC employees at Mill Pond School/Westborough and David Mindess School/Ashland
- WPI Women's Volleyball Team at Elm Park Community School/Worcester
- MathWorks employees at Lilja and Kennedy Elementary Schools/Natick
- Fidelity Investments employees at Boys & Girls Club of MetroWest/Marlborough
- Bose Corporation employees at Boys & Girls Club of Assabet Valley/Maynard and Boys & Girls Club of MetroWest/Marlborough
- Akibia employees at Mill Pond School/Westborough and David Mindess School/Ashland
- Nichols College Men's and Women's Basketball Teams at Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley
- Holy Cross College Women's Volleyball at the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester, Men's and Women's Golf and Women's Track Teams at Grafton Street School/Worcester



Connecting Kids to Success

Now and in the Future



Each time we connect a child (Little Brother/Sister) with a mentor (Big Brother/Sister), we start something powerful: a one-to-one relationship built on trust and friendship that increases their potential for success ... and we have the facts to prove it.

MAKING BETTER CHOICES—NOW

A national study conducted by Public/Private Ventures showed that Little Brothers and Little Sisters are:

52% less likely to skip school

46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs

33% less likely to engage in violent behavior

27% less likely to begin using alcohol

THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF THE BIG/LITTLE CONNECTION

A 2009 survey conducted on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters by Harris Interactive® online highlighted the life-long positive impact on adults who were mentored as children.

84% said they learned the importance of helping others

81% said the experience changed their perspective on what they thought was possible in life

77% set higher goals than they would have on their own

69% said their relationship with their Big helped them make better choices as an adult

65% reported reaching a higher level of education than they thought possible

Special Connections

Partnering with the Deaf Studies Program at Holy Cross College



S P E C I A L C O N N E C T I O N S

Over seven years ago, Judy Fask, the Director of the Deaf Studies program at Holy Cross, had the opportunity to sit in on a presentation by Big Brothers Big Sisters addressing potential volunteers. Because the Deaf Studies program at Holy Cross focuses on pairing students with deaf children in the community, Judy realized how beneficial it would be to partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

While there is no deaf studies major or minor available to pursue at Holy Cross, students can create their own student designed major or minor to include deaf studies. For the children in the community who

are matched with college students, it allows them to have an additional relationship with a mentor where language is not a barrier. “I want students to use skills they have to open opportunities for deaf children in the community,” said Fask.

Currently, there are seven matches within the Big Brothers Big Sisters Deaf Studies program, with six of the Bigs coming from Holy Cross. Bigs and Littles meet for 90 minutes per week, typically on weekends. Both Judy Fask and Big Brothers Big Sisters hope to continue to grow this established partnership for years to come.

“I want students to use skills they have to open opportunities for deaf children in the community.”

— Judy Fask, Director, Deaf Studies program at Holy Cross

Nicole and Monica

Nicole Winslow met her little sister, Monica, in the swimming pool at Holy Cross. Nicole was involved in the deaf studies swimming program, while Monica was taking a swimming class on the college campus. Judy Fask noticed the two girls signing together and suggested to Nicole that she apply to become a Big Sister.

After going through the interview process, Nicole and Monica were matched. “We started signing to each other and felt we had a really good connection,” said Nicole. Because of her match with Nicole, Monica has been able to learn a new skill: Cambodian Dance! The two attend weekly dance classes —

“Everyone in the class is hearing and Nicole translates for me,” explains Monica. “She also has helped me with my swimming classes. She is always there for me.”



For Nicole, the experience of spending time with Monica was been extremely rewarding: “We learn from each other. Monica has helped me improve my sign language skills and learn more about the Deaf community.” Because Monica’s family is unable to sign, she feels their impact on each other is just as strong. “Our friendship makes me feel less lonely. She makes my life happier!”

“She is always there for me... She makes my life happier!” — Monica

Our Matches Truly Connect

Jesse and Nick

For the past two and a half years, [Jesse Haghanizadeh](#) has been a Big Brother to 12-year-old [Nick](#). The two spend time together on both Monday and Thursday afternoons, going fishing, playing football—as Nick puts it: “Doing things that guys like to do.”

