

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters.**

OF METROPOLITAN  
CHICAGO

# A LETTER FROM BRIAN WRUBEL, BOARD CHAIR 2016 - 2023

As I look back on my past seven years of service as Board Chair, I am energized for the future and grateful for all of the incredible people that have helped to build up the BBBSChi village. Stepping into the role, we were on the cusp of developing Drive for 5, the Agency's strategic plan to serve 5,000 children. While we planned for many growing pains, new challenges and limitless opportunities, I don't think anyone expected for the world to go into lockdown - the ultimate challenge for an organization whose core mission is built around human connection.

BBBSChi never wavered from its commitment to the kids and families we serve. And with perseverance and endurance, we stayed true to the vision of Drive for 5 - with the pledge that we never have to say "no" to another parent who is looking for a mentor for their child.

**I want to express my deep gratitude to all the Bigs, Littles, families, staff, supporters and my fellow Board members who brought thoughtfulness, creativity and resilience to make these connections thrive.**

I remember one of my first BBBSChi meetings as Board Chair, where I met a new match who had just been paired together. You could already see a real connection between them, and that they were full of hope for what this experience could bring them. I got to see that same match graduate from the program after seven years together. They are just one example of thousands of life-changing relationships that have been formed during my time.

We've done a lot to lay the foundation for the next phase of the Drive for 5, and we know there is more to be done. That is why I am so glad that Rob Hallberg has agreed to serve as our next Board Chair. As a fellow Big and a long-time champion for the mission, Rob will no doubt help the agency and mission thrive in the days ahead.



Brian Wrubel  
BBBSChi Board Chair

**IMPACT UNDER  
BRIAN'S LEADERSHIP**

**6,638**

Mentoring  
Matches

**\$37,104,632**

Raised to  
Defend  
Potential



**IT ALWAYS FELT LIKE THERE WAS SOMEONE IN MY COURT I COULD RELY ON. I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO MY BIG DURING EVERY IMPORTANT DECISION IN MY LIFE AND HE HAS SHAPED ME INTO WHO I HAVE BECOME.”**

**Little Brother Joey, BBBSChi Class of 2023, Freshman at Babson College**

## **OUR MISSION**

Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

## **OUR VISION**

All youth achieve their full potential.



**80,000**

Hours Bigs  
Invested in  
Match Outings

**24,375**

Hours of  
BBBSChi  
Match Support



# BIG IMPACT

**1,402**

Life-Changing  
Mentoring  
Relationships

Youth,  
Volunteers &  
Families  
Impacted

**4,005**



**90%**

of Littles built and grew  
positive relations  
with peers



**93%**

of Littles maintained or  
improved their grades



**95%**

of high school senior Littles  
graduated with a plan for  
their future (2-4 year  
college/university, trades,  
military or job training)





## BBBSChi Opens Regional Offices Across Chicagoland

BBBSChi doubled down on its commitment to Chicagoland communities, opening 4 new regional offices to expand our reach in underserved neighborhoods: North Chicago, Merrillville, Auburn Gresham and Homewood. The office openings are a part of BBBSChi's Drive for 5 - a strategic regional expansion plan to provide 5,000 youth across Chicagoland with the lasting impact of a mentor.

We were able to open our doors in these regions thanks to foundational investments from community partners.

BBBSChi's Southland office is supported by federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the Cook County Department of Public Health. Additionally, funding has been provided in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services to support BBBSChi's Lake County Illinois expansion, including its North Chicago outreach office. Additionally, significant funding for our regional strategy was provided by Senator Durbin via the Federal Community Investment Funds and IL State Senator Javier Cervantes through a grant allocation from the Illinois Department of Human Services.



