

CC Joining Bigs & Littles changed my life! I met Ben. He is one special person. He never gave up on me. I was not an easy kid to get along with, Ben never stopped trying. He made my life better and pushed me to want more. I got accepted into five colleges because of him and your organization. They made me see anything is possible when you believe in yourself. — Ngel, Little Brother

# When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.

- Viktor Frankl

Dear Friends,

As the city emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, seemingly a picture of prosperity, with restaurants bustling, subways running and packed beaches - for many - those who were struggling well before the pandemic, recovery will take time.

2020 will go down as one of the most challenging years in global history, but for Bigs & Littles NYC, it reflects a time of unity, grit and resilience - where amidst the tragedy came incredible generosity from so many. We were fortunate for our Big Sisters and Big Brothers who remained closely tied to their Littles, our committed staff, who often put the needs of our families before their own and our donors and our Board - who shared both their time and treasure, generously.

Together we brought peace and security to the families and children we serve, ensuring their rent was paid, their bills were covered, they had food on the table and that every child had a working device for school, but most of all, that they weren't alone. While the world quickly lost sight of human connections and meaningful relationships, Bigs and Littles NYC doubled down on our mission of building safe and critical bonds between children, who were more isolated than ever, and consistent, caring, adult mentors.

We adapted to a virtual model, knowing that in the long term there is no comparison to connecting face to face, but we pivoted to meet the existing need. We learned that our staff are relentless in their commitment to our community and that our donors are steadfast in their support. We also learned that as an organization, we can withstand setbacks and emerge, in many ways stronger — and more prepared for the next crisis. Credit goes to our entire network of volunteers, friends and supporters.

Because of you, we remain optimistic for a better year ahead.

Sincerely,

Blanche Johnson, LMSW

Board President

Vidhya R. Kelly, LMSW CEO / Executive Director

# Thank you Blanche Johnson and Welcome Andrew Bogart!

A licensed, certified social worker and tireless advocate for children and families in New York City for over three decades, Blanche Johnson joined our Board of Trustees in 2010 and is now ending her tenure as Board President after over two years of dedicated service.

We thank Blanche for her incredible contributions to our mission, including her generosity, mentorship, warm leadership, and insightful stewardship during periods of growth, uncertainty and innovation.

Together we expanded our Board of Trustees and Executive Junior Board, garnered support from new foundations and major donors, continued to diversify funding streams and in 2020, weathered the storm of COVID-19.

Thank you, Blanche, for your steadfast partnership.





We are excited to announce that Andrew Bogart has been nominated to the post of Board President effective November 1, 2021. Andrew joined our Board of Trustees in 2013 and has been Chair of our Finance Committee, working closely with staff to ensure financial solvency and responsible budgetary oversight.

Andrew has generously supported the staff's vision over the years, working side by side to move our mission forward, providing critical support as a donor and thought partner. We are thrilled to welcome him as President of our Board of Trustees. A Portfolio Manager at MetaView Group, a platform company of Millennium Management, LLC., Andrew's experience in the financial sector is highlighted by his previously held positions at Capstone Investment Advisors, Diamondback Capital, LLC and Nomura Securities International, Inc. Mr. Bogart received a BS from Providence College in 1998 with a concentration in business management and finance, and during that time was a Big Brother through The Feinstein Institute for Public Service. He currently lives in Brooklyn with his wife Elsa and their daughters Cleo and Stevie.

We believe that the foundation that Blanche has built as Board President for Bigs & Littles NYC in recent years will provide a firm platform upon which Andrew can help us grow and evolve in the coming years.

# Mission

Founded in 1902, Bigs & Littles NYC Mentoring strives to transform the lives of children through one-to-one mentoring, while strengthening entire families in hardship.

# Vision

A city in which all young people are empowered to recognize, reach for and achieve their full potential.

# Demographics







In 2020, Bigs & Littles NYC Mentoring served **705** children and family members, including nearly **200** in one-to-one matches. Volunteer mentors contributed approximately **18,048** hours towards fulfilling our mission.