On many Thursday evenings during the summer, Jesse takes Nick to Hebert’s Candy Mansion Cruise Night. Jesse will typically display his car while he and Nick spend time looking at the other vehicles and using the opportunity to bond over a common interest.

Last summer, when Nick found out Jesse was going to sell his BMW Convertible, he composed a list of reasons that his Big Brother should not sell the car. “I tried to explain to Nick that I wanted to pay off my student loans and buy a house,” said Jesse. Nick countered that explanation from Jesse with another list.

“I just think he’s a great kid, we get along really well,” said Jesse. Because of their friendship, Nick has more



confidence that there are multiple people in his life that he can count on.

When the two approached the one year anniversary of their match, Nick was afraid Jesse would leave him because Jesse had fulfilled the minimum commitment he made to be a Big Brother. Jesse assured Nick that that’s not the case—they will be brothers for a very long time.

6

Melissa and Mariah



Since November 2007, [Melissa Kuhn](#) has been matched with her Little Sister [Mariah](#). Melissa, a current senior at WPI and captain of the Women’s Basketball Team, visits 11-year-old Mariah each week at Elm Park Elementary School in Worcester.

Mariah, who has always taken an interest and enjoyed playing basketball, has seen her game improve with some help from Melissa. “I want to get Mariah in an organized league,” said Melissa. “She has a lot of great leadership qualities and I think she would do great!”

One of their favorite moments was when Mariah was able to attend one of her Big Sister’s basketball games. Mariah made a shirt which had Melissa’s name and number on the back, cheered her on from the stands

and spent time in the locker room post-game with the whole team.

As a match, the two have also been able to attend Mentoring Night at Fenway Park and A Taste of Something BIG—an event held by Big Brothers Big Sisters each May.

Over the past few years, Melissa has seen Mariah, now in the sixth grade, gain a lot of confidence in who she is. “Seeing her grow—she really has become her own, individual, person. She’s not a follower; she’s comfortable doing her own thing.” Mariah’s motivation toward schoolwork has also improved. “When we first started spending time together, a lot of the time we just did homework,” explained Melissa. “Now, Mariah has it done before I come so we can do other things together. I don’t even have to ask her about it, I trust her.”

Mariah sums up their relationship: “In the beginning, I was shy and Melissa was outgoing. Now we are more equal, and more like real sisters.”

The 2010 Deranian Award

Each January, Big Brothers Big Sisters presents the Dr. H. Martin Deranian Fellowship Award, named in honor of Dr. H. Martin Deranian, a Shrewsbury resident who has been a Big Brother for over 40 years. The award is given to an individual mentor or group of mentors who go above and beyond the expectations set by the agency and have made a long-term commitment.

The 2010 Deranian Award was presented to Unum, Big Brothers Big Sisters first corporate partner. Through its demonstrated community involvement, the company believes in a meaningful experience for their employees. For the past eight years, employees have mentored children from Elm Park Elementary School, with most of the matches eventually converting from site-based to community-based.

In addition to being matched as Bigs, several Unum employees participate in the Rodman Ride for Kids to raise money for Big Brothers Big Sisters. The company provides additional financial support to the agency and also encourages employees to serve as both Board members and to volunteer at various Big Brothers Big

Sisters events throughout the year. Little Brothers and Sisters are consistently included in "Take Your Child to Work Day," and Unum serves as a reference point for other companies interested in establishing a school-based mentoring program.

In November, 2010, we were sad to hear of the passing of **Colleen O'Brien**, Vice President of the Big Brothers Big Sisters Board of Directors and a dear friend of the agency. Colleen was extremely committed to volunteering and bettering the Worcester Community, spending much of her time working with a variety of non-profits throughout the area — and encouraging her co-workers at Unum to become equally involved.

Colleen was matched with her Little Sister, **Kayla**, since 2003, first as a school-based match and eventually converting to community-based. Serving on the Big Brothers Big Sisters Board since January 2006, Colleen had a very important voice within the agency; a passionate advocate for less-fortunate children, Colleen's beliefs and dedication to serving others will remain a driving force for many years to come.



