



*Kim and Shalea*

**2023 Impact Report**

**IT TAKES LITTLE TO BE BIG**



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters.**  
OF METRO ATLANTA



*Kene and Karl*

# 2023

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta works with volunteers, parents and families to create mentoring relationships that **defend, inspire and empower** the potential that lives within every kid.

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## Young Leaders Council

The mission of the Young Leaders Council (YLC) is to unite, engage, and elevate the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta community. The YLC elevates the BBBS brand by creating meaningful mentor connections, strategic recruitment efforts, and brand-elevating events.

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**Alexandra Ginsberg** Rollins, Inc.

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# message from our ceo



Mayor Andre Dickens declared 2023 as the “Year of the Youth” and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta was honored to partner with the mayor to make our city a better place for young people. We were able to grow our programs significantly, **increasing the number of youth served by 43% to more than 1900.**

This growth was fueled by program innovation, especially through our Level Up program. Level Up is a large-scale mentoring program that utilizes paid mentors embedded full-time in middle schools. Launched in September of 2022, this program grew to serve more than 800 students at five schools in 2023. Level Up grew out of the needs expressed by principals in the community, and I’m

proud that we have been able to respond to that need in such a meaningful way.

Another focus in 2023 was strengthening and expanding our program for teens by helping them build strong career paths after high school. We increased the number of workplace mentoring partnerships for our Beyond School Walls program, which pairs corporations with high schools to promote workforce development for students. We also re-launched our Big Futures program to provide opportunities for career exposure and exploration for the 577 high school students enrolled in any of our programs.

Most of all, I am proud of the success of our young people. **Overall, 97% of the seniors in our program graduated from high school on time and 91% had plans for education, employment, enlistment or entrepreneurship following graduation. 99% of our youth avoided the juvenile justice system.** Throughout the year and in all our programs, our Littles showed how mentorship helps them make better choices, to solve problems in everyday situations and become confident and happier.

The support of our families, donors, volunteers, board members and staff made it possible for us to exceed our fundraising goals and grow our programs. We give them our heartfelt thanks for investing in our mission in so many ways. Thank you for joining us to defend the potential of Atlanta’s next generation of leaders.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kwame Johnson".

**Kwame Johnson**

President and CEO

# 1907 YOUTH SERVED

1001 female | 900 male | 6 gender diverse

average length of a match

32.5 months

43%  
Increase in number of youth served

5  
Middle schools in Level Up program serving 866 students

6  
Beyond School Walls workplace mentoring partnerships

68%  
Increase in new matches

## these are our kids

78%  
come from low- or very low-income families

82%  
qualify for free or reduced lunch programs at school

68%  
live in single-parent households

22%  
have one or more parents who have been incarcerated

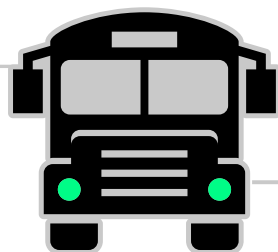
## promoting success

99%  
were promoted to the next grade on time

99%  
did not become involved in the juvenile justice system

97%  
of high school seniors graduated on time

91%  
of graduating seniors reported plans to pursue education, employment, enlistment, or entrepreneurship



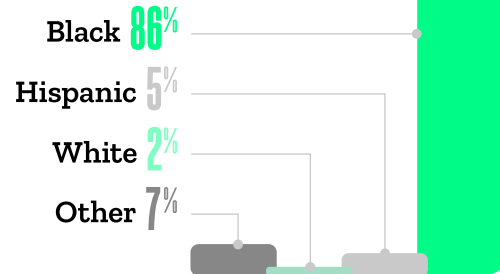
## littles' grade level

7% elementary

63% middle

30% high

## littles' ethnicities



# georgia match of the year

**Big Brother Karl** and **Little Brother Kene** have been matched for five years, with Karl's dedication to youth mentoring extending well beyond their match's duration. Karl is a devoted high school math teacher with Gwinnett County Public Schools and has been involved with the BBBS program as a Big for over 19 years, serving as Big Brother to 3 Little Brothers.