# Your Investment Impact



100% of our Littles graduated high school



100% of these youth went on to college or vocational training



100% of our Littles avoided derailing behaviors



**87%** of our Littles showed increased self-confidence



**97%** of our parents increased self-efficacy

## Community-Based Mentoring

When 14-year-old David joined Bigs & Littles NYC in Summer of 2017 he was shy, introverted and more than a little anxious about all the new situations he would be facing as a freshman at Brooklyn Technical High School. A firstgeneration Chinese-American living in Sunset Park with his mom, dad and four older brothers, David's interests included sports, video games, computers and comic books. His Program Manager Ana knew that she had the perfect Big Brother match for David — 28-year-old Juhyun had moved here from Korea at age 15, and could offer a mentee the benefit of first-hand experience as an immigrant adjusting to high school in the United States. Empathetic, driven and ambitious, Juhyun was working as a Manager at Verizon Wireless while also looking to go back to school. Since then, Juhyun has acquired an MSW from Columbia School of Social Work and has decided to rejoin the US Army as he was a member of the Army



Reserves before. Recent spikes in anti-Asian bias across the country have made Juhyun feel he has to be more cautious and alert, especially when he's traveling outside his neighborhood. Through all these transitions, Juhyun made the time to be a consistent source of support, encouragement and inspiration for David, continually introducing him to experiences outside of his comfort zone. Juhyun shared that he always wished he had a younger sibling, and he's enjoyed developing a similar caring relationship for David, to whom he has tried to pass along life lessons and advice.

Bonding over many meals and visits to places like the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Brooklyn Bridge Park, Juhyun was impressed by how open David has become to trying and critiquing new foods. Juhyun motivated David to build on this confidence and become more comfortable sharing his opinions, helping him participate more vocally at school. David became one of the agency's youth Program Leaders and worked part-time after school at the organization for close to two years, further developing his social skills and his ability to represent our program. David and his mom also came to several agency events, in particular our College Access and Career Exposure workshops. Juhyun, who is now going through officer training in advance of a deployment to the Middle East next year, has been an incredible role-model, remaining in frequent communication with David during the pandemic. In the fall, he stepped in to help David with his college applications, making sure David completed them on time and maintained his grades.

According to David, "Juhyun has helped me understand a lot of new things, I appreciate having his perspective and him encouraging me to do more." Thanks to this support, David looks forward to beginning at John Jay College this fall and is amongst our first cohort of Ingrid Kelly Memorial Scholarship recipients. While their match will formally come to a close soon, David knows he has the support of a true friend and role-model in Juhyun for many years to come.

## Mentoring Moms & Dads Program

Research shows that children are only as healthy as their families. At Bigs & Littles NYC, supporting our parents in setting and working toward their own goals is critical to empowering them toward positive mental health and success for them and their children. Our Mentoring Moms and Dads Program is the only one of its kind nationwide, offering single parents their own mentors simultaneously to their children being matched, providing an extra layer of support to help parents cope with day-to-day anxieties and stressors, bolstering resiliency through emotional support and targeted assistance in achieving life goals. For Julia, this came in the form of her carefully chosen mentor, Susan, in May of 2019.

From the moment Julia met Susan, they connected easily, sharing stories about their daughters, both teenagers going through similar situations. Julia, has a 15-year-old daughter, Madyson, who she lives with in East Harlem and who has been matched with Bigs & Littles for several years, while Susan has two daughters, age 17 and the other in her late 20's. For Julia,



being the best mom possible for Madyson meant persisting towards her dreams of completing her GED, growing her home business selling baked goods, and managing a healthier lifestyle in response to her recent diagnosis of diabetes. Susan, a Case Manager who holds a Master's degree in Human Services, has experience as a career coach, wellness advocate and leadership coach, recently took her learnings from caring for her elderly mother to launch a new business that offers support for individuals suffering from memory loss.

## Volunteer

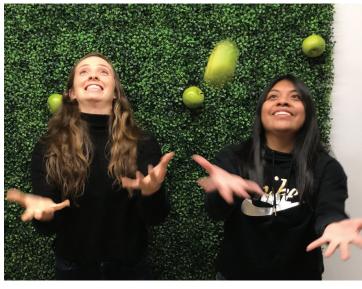
Volunteer mentors ages 21 and older provide guidance and support to a young person aged 7 to 19, spending 8 hours a month together for one year and introducing a child/teen to new ideas, activities and interests. Bigs & Littles NYC's mentors report that they gain much more than anticipated from the experience of giving back and strengthening our community.