Colleen O'Brien and her Little Sister Kayla at Unum's "Take Your Little to Work Day".

A Decade of Connections



Big Brothers Big Sisters Celebrates a 10-year Partnership with Holy Cross College

Ten years ago, Holy Cross became Big Brothers Big Sisters first community partner with the creation of John's Brothers.

The concept of John's Brothers was created by then Holy Cross Lacrosse Coach, Mike McCaffrey. The program was dedicated to the memory of John Price, a former Holy Cross lacrosse stand-out who passed away during his junior year in 2000. After John's passing, McCaffrey reached out to Big Brothers Big Sisters Executive Director, Ben Ticho, with the idea of creating a mentoring program in John's memory. John was always interested in helping those that were less fortunate. Ticho, a Holy Cross alum himself, thought highly of the idea, and the wheels were set in motion.

Since then, each member of the Holy Cross Lacrosse Team has been matched one-on-one with a local student from the Canterbury Street School in Worcester between the ages of 6–13. One afternoon per week, the team members travel to the school to meet with their Little Brothers — where they play board games, help with homework, and discuss life — things that traditional siblings do.

For the past seven years, members of the Lacrosse Team have also participated in the Rodman Ride for Kids, raising money to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters. In the last three years alone, the Team has raised over \$25,000.

Today, the Big Brothers Big Sisters connection with Holy Cross is stronger than ever. In the last 12 months, over 300 students have been matched with a Little Brother or Sister. Participating groups include: Men's Baseball, Cheerleading, Women's Field Hockey, Men's Football, Men's & Women's Golf, Men's Lacrosse, Women's Soccer, Women's Track & Field and Women's Volleyball.

In addition to the athletic teams that participate, over 120 matches have Bigs who are part of the SPUD program at Holy Cross — Student Projects for Urban Development.

Members of SPUD are matched with their Littles at various schools and community venues throughout Worcester, including Canterbury Street School, Quinsigamond Elementary School and the Main South Boys & Girls Club. With over 40 percent of students at Holy Cross being involved with SPUD, it is no wonder that such a significant number of the Holy Cross matches come from this program. The college has been very supportive of the partnership, providing the Big Brothers Big Sisters/SPUD program with four work-study students who act as Site Coordinators and also a 15 passenger van to use for transportation to and from programs.

Big Brothers and Big Sisters from the college continue to make a difference in the lives of children, embodying the mission of Holy Cross to be “men and women for others.” As we celebrate 10 years of working with Holy Cross, we look forward to what the next decade shall bring!

8

Derek and Scott

Derek Towle was matched with his Little Brother, Scott, in January 2001, during the first year of the John's Brothers program. Scott was in the third grade at the time, while Derek was a sophomore in college.

In his younger years, Scott admits his academics were questionable. “I didn't pay attention in school... Derek was always on me asking how my grades were. If I didn't behave, he found out.” Having an additional person that was invested in his performance in school helped Scott academically, and it also helped him socially. “I wasn't outgoing, but Derek was, and I wanted to be like him,” said Scott. By the time high school rolled around, Scott's grades improved, he was Treasurer of his class and President of the Student Council.

It was important to both Scott and Derek to stay in touch during the summer breaks and remain in touch beyond Derek's

graduation from Holy Cross. “One summer, he invited me to a cookout at his family's house. I met his mom and extended family, a whole group of his relatives,” Derek explained. It was through these outings that Scott felt their friendship genuinely grow. “I kind of liked inviting him places, and he was willing to go to them. We went to a couple of Red Sox games, spent time around birthdays and holidays together. I felt a connection, and I felt that he would be there for me if I needed him.”





As they approach the 10-year anniversary of being matched as Brothers, Derek and Scott still make it a point to talk and see each other. “We talk as often as we both can, we call each other randomly and try to get together around the holidays,” said Scott, who is now a freshman at Fitchburg State University.