Karl says his experience of growing up without positive male role models fueled his determination to become the mentor he had yearned for during his formative years. From their initial meeting, Karl recognized Kene's reserved nature and embraced the opportunity to nurture his growth and self-confidence. Karl has encouraged Kene to embrace his unique qualities and navigate the challenges of adolescence with resilience and determination.

In 2023, Karl and Kene were selected from a nationwide talent search to participate in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Karl's and Kene's families were in attendance to cheer them on as they joined 29 other Big/Little matches caroling on the "Singing Christmas Tree" float.

The experience was impactful for Kene, an aspiring music producer who plays several instruments. **"I believe I wouldn't be the leader I am today without Karl as my Big,"** Kene reflected, **"The guidance and mentorship I've received have played a crucial role in shaping my character and instilling leadership qualities."**

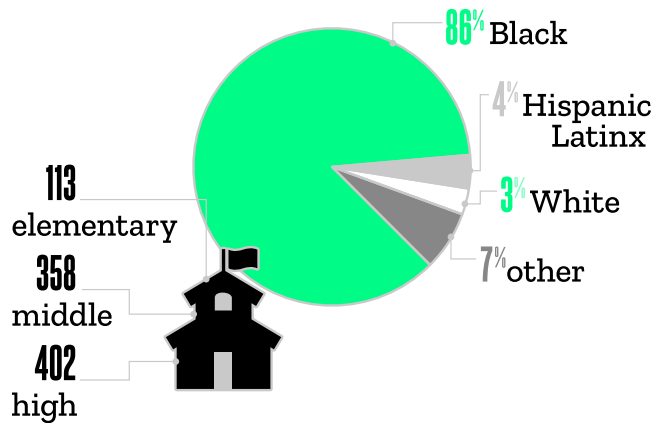


Volunteer Bigs and Littles are paired in professionally supported 1:1 matches that meet a few times per month in the community or at school.

