



SFY 2023 Big Brothers Big Sisters Direct Appropriation

Final Report

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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs Division

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As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately \$149 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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Introduction

The Minnesota State Legislature appropriated \$237,500 (\$250,000 minus \$12,500 for DEED administration) in [2021 Minnesota 1st Special Session Laws, Chapter 10, Senate File 9, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3 \(z\)](#) for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023 to Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities to provide work readiness, employment exploration, and skills development for youth ages 12 to 21 in the Twin Cities, central Minnesota and southern Minnesota.

Summary of Goals and Objectives Presented in the Work Plan

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS), the nation's largest mentoring program, matches youth facing adversity with mentors when they are between the ages of 8 and 12 and continues to support them until young adulthood. In addition to receiving tremendous benefits from forming positive relationships with their mentors, mentees are also able to participate in numerous enrichment activities hosted by BBBS to help youth (both mentees and youth mentors) plan for their education and career futures.

During SFY 2023, the BBBS agencies in the Twin Cities, Central Minnesota and Southern Minnesota had a goal to serve at least 1,200 youth through a variety of activities to prepare them for the future workforce:

- Mentoring that leverages caring adult volunteers to provide long-term, one-on-one mentoring for teens with an emphasis on high school and post-high school success;
- Career pathway exploration and readiness through one-on-one support, group activities in partnership with local businesses, and referrals;
- Post-high school college and training access and success through college/training tours, test prep, application support, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), access to scholarships, and on-going support during college and training/certificate programs; and
- Unique mentoring programs focused on future planning and career pathway success for high school students that are embedded in schools in partnership with BBBS, such as AVID in Southern Minnesota, the Graduation Coaches Program in partnership with Hope Community Academy in St. Paul, and Bigs on Campus in Central Minnesota through a partnership with St. Cloud State University.

Program Activities

Described below are highlights of activities delivered during the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

- **Bigs on Campus** – initiative pairing junior and senior high students with an adult mentor who is a St. Cloud State University alumnus, staff member, or community professional. Matches spend time exploring campus, touring academic departments, participating in college activities and events, and talking about future goals, career options, and college life. Most activities during the past year were moved online. (Central Minnesota)

- **Scholarship Opportunities** – Federated Challenge scholarship competition sponsored by Federated Insurance and administered by BBBS open to Littles/Alumni who have been matched for 18 months or longer and are planning to attend a two-year or less post-secondary Minnesota institution. This year 38 applicants received Federated scholarships. In addition, the Stand Tall Scholarship was available for BBBS youth and volunteers for four-year schools in or out-of-state. This was a pilot program this year made possible through the generosity of a donor.
- **Post-Secondary Success Coordinator** – meeting with BBBS alumni who are college students to assist with financial aid applications and other college-related topics. (Twin Cities)
- **AVID Matches** --BBBS had individual conversations with youth about college & career readiness. This included future planning, interest exploration, and answering questions about applying for college, resumes, interviews, and other college and career related topics. (Southern Minnesota)
- **Little Big Virtual Academy**-BBBS continues to be an educational and enriching resource for our youth & matches. It includes an extensive list of virtual and in-person college & career readiness activities - <https://www.bigdefenders.org/little-big-virtual-academy-3/>
- **One on one match support** – BBBS staff at all three Minnesota agencies continue to connect with all the youth and volunteers on a quarterly basis to share college, career and community resources. They provide coaching and support to help matches build strong relationships that will hopefully last well beyond a youth’s high school graduation.

Participant Data

The grant period for SFY 2023 funds ran from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The participant data for this period is below.

Demographic Data

| DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC | NUMBER SERVED |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Total Served | 1,888 |
| Male | 771 |
| Female | 1,091 |
| Trans/Other | 8 |
| Age 12-13 | 473 |
| Age 14-15 | 473 |
| Age 16-17 | 530 |
| Age 18-19 | 364 |
| Age 20-21 | 48 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 170 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 22 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 35 |

| DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC | NUMBER SERVED |
|---|---------------|
| Black/African American | 483 |
| White | 862 |
| Multi-racial | 258 |
| Other/Unreported Race | 58 |
| 8 th grade student or younger | 486 |
| 9 th -12 th grade student | 1,039 |
| High school graduate or equivalent | 193 |
| Post-secondary education student | 140 |
| Family qualified for free or reduced-price school lunch | 1,099 |