As is the case with many matches made throughout the years, the Littles often have just as large of an impact on their Bigs as the Bigs do on the Littles. “I learned a lot about the value of friendship, which I never would have learned had it not been for the program... I hope I’ve been as good of a friend to him as he has been to me,” said Derek. Derek also spoke of the connection with Holy Cross and Big

Brothers Big Sisters: “I have to say, I was utterly impressed with how much it’s grown, with all the groups that do it now. It’s amazing, and I’m proud to say I’ve been there since the start. It’s easy to get stuck in your own world — to make time for a program like this is remarkable.”





Supporting Connections

Big Brothers Big Sisters 2010 Contributors

On behalf of the children we serve, we would like to thank all of the individuals, families, businesses and corporations, and foundations for their investments in our mentoring programs. Through this important financial and in-kind support, we are able to reach those who need us most. This list reflects donations received between October 1, 2009, and September 30, 2010. We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list.*

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(\$100,000+)

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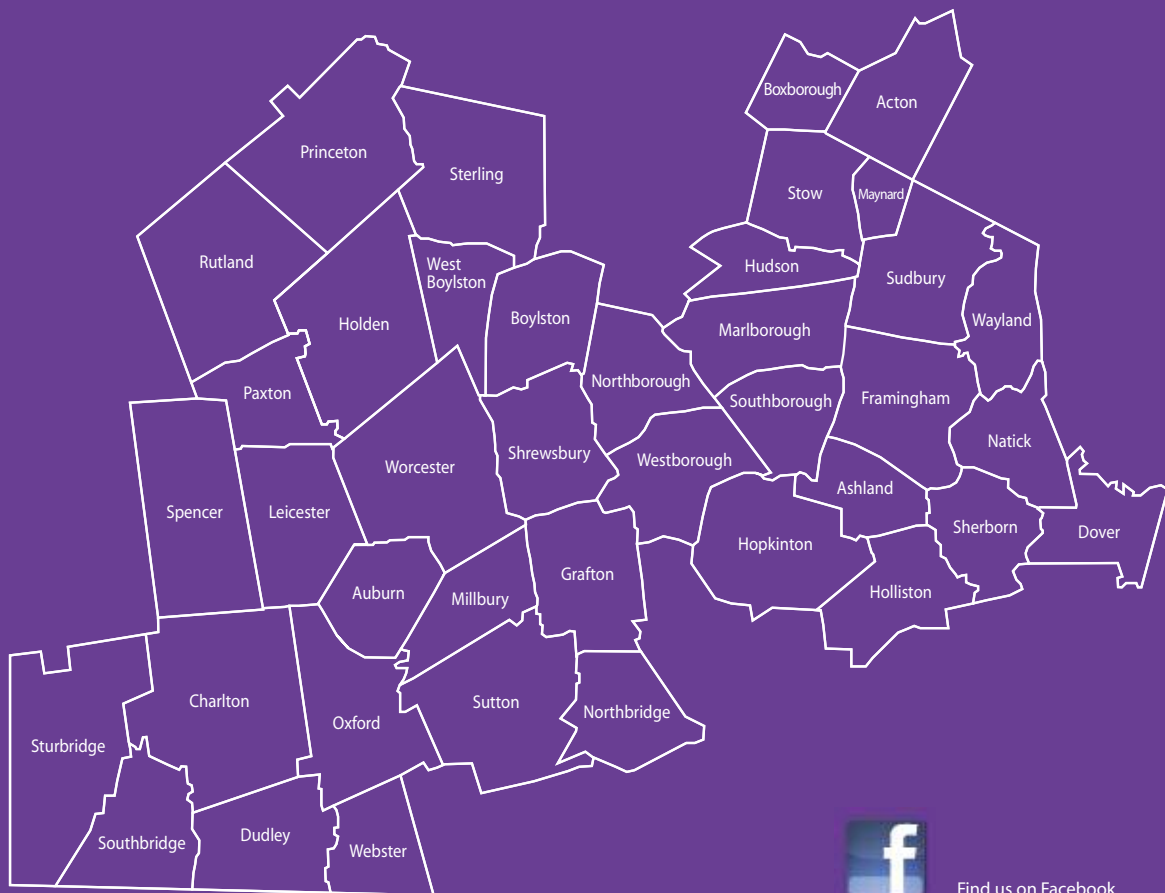




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