Become a Mentor Today

Visit https://bigslittlesnyc.org/volunteer

## World of Work Program (W.O.W.)

Now in its fourth year of partnership with the Academy for Software Engineering (AFSE), our pioneer corporate partner Good Apple has remained steadfast in their dedication to providing invaluable opportunities for youth right in their community. Students gain exposure to the workplace while developing vital 21st century skills - communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. Matched in our site-based, one-to-one, group mentoring program since January of 2020, Big Sisters like Cennedi, a media planner in her mid-20s who grew up in Florida and went to college in Vancouver, have empowered and inspired Little Sisters like Nathaly, a 17-year-old Ecuadorian-American Junior at AFSE. Nathaly has become a more confident public speaker, expanded the scope of career options she is interested in beyond robotics and engineering, and is thinking critically about overcoming racial bias in our community. For Nathaly, W.O.W. has become a welcome break from the stressors of her school week, and she looks forward to seeing her mentor and everyone in the group, with whom she has developed supportive friendships that only



got stronger through the challenges of the pandemic. According to Cennedi, "When I joined Good Apple and heard about the W.O.W. Program, I immediately knew it was something I wanted to get involved in. It's an amazing way to interact with both the students and my co-workers through fun, informative, and engaging activities. It's been especially rewarding to witness the amount of growth my Little has achieved in just over a year. I'm looking forward to continuing my involvement in upcoming years!" Thank you to founder Al Muzaurieta, his wife Annie and their family for being a role model for other corporations to help inspire the next generation of leaders in NYC.

## Start a W.G.W. Program

Is your company ready to boost employee engagement, build comradery and promote volunteerism? We invite corporate employees to be a part of our World of Work Mentoring program, where local High School students are matched one-to-one with mentors from our corporate partners and meet twice a month in a group, on a weekday afternoon at the company. The curriculum focuses on workplace exposure and career preparation, and culminates in a targeted group project. With all aspects of the program taken care of on-site, companies and their employees have the opportunity to strengthen the community they work in, see meaningful outcomes, develop their leadership skills and enjoy the boost from having future leaders in the office and guiding them towards success.

### Contact Vidhya Kelly at vkelly@bigslittlesnyc.org

## Navigating Forward Through Unchartered Waters

Due to COVID-19, eleven million individuals nationally lost their homes, 45 million are food insecure, and one third of households are unable to pay their bills. But amidst the tragedy came incredible generosity. Together we brought peace and security to the families and children we serve, ensuring rent was paid and they could remain in their homes, bills were covered and there was food to eat, every child had a working device for school and most of all, knew they weren't alone in their struggles.

Our dedicated Bigs stepped in as caring adult role models when their Littles were more isolated than ever. We quickly adapted to a virtual model and expanded programming to address emerging needs with the launch of the Caring Through COVID program for children coping with loss of a parent or family member from COVID as well as to address rising hate crimes toward Asian Americans.

Thank you for supporting our children and families in every way, and especially through our COVID-19 Emergency Fund.

Special thanks to the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation for critical support through their COVID-19 Emergency Relief Grant.



# Thank you to Frances Sykes and the PASCALE SYKES FOUNDATION

Since 2015, the Pascale Sykes Foundation has walked hand-in-hand with the agency as we implemented the Whole Family Approach to our mentoring and family strengthening programs, allowing us to expand and deepen our services to Hispanic children and families. At every step of the way, Fran and the Foundation have been invaluable thought partners, offering countless resources including professional development opportunities for staff, technical assistance, marketing and branding resources, and most recently, a timely COVID-19 Emergency Technology Grant. As the Foundation looks to sunset and our six-year partnership comes to a close, we salute Fran and her team for their tireless dedication to empowering and uplifting families in need, and for their enduring efforts to raise standards of service across the industry.



Bigs & Littles' whole family approach to mentorship exemplifies the impact positive relationships have on youth and adults alike. Their expertise, creativity and genuine commitment to New York City families make them an incredible asset to the community and a role model for others.

