

Big Brothers Big Sisters Board Report January 2020

Participants:

- # of School Based Matches - 23 thus far. This will increase slightly in the next month.
- # of Community Based Matches - 55. Waiting List - 143
- # of Work Place Mentoring Matches - 3 thus far.

Program Highlights:

- Again, our community based program continues to do well. We are slowly but gradually adding new matches, we are taking in more bigs (mostly female) and we are receiving more inquiries on how to become involved.
- Our school-based match numbers are creeping up ever so slowly. Unfortunately, rather than having 10-15 high school bigs and 10-15 grade school littles meet in person each day of the week for program (different schools each day), COVID has pushed us into remote mentoring. For those bigs and littles who are lucky enough have the technology equipment to participate, mentor managers arrange days and times for them to meet on-line, mostly through zoom. This allows the mentor managers to oversee the time spent together and to monitor what it done and said between the big and little. Typically each zoom meeting lasts up to 30 minutes. Still, remote mentoring continues to be a tough sell. Many parents of students as well as the school liaisons have chosen to pause on BBBS until we return to in-person mentoring, stating that they don't want their kids to have to be on the computer any more than they are now for school. We also continue to be plagued with bigs and littles not having the technology pieces necessary to participate. Mentor managers schedule meetings with those who are involved but often one party or the other fails to sign on at the agreed upon day/time. Remote mentoring has been difficult for BBBS affiliates all across the country.
- Our site-based program through BNY Mellon has also encountered issues with remote mentoring. BNY employees have been working remotely ever since COVID hit. Even the program liaison there has not reported to the work place. As a result there is no effective method of recruiting BNY bigs without seeing them or having direct contact with them. BNY is selling their building in the coming months and the access to their employees and their facility is in flux at this time. Nonetheless, we do have a small handful of matches there that meet remotely (similar to school-based).
- Sara Faucher became our new Program Assistant here at BBBS as of January 4th. Sara comes from a wide background of human service experience, including time spent at the Food Bank.
- BBBS staff and our Advisory Council are planning a fund-raising golf event for summer 2021. Co-chairs Dan McGarvey and Andrew Barno have formed a committee that will be focusing on the details of the event in the coming months, including a date and location.
- We are currently in discussion with local YMCA officials in setting up an arrangement in which our bigs and littles will be able to utilize their facilities for activity time at no cost or reduced cost.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Board Report January 2020

Upcoming Events:

- Advisory Council Mtg. (remote) on Wednesday Feb 17th at 5:30 pm.

Success Story:

[syracuse.com](https://www.syracuse.com)

Big Brothers Big Sisters ‘sending’ local pairs to fill in the stands at Super Bowl

Charlie Miller, [syracuse.com](https://www.syracuse.com) 1 day ag

Syracuse, N.Y. — The coolest part about Elijah Bailey’s week was being able to tell his buddies at Le Moyne Elementary School that he’ll be in the stands at Sunday’s Super Bowl in Tampa, Florida.

Well, sort of.

A cardboard cutout of the 9-year-old fourth-grader will be seated somewhere in Raymond James Stadium when the Kansas City Chiefs play the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in Super Bowl LV. Eli will be seated next to Shaun Sample, his mentor in the local Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

“If it weren’t for Covid, he and I would be able to go to actual games together. But this makes me happy,” Eli said. “This is the next best thing. When Covid is over, we’ll be able to go to games and have more fun.”

Eli and Shaun are one of four Central New York Big Brother Big Sister groups whose photographic cutouts will be seated among the 25,000 actual fans allowed in the game. The others whose cutouts will sit above the action are: Tony Baird with Calvin Davis, Sarah Krasniak with Iridessa Homer, and Justin and Josie Latus with Max Liberty.

The NFL and the United Way Worldwide put the word out several weeks ago that they were looking to fill the stands at the Super Bowl with people who make a difference in their community. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, only 25,000 actual fans can attend the game in the stadium that would normally seat between 65,000 and 75,000 people.



Big Brothers Big Sisters Board Report January 2020

United Way Worldwide, meanwhile, reached out to Ray Manassa of the local chapter to suggest they get involved in the fans-in-the-stands initiative. He then called John Bruzdinski, the director of PEACE Inc.'s Big Brothers Big Sisters program, to see if they could get some of their "Bigs" photographed with their "Littles" and submit them to the NFL.

"As luck would have it, United Way's Director of NFL partnerships loved the idea," Manassa said. "These folks who help the kids are making such a difference in their lives and a difference in our community. They deserve the recognition."

Said Bruzdinski: "And imagine what the kids would think if they actually see themselves on TV at the Super Bowl."

He immediately reached out to some of the mentors and asked if they'd be interested.

Shaun Sample, a local pharmacist, jumped at the chance. Shaun has been Eli's "Big" since November. They get together once a week to have dinner, talk football and other sports, play board game or go bowling.

On Thursday night, Shaun picked Eli up at his mother's house and took him to Tully's on Seventh North Street for chicken tenders.

"Growing up, I didn't have a great upbringing. I went to a community center in Elmira, where a man took me under his wing," Shaun said. "He kept me on the straight and narrow. Without him, I wouldn't be where I am today. That's what I want to give to Eli."

They won't be able to watch the Super Bowl together because it's on a school night, and the game won't end until well after 10 p.m. But they'll be watching, trying to find themselves out in the stands.

"That would be so cool," Eli said. "Seeing us together at the Super Bowl would be awesome."

Big Brothers Big Sisters in Central New York has 140 children on the waiting list to get a mentor. If you're interested in volunteering six hours a month of your time, call 315-470-3369 or go to the website.