

THE BRONX CELEBRATES NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH WITH NATION'S FIRST MENTORING ORGANIZATION

Elected officials joined the community and Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC to honor 'Bronx Male and Female Matches of the Year' for remarkable impact

BRONX, NEW YORK, January 10, 2017 – The Bronx community joined Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City (BBBS of NYC) at The Bronx Museum of the Arts for a special ceremony to celebrate the 2016 'Bronx Male and Female Matches of the Year', as part of National Mentoring Month.

National Mentoring Month also marks the launch of BBBS of NYC's 2017 citywide mentor recruitment campaign to identify caring adult role models for thousands of at-risk youth, with the continuous expansion of its efforts in the outer boroughs.

Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene, Council Member Vanessa Gibson and representatives from the Bronx community joined BBBS of NYC to honor the 2016 'Bronx Male Match of the Year', Big Brother Clifford Davis and Little Brother Justin, and the 2016 'Bronx Female Match of the Year', Big Sister Cristy Gonzalez and Little Sister Jillian, for the profound impact they have had on one another.

Clifford is a 25-year-old Bronx resident, who has been matched with fellow Bronx native, 11-year-old Justin for the last year. Since the beginning of their mentoring relationship, Clifford has influenced Justin to be a more self-confident, insightful and optimistic individual. Together, they have explored new places across the city, tried different cuisines and have developed a better awareness of various cultures and traditions.

Cristy is also a 25-year-old Bronx resident and has been matched with her Little, 11-year-old Jillian, since 2014. The match has developed a tradition of walking Jillian's dog in her neighborhood park, where the two discuss everyday life, developing a close bond over the course of these walks.

"The unique and special relationships that our matches in the Bronx have formed are a true representation of what the Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC program is all about," said Hector Batista, chief executive officer of BBBS of NYC. "Clifford and Cristy have helped provide Justin and Jillian with the tools they need to succeed and thrive academically, in life and in the Bronx community. These matches demonstrate what it means to be a stand-out resident in this borough."

Throughout the month, BBBS of NYC will hold a series of ceremonies with public officials, community organizations and current Big Brothers and Sisters in Brooklyn, Staten Island, Manhattan and Queens, as part of the organization's continued expansion in the boroughs. During each ceremony, BBBS of NYC will honor 'Borough Matches of the Year,' to recognize Bigs and Littles who have made tremendous strides and developed strong, lasting bonds.

By the end of 2017, BBBS of NYC hopes to have paired hundreds more children that are currently awaiting a match with caring adult role models, or "Bigs." The nation's first and New York's largest youth mentoring organization, Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC currently serves more than 5,200 young people each year through a variety of specialized mentoring programs.

Mentoring is open to adults 21 or older who reside in the five boroughs, and it is free to volunteer. To become a volunteer mentor, donate, or learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC and National Mentoring Month, please visit <http://www.bigsnyc.org/>.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City

Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC (BBBS of NYC), the nation's oldest and NYC's largest youth mentoring organization, has served the changing needs of New York City's most at-risk youth since 1904. The volunteer- and donor-based organization offers a variety of specialized mentoring programs to help children facing more complex challenges – including immigrant youth, children of incarcerated parents and those in foster care – as well as the Workplace Mentoring Program, which helps businesses throughout New York City positively

impact the lives of young people and build a foundation for professional success. Additionally, since 1992 BBBS of NYC has worked through its Center for Training and Professional Development to equip non-profit professionals throughout New York City to develop and enhance their own mentor-based programs and organizations.

Through the support of individuals, foundations and corporations, this not-for-profit agency has been able to change the lives of the city's most disadvantaged children, matching them with caring adult role models – dependable friends who can help to expand their horizons, realize their potential and enrich their futures. To learn more, become a mentor and/or offer support, please visit www.bigsnyc.org.