# TOTAL YOUTH SERVED



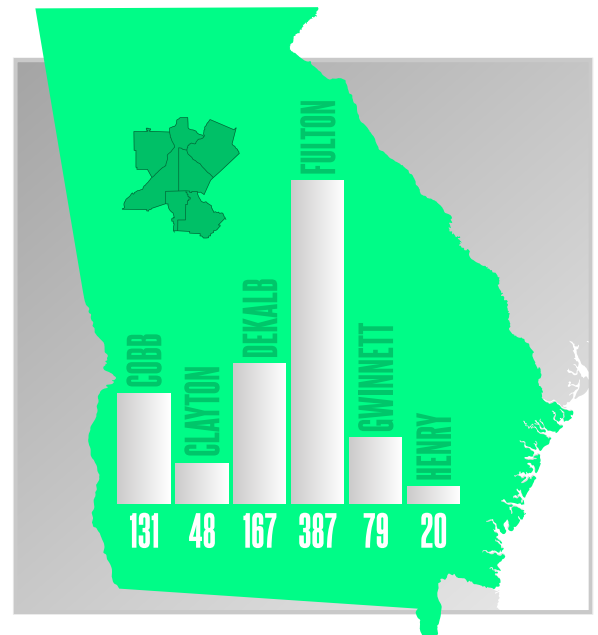
## grade level and ethnicity



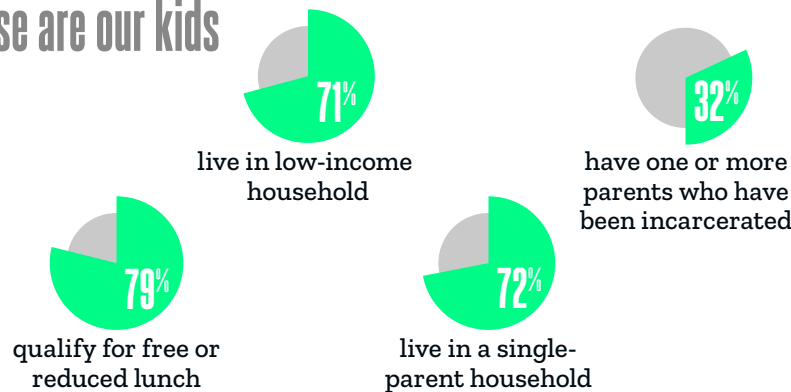
average length of a match

**32.5 months**

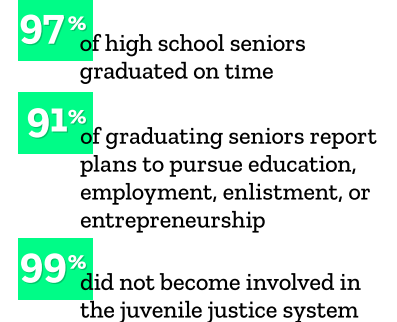
## top counties served



## these are our kids



## promoting success



# metro atl matches of the year

## Big Sister and Little Sister



### Kim and Shalea

**Little Sister Shalea** has been matched with her **Big Sister Kim** for nine years. Kim, a Senior Marketing Associate at Goodwyn Mills Cawood, shares, "Meeting Shalea at age 7, I discovered a shy yet sweet girl with a passion for singing. Over the years, her love for math, inquisitive nature, and eagerness to learn have shone through. Now 16, Shalea has overcome academic struggles and bullying to excel in honors classes and thrive as a confident young lady."

Shalea equally admires Big Sister Kim: "What makes Kim special is that she's more than just a mentor—she's like the best friend I never had growing up. Her guidance and openness have played a crucial role in my growth and maturity over the years."

Shalea credits her Big Sister for teaching her to navigate life. "**Understanding the different aspects of growing up today,**" she says, "**I've realized the importance of surrounding myself with people who genuinely want the best for me.**"



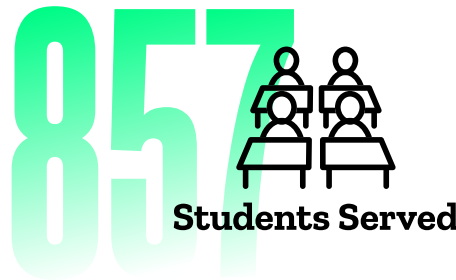
### Big Brother, Big Sister and Little Brother John, Jan and Tavaris

**Big Brother John** McFarland, **Big Sister Jan** Thrapp, and **Little Brother Tavaris** were matched in the Big Couples Program in the summer of 2019. This volunteer mentoring program pairs married couples or those in committed relationships with one Little Brother, offering a unique dynamic for support and guidance.

From the outset, Tavaris' vibrant and compassionate nature formed an immediate connection with his mentors. Whether playing board games at a coffee shop, enjoying a musical theater performance, or high-fiving after one of Tavaris' baseball games, they cherish their quality time together.

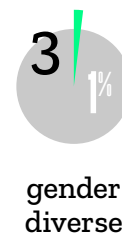
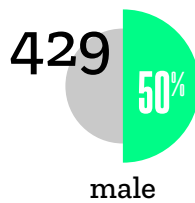
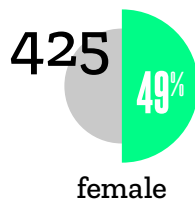
When Tavaris faced apprehension about starting middle school, John and Jan provided crucial support. Through open communication, they helped him find clubs to join and strategies to manage his worries, boosting his confidence. Jermeke, Tavaris' mother, describes Jan and John's commitment: "**My son has to be the luckiest and most loved kid in the world because of his Big Brother and Big Sister.**"

**Level Up** pairs students (Littles) with trained employees (Lead Mentors). Littles meet with their mentors during the school day for group mentoring and 1:1 sessions, fostering conversations, connection, and the enhancement of social-emotional skills within a structured school schedule.