— Frances Syles, President, Pascale Sykes Foundation

### Thank you to everyone who donated to our COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Children and Families.

As parents lost employment, and children were kept home from school, our Emergency Fund provided critical assistance to our constituents. We raised over \$100,000 from existing and new donors, and thus far distributed close to \$80,000 to help struggling families with groceries, bills, rent, household items and electronic devices.

# We are especially grateful to new partners Michael and Charmaine Clark from The Change Reaction

who recognize that it is imperative for all members of a community to step forward and take care of one another.

Mike, Partner and Co-founder of GHC companies, along with his wife Charmaine and their children - Josephine, 5 and Bodhi, 2, live in New York City and generously extended their hearts across the city to their neighbors the moment they heard that other families were struggling.

During the holidays, the Clarks put smiles on so many of our Littles' faces and soon after went on to fill critical gaps for our families who were facing devastating setbacks at the height of the pandemic.

As the city comes back, our families, too, are slowly recovering. Thank you Mike and Charmaine for your never ending support.



Together with other sponsors of our COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Children and Families, contributions supported:

55 computer devices for remote school

**138** grocery orders

**56** orders for household supplies

45 household bills (including rent, electricity and cell phone bills)

## Ingrid Kelly Memorial Scholarship Fund

Ingrid Rosa Kelly was born in Germany, was a survivor of World War II and immigrated alone to the United States at the age of 21 with \$50 in her pocket. Like many others, Ingrid came to this country with dreams that appeared impossible, but using her signature will, grit, passion and faith, Ingrid made all of them come true. From humble beginnings, Ingrid and the love of her life, Jack Kelly, built a wonderful life for their family in Pottersville, New Jersey and always shared their good fortune with others. In keeping with Ingrid's legacy, The Ingrid Kelly Memorial Scholarship Fund, established in her honor by her family (Jack, Rob, Vidhya, Jaya, Lekh, Shail, John, Jen, Emma, Avery, Brigid) after Ingrid's passing in December 2020, supports the many Little Brothers and Little Sisters at Bigs & Littles NYC Mentoring who are first generation college students in need of assistance to pursue higher education including vocational schools. The Fund supports college tuition assistance, living expenses, books and meals for students who demonstrate academic achievement, leadership qualities, and a commitment to service in school, at home or in their community.



























2021 Recipients: Tia, Janyah, Kenya, David, Noel, Ansh (last names withheld for privacy purposes)

## To Make a Contribution

to the Scholarship Fund **visit bigslittlesnyc.org/donate** and list **Ingrid Kelly Memorial Scholarship** as the dedication.



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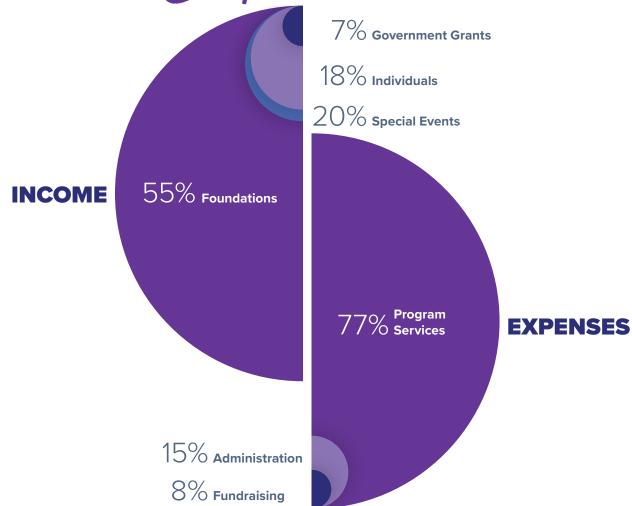
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### **2020 ANNUAL BUDGET: \$1.19**M

Thanks to annual donations from our Board of Trustees, 100% of every dollar raised goes to directly supporting our programs.

To make a contribution, visit bigslittlesnyc.org/donate

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A mentor is not someone who walks ahead of you to show you how they did it. A mentor walks alongside you to show you what you can do.

— Anonymous

