

NEWS

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BROOKLYN CELEBRATES NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH WITH NATION'S FIRST MENTORING ORGANIZATION

Elected officials joined Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC for open house ceremony at Good Shepherd Services; Honored 'Brooklyn Big of the Year' for remarkable service

NEW YORK, January 25, 2016 – Elected officials today joined Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City (BBBS of NYC) for a special open house at Good Shepherd Services as part of National Mentoring Month, celebrating the organization's impact in Brooklyn and honoring the 2015 'Brooklyn Big of the Year' for his extraordinary commitment to his "Little."

For BBBS of NYC, this year's National Mentoring Month also marks the launch of its 2016 citywide campaign to recruit more volunteer mentors in Brooklyn and throughout the boroughs.

Brooklyn Deputy Borough President Diana Reyna, Council Member Mathieu Eugene, and Mike Stinson, Chief of Staff at New York State Assembly (Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon), joined BBBS of NYC to honor Big Brother Michael Bufano for serving as an incredible role model to his Little Brother, 10-year-old Devin from Brooklyn. Michael incorporates education, healthy eating and community service into many of their match outings, and the two especially enjoy volunteering to make bird houses at a community park and visiting museums throughout the city. During their four years together as a match, Michael has helped Devin learn to become self-aware when handling negative emotions and to express his feelings in mature and effective ways. In addition to mentoring, Michael is also extremely dedicated to furthering BBBS of NYC's mission and has spoken on behalf of the organization during a recruitment initiative in Brooklyn.

"Michael is a remarkable example of what it means to be a mentor, and as a long-time Brooklynite I am proud to see men and women like him stepping up as mentors to young people," said Hector Batista, chief executive officer of BBBS of NYC. "I am grateful for the tremendous support of the Brooklyn community, and as our organization continues to expand our services in this borough, I know that together we can ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed."

Throughout the month, BBBS of NYC will bring together public officials, community organizations, schools and current Big Brothers and Sisters for a series of ceremonies in Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and the Bronx, celebrating the organization's continued expansion in the boroughs. During each ceremony, BBBS of NYC will honor 'Borough Bigs of the Year,' recognizing mentors for their unwavering dedication to their Littles.

A highlight of National Mentoring Month was the highly anticipated Tournament of Champions Pong on Thursday, January 14th at Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall. Now in its eighth year, the annual table tennis tournament helped raise funds to benefit BBBS of NYC's youth mentoring programs.

By the end of 2016, 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 5,000 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/>.

Businesses interested in joining the more than 45 corporations that already have Workplace Mentoring Programs can also email wmc@bigsnyc.org.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City

Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC (BBBS of NYC), the nation's first 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, teen mothers and children of incarcerated parents – as well as the Workplace Mentoring Center, 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 mentoring and youth-development 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.

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