Ralph J. Bunche Middle School • Jean Childs Young Middle School • Lithonia Middle School  
Luther J. Price Middle School • H.J. Russell West End Academy

student demographics



22-23 program outcomes

**Vision for the Future**

- 85% of Students completed a Future Planning Guide
- 74% of Students had consistent or improved educational expectations

**Avoidance of Risky Behaviors**

- 99% of Students avoided the Juvenile Justice System
- 84% of Students had reduced or no school discipline events

**Social-Emotional Learning**

- 82% of Students had decreased or no depressive symptoms
- 92% of Students had consistent or improved emotional regulation

**Sense of Belonging**

- 87% of Students had consistent or increased feelings of school connectedness
- 94% of Students had a trusted adult in their lives

school impact

- ▶ Average Daily Attendance increased on average 5.7% in the grade levels we served and 4% in the schools we served.
- ▶ Two of our schools saw the greatest Average Daily Attendance increase in the district.
- ▶ On average, Littles were involved in less than one school discipline event per year.
- ▶ On average, 85% of our Littles either maintained or improved their behavior from beginning to end of the year.



# a new level



Level Up offers a space for students to receive personalized attention they can't always receive in the classroom. The mentoring relationship between **Lead Mentor Quantavis Tilley** and **Little Brother Cassion** from Young Middle School epitomizes the power and effectiveness of this innovative approach to youth mentoring.

When Cassion entered the program as a 6th grader, Mr. Tilley noticed he was shy and withdrawn from his classmates. Through 1:1 sessions, Mr. Tilley learned that Cassion had been held back early in his schooling and was not the same age as his peers, leading to feelings of alienation and a lack of motivation to engage in class. Cassion was in danger of falling even further behind.

By recognizing issues that may have otherwise gone unnoticed, Mr. Tilley became Cassion's staunch advocate, working with the school team and Cassion's family to secure the necessary academic intervention. As they navigated through middle school, Mr. Tilley encouraged Cassion to believe in himself and remain committed to his goals. **"I told Cassion that maintaining consistency in the face of adversity would be his biggest fight,"** Mr. Tilley shared, **"and he rose to meet that challenge."**

Thanks to the advocacy of Mr. Tilley, Cassion has regained his confidence among his friends and in the classroom—and he's on track to begin high school next fall with his appropriate peer group.

**"Since we launched the program at Herman J. Russell West End Academy in September 2022, we have already seen significant positive impacts on our students. Our students are excited to come to school. This program has increased our attendance rates and the students they serve have the highest attendance rates in the school. This program also has helped with students having a safe person to go to when they are dealing with issues in class. BBBS offers behavioral and academic support for our students."**

**—Tonetta Green**, Principal of HJ Russell West End Academy

**"Thank you for all that you and the BBBS organization have done for my son, Mikhel. Starting middle school is hard enough, especially coming to a new school. You always find time to pull Mikhel aside and find out what was going on, even when it was not your day to meet with him. It is good to know he has a positive male role model he can come to."**

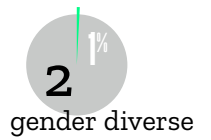
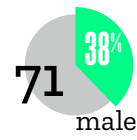
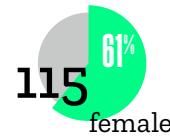
**—Jessica**, mother of a child participating in Level Up

**"I learned a lot about being able to control my emotions. I know I cannot just react after something happens, but I have to think about what I have done."**

**—Student**, Level Up

**Beyond School Walls** is a mentoring program facilitated by BBBSMA Staff, pairing corporate volunteers with high school students at the mentor's workplace.