**AT BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS, WE KNOW THAT A CONSISTENT MENTOR IS THE KEY TO BUILDING RESILIENCE AND ENABLING A CHILD TO SUCCEED. MULTIPLY THAT BY THOUSANDS AND YOU HAVE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE. WITH NEW PHYSICAL LOCATIONS, WE KNOW WE CAN EFFECTIVELY REACH MORE BIGS AND FAMILIES AND BE THERE FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON WHO IS LOOKING FOR A MENTOR IN THEIR LIFE.”**

**Jeremy Foster, BBBSChi President & CEO**

# BIG EXPERIENCES

**In 2023, more matches took advantage of the Match Enrichment Fund (MEF) and Akesh Experience than ever before.**

MEF is designed to support enrichment activities for Bigs and Littles to enhance and strengthen their relationship, while the Akesh Experience funds unique lifetime experiences. Matches utilize these critical funds for anything from photography and writing workshops to college and career prep. Sometimes it's an opportunity they've always dreamed of!



Little Brother Emanuel and Big Brother Ritvik tapped into their creative side, exploring new art mediums, at Bicycle Spin Art workshops.



Big Sister Tochi has been able to support Little Sister Makinzie's dream to become a chef through cooking classes at Sur La Table.

“

**WHILE NONE OF US CAN PREVENT ALL THE TRAUMA THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCE, THERE ARE TWO PROVEN WAYS TO COUNTER IT. THE FIRST IS TO PUT A CARING, COMMITTED MENTOR IN A CHILD'S LIFE, AND THE SECOND IS THROUGH POSITIVE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES. BOTH ARE AT THE CORE OF THE BBBS MISSION.”**

**Annie Heitman, Vice President of Programs**



Big Sister Colleen helped Little Sister Ali celebrate her 14th birthday with a trip to Sneakerhead University, where they designed their own shoes and learned about running a creative business from a young entrepreneur.



Big Brother John took Little Brother Jacob on a day trip to his hometown of Cleveland, fulfilling a dream of Jacob's to plan a trip, fly for the first time and "know how it feels to see the world from the clouds!"

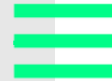




# BIG CELEBRATIONS

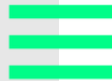
**BBBSChi's 2023 Events Brought in Over \$1,000,000 to Drive Our Growth**

## Tailgate Party



The BBBSChi Board of Directors hosted the 17th annual "un-gala gala" at Soldier Field, bringing in over 300 guests and raising over \$300,000. Top honors of the night went to the Matches of the Year!

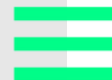
## Live Big



Women across Chicagoland including a youth development leader, healthcare CEO, biochemist, and president of a construction and manufacturing company gathered to speak with Bigs and Littles about networking, overcoming failure and navigating their personal and professional journeys.



## Graduation



We celebrated over 60 graduates and their families, recognizing their commitment to the mission and to each other. We heard from a panel of 8 Bigs and Littles who had each been matched over 8 years, awarded Brighter Futures Scholarships and surprised the 2023 Big of the Year Brian Kohout.



# MATCH OF THE YEAR

This year we were honored to award two Match of the Year recipients: Little Brother De'Andre and Big Brother Zac, matched 4 years, and Little Sister Jocelyn and Big Sister Haley, matched 6 years.



**I'VE LEARNED THAT I SHOULD TAKE MY FUTURE SERIOUSLY — THAT I COULD WANT MORE FOR MYSELF. HALEY ALWAYS PUSHED ME TO DO MY BEST AND THAT WAS ENOUGH FOR ME TO KEEP GOING. I WANT TO HELP YOUNG LATINO GIRLS LIKE MYSELF WHO DON'T SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE OF THEIR FUTURE AND WHAT LIFE HOLDS FOR THEM JUST LIKE HALEY DID. SHE BROUGHT EVERYTHING TO LIGHT FOR ME.”**

**Little Sister Jocelyn**



**WHEN MAKING DECISIONS, I CONSIDER WHAT MY BIG WOULD THINK. BRIAN HAS DIRECTLY IMPACTED MY CAREER TRAJECTORY AND HOW I HOPE TO LIVE MY LIFE.”**

**Little Brother Dillon**

# BIG OF THE YEAR

Big of the Year Brian Kohout says his relationship with Little Brother Dillon really started to change when “Dillon stopped asking me questions and I started asking him.” Over their 9 years together, Brian and Dillon have both challenged each other to be the best version of themselves. In June of 2023, Brian celebrated Dillon’s high school graduation alongside his mom, Bertha, and grandmother, who were instrumental in their transformational time together. Dillon is currently studying Mechanical Engineering at University of Illinois Chicago on a full-ride scholarship!