Program Services, Activities, and Other Related Assistance

| SERVICE PROVIDED | NUMBER SERVED |
|---|---------------|
| Education or Job Training Activities | 332 |
| Work Experience Activities | 5 |
| Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities | 1,888 |
| Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities | 1,888 |
| Mentoring Activities | 1,478 |

Customer Satisfaction

| CUSTOMER RATING | NUMBER SERVED |
|--|---------------|
| Program Experience "Excellent" | 135 |
| Program Experience "Very Good" | 114 |
| Program Experience "Average" | 40 |
| Program Experience "Below Average" | 3 |
| Program Experience "Poor" | 3 |
| Number of Participants Completing Customer Satisfaction Survey | 295 |

Program Outcome Measures

1. **Healthy youth development, focused on the social, emotional, and academic development of youth**
 - Percentage of participants who stay on track or improve their social acceptance and social competence – goal 75%, actual 90%
 - Percentage of participants who stay on track or improve grades and academic performance – goal 75%, actual 84%
 - Percentage of participants who stay on track or improve their educational expectations – goal 75%, actual 93%
 - Percentage of participants who report having an encouraging, caring adult in their lives – goal 75%, actual 95%

2. **High school graduation**
 - Percentage of high school seniors in a mentoring relationship at the beginning of senior year who will graduate – goal 80%, actual 85%

3. **Youth skills and knowledge related to career, training and college readiness**
 - Percentage of youth who report having an increased understanding of the careers presented at events – goal 75%, actual 82%
 - Percentage of youth who report having a stronger connection between their interests and future goals after attending events – goal 80%, actual 86%
 - Percentage of participants who report having a better understanding of the workshop event/topic – goal 80%, actual 82%

Expenditure Data

Expenditures from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 were as follows:

| Budget Category | Expenditures |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Administration (up to 10% allowed) | \$16,949.00 |
| Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits | \$0.00 |
| Direct Staff Services | \$220,551.00 |
| Support Services | \$0.00 |
| Total | \$237,500.00 |

Program Success Stories

Minnesota Big Sister of the Year:

Mariah was matched with Denise in June of 2011. Early in their match, their time together consisted of baking, entering items into the 4-H contest at the fair, going to dinner at new places, going to the library, attending plays, and their tradition of creating a new outfit each year for the annual BBBS Holiday Party. Denise showed Mariah what it was like to have someone that was going to show up and be there for her.

Since being matched with Denise, Mariah has found someone she can confide in and share her feelings with. As Mariah has gotten older, their time together has changed from doing things a 6-year-old is interested in, to teenage and young adult activities. Mariah and Denise continue with the tradition of attending the BBBS Holiday Party, but their time is more focused on their friendship and just being there for each other and talking. Denise took Mariah on her first college visit to Denise's Alma Mater, Winona State University. Mariah fell in love with the campus and has applied and been accepted. Mariah plans to attend school for social work, and Denise could not be prouder of her. As Mariah approaches the next chapter in her life, she knows the best friend she made at 6-years-old will always be there. Today, she is looking forward to starting college in the fall.

A Southern Minnesota Success story:

Little Sister and Big Sister were matched in 2020 when Little Sister was 11 years old. When she turned 12, she began participating in BBBS college and career readiness programming events. The match attends many of these events, and it has helped Little Sister decide that she would like to attend a four-year college after high school graduation. She is now in 10th grade and in addition to other community volunteerism, has also become a Big Sister herself in a high school SS match. Now, she has her own Little Sister and is loving the opportunity to mentor and give back to this child she was matched with. It has been very fun to see Little Sister come full circle from being a Little to now being both a Little and a Big.

Twin Cities Success story:

For the Twin Cities, a project highlight was our Alumni Social! This was something new we implemented for our Alumni caseload. We were able to check in on our Alumni Littles and get to know how they were doing. One Little that came out was a scholarship recipient and someone we have been in consistent communication with! They were someone who was struggling to choose a major and adjust to the college lifestyle- but it turns out they were having more fun! They learned many life lessons regarding paying bills, and how expensive school was, and they shared about how much they miss being in programming. It was nice to hear how this Alumni Little was doing after serving her for more than 6 years in BBBS!