



NEWS

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Contact: Tom Corsillo
The Marino Organization
212.889.0808
Tom@themarino.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC Honors Volunteers for Making a Difference in the Lives of the City's Youth

The nation's first mentoring organization celebrates 'Bigs' with awards ceremony

NEW YORK, March 31, 2015 – [Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City](#) (BBBS of NYC) tonight hosted its Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at the Hard Rock Café in Times Square, where 'Bigs' were honored for their remarkable dedication to serving as positive role models and making a difference in the lives of young people across New York City.

Tonight's ceremony is part of a year-long campaign by BBBS of NYC to highlight the impact of mentoring and raise awareness of the urgent need for volunteers.

"Our mentors make such a tremendous impact on the lives of the young people we serve, empowering them to dream big and reach their full potential in life," said Hector Batista, chief executive officer of BBBS of NYC. "Thanks to our Bigs, children across New York City have positive role models to guide them through life's challenges. I am so grateful for the dedication and passion of all our volunteers, and I encourage others to help us continue our mission of providing mentors to the thousands of boys and girls each year who need them the most."

Awards presented throughout the evening included: *Little Moments Big Steps*, *Going the Extra Mile*, *Big Champion*, *Rookie of the Year*, *Hall of Fame*, *WMC Corporate Big of the Year*, and *Most Valuable Mentor*.

- *Little Moments Big Steps* was awarded to Brian Washington (Building Futures Program), Robin Chiu (New American Program) and Alan Campbell (JJMP Prevention Program), for their extraordinary work in helping their Littles develop self-confidence, engage in new experiences, make smart decisions, and set personal and academic goals.
- *Going the Extra Mile* was awarded to Fernando Luciano (New American Program), Layla Rafael (Bronx Program), Meghan DeSimone (Community Impact), Jeffrey Kari (MCP), and John Hurring (Bronx Program), for the instrumental role they played in their Littles' academic improvements.
- *Big Champion* honored Kendra Chiu (New American Program), Sara Phillips (Workplace – Pfizer), and Osterman Perez (MCP), for their tremendous contributions to BBBS of NYC fundraising events, including the organization's annual Race for the Kids.

- *Rookie of the Year* was awarded to the Bigs who were matched with their Littles for 6 – 18 months. Annie Jackson and Kyle Tucker (Traditional Program) were honored for successfully overcoming initial obstacles with their Littles and developing strong, lasting relationships.
- *Hall of Fame* honored Antonia Chong (Workplace – Deloitte) for serving as an outstanding mentor to her ‘Little’ for 20 years.
- *WMC Corporate Big of the Year* honored Laurie Lawrence (Workplace – CBS) for her commitment to attending programs, remaining in touch with her ‘Little’ during “off-hours,” and fully engaging in activities.
- *Most Valuable Mentor* was awarded to Jolanta Kordowski (Workplace – MetLife) for her years-long contributions to the organization, including mentoring five Littles, participating actively in fundraising, and appearing on both national TV (PBS) and in a short documentary film for the agency.

The year-long campaign brings together public officials, community organizations, schools and current Big Brothers and Sisters in a series of events intended to help find volunteer mentors, or “Bigs,” for the hundreds of young people currently awaiting a match. Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC currently serves more than 3,600 young people every year through a number 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, please log onto www.bigsnyc.org or call 212-686-2042.

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, children in foster care 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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