# BIG MOMENTS

“  
**TODAY WAS THE BEST  
DAY OF MY LIFE!**”

**Little Brother Alex**

Some of our most memorable moments from 2023 came from impactful activations driven by our generous partners.



## **WEST MONROE ENTREPRENEUR DAY**

A creative and innovative Day of Service at West Monroe brought together their consultants and BBBSChi high school Littles for a Shark Tank style business plan pitch. The Sharks - aka West Monroe leadership - were ready to invest!



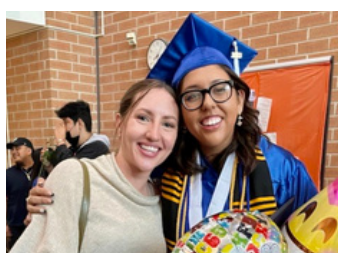
## **KPMG EMPOWER HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

KPMG hired five high school Littles this summer for a paid internship, exposing them to career opportunities in public accounting and professional services as they begin their academic and career journeys.



## **ACCENTURE BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

In honor of Black History Month, Accenture's African American and Black ERG partnered with BBBSChi for a day of recruitment events geared toward bringing in more Bigs of color culminating with a happy hour for all Accenture employees.



## **DELOITTE FOUNDATION YOUTH EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIPS**

With support from Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and the Deloitte Foundation, BBBSChi awarded four Littles the inaugural Youth Equity and Empowerment Scholarship, providing financial support and credentialing programs to support seniors' post-secondary endeavors in Business, Design, Economics, Engineering and Marketing.

# BIG MOMENTS



Macy's brought holiday cheer with once-in-a-lifetime experiences for Chicagoland Littles — from breakfast with Santa to shopping sprees, to lighting the Great Tree at Macy's State Street and even caroling in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade!



**THE ENTIRE MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE EXPERIENCE WAS NOTHING SHORT OF LIFE-CHANGING. THE REHEARSALS IGNITED A SPARK IN XAVIER, WHO NOW WANTS TO FOCUS ON MUSIC."**

**Mother to Little Brother Xavier**

# BIG SPORTS



## CHICAGO BEARS MEET-UP AT HALAS HALL

The Chicago Bears welcomed matches to their practice at Halas Hall, signing autographs, passing out swag and posing for photos with the Vince Lombardi trophy. Little Brother Alex walked off the field with his Big Zach, proclaiming "today was the best day of my life!"



## DICK'S SPORTING GOODS FIELD DAY

BBBSChi continued to build its Big Sports programming thanks to DICK'S Sporting Goods, who hosted hundreds of matches for a Back to School Field Day. Matches learned fundamentals in basketball, tennis and ultimate frisbee.



## CHICAGO BULLS GAMEDAY

Over 150 matches in our Site Based Programs took over the United Center, cheering on the Chicago Bulls and hanging courtside during pregame warmup.

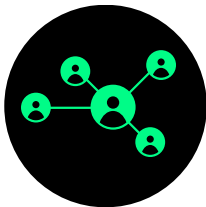
# BIG VOICES

**BBBSCHI LAUNCHES THE  
BIGS LEADERSHIP  
COUNCIL ELEVATING THE  
VOICE OF THE VOLUNTEER.**

The Bigs Leadership Council (BLC) was created to provide feedback, insights, and leadership to advise programming, enhance the Big and Little experience, and strengthen the BBBSChi community.

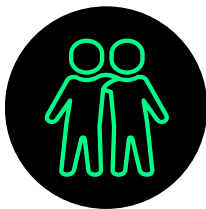


Four new programs were developed and spearheaded by the BLC Executive Team made up entirely of current Bigs:



## **01 — QUARTERLY BLC FORUMS**

Facilitates exchange of feedback and ideas between BBBSChi and Bigs to drive continuous match experience improvement



## **02 — BLC SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

Provides opportunities for Bigs to interact and socialize, strengthening their ties to other Bigs, matches and the agency itself



## **03 — BIG PEERS**

Partners incoming Bigs with experienced Bigs to help them kick-start their mentoring journey



## **04 — ONLINE COMMUNITY PLATFORM**

Creates an online space for socialization, peer guidance, and updates from BBBSChi HQ → Hundreds of Bigs have joined to share match outing ideas, various resources and ticket opportunities

**The BLC adds to our commitment of incorporating the voices of Bigs, Littles and families into our work.**



# GRATEFUL FOR BIG GENEROSITY

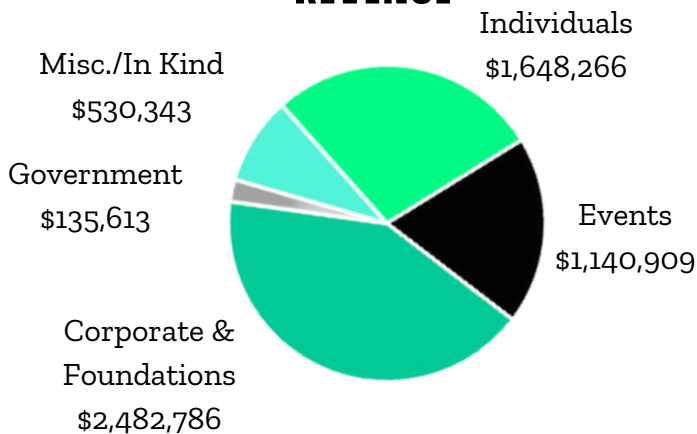


## PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

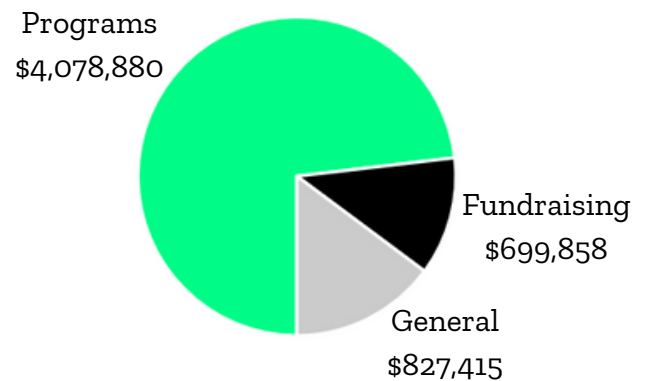
# \$5,937,917

In FY2023, BBBSChi's total net assets were \$4,332,749.  
To view our full financial report and form 990, [please click here.](#)

### REVENUE



### EXPENSES



#### IT TAKES A VILLAGE. VIEW OURS:

Drive for 5 Donors

Match Makers

JBH Legacy Fund

Individual Donors

Tribute Donors

Dedicated Partners

Board and Leadership



# LOOKING FOR NEW WAYS TO JOIN THE MISSION?

Thank you to everyone who has leaned in to this mission and created big moments for matches - from their first meeting to each impactful conversation, outing and experience along the way. We could not do this without the village of Bigs, Littles, families, staff, donors, partners, Board members and advocates that drive BBBSChi one step closer to ensuring every child has a plan for their future and a positive mentor by their side.



Post on your social media site of choice about your mentoring experience and tag us [@BBBSChi](#).



Sign up to be a Match Maker and make a monthly donation of any amount at [bbbschgo.org/matchmakers](https://bbbschgo.org/matchmakers) to help change a child's life every single month.



Have you considered naming Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Chicago in your will or estate plan? Your generous commitment to the future of BBBS will have a lasting impact on our community. Please let us know about your intentions, or learn more by contacting David Gee at [gee@bbbschgo.org](mailto:gee@bbbschgo.org) or 312.207.5601.

TOGETHER WE **EMPOWER POTENTIAL**



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**THANK YOU**

**FOR BEING A PART OF  
THE BBBSCHI VILLAGE**