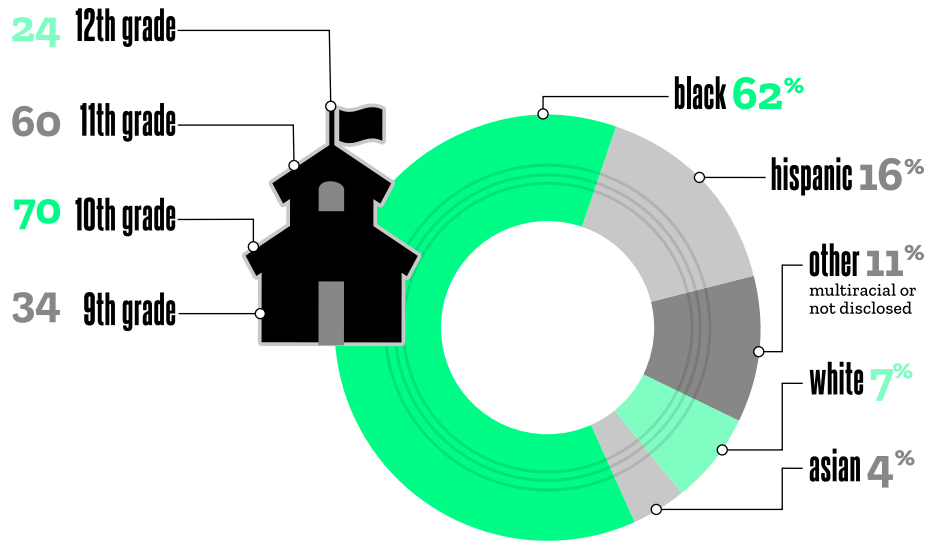
TOTAL YOUTH SERVED **188**



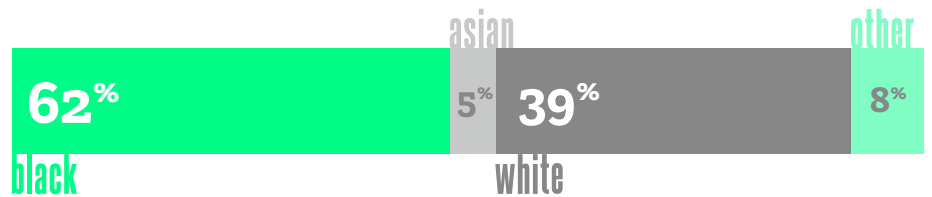
corporate partners



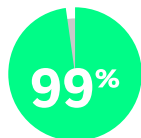
high school students (littles)—grade level and ethnicity



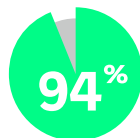
volunteers (bigs)—ethnicity



promoting success



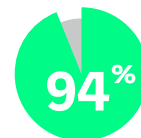
Did not become involved in the Juvenile Justice System



Plan to pursue post-secondary education



Graduated HS on time



Received financial aid

# big futures: reimagined

In 2023, our **Big Futures** program experienced remarkable growth and impact, serving over 550 high school students with developmentally suitable programming and resources. Designed to provide comprehensive support to high school youth, Big Futures ensures that every student graduates high school with a concrete plan for their future, a sense of confidence, and a strong support system. We achieve this goal by providing students with guidance to explore pathways towards what we refer to as the “4 E’s”: **Education, Employment, Enlistment, and Entrepreneurship**. We empower Littles to pursue their aspirations in these key areas, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed for success in their chosen paths.

Through activities curated for their age group, and connections to community partners, we offer a suite of opportunities for high school Littles to thrive. From college application support to corporate behind-the-scenes visits, we’re enriching students with the tools necessary to thrive as they transition into adulthood. Through ongoing evaluation and feedback from students, mentors, and families, we continue to refine and enhance our programming to ensure it meets the evolving needs of the students we serve.

## Defender of Potential

### Sylvia Zenteno-Booker



Big Sister Sylvia Zenteno-Booker and Little Sister Deanna were paired in the Beyond School Walls program, a collaboration between Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta

and Cox Enterprises, marking the beginning of their journey during Deanna’s freshman year.

Throughout their relationship, Sylvia has been instrumental in providing Deanna with invaluable insights and support as she considers various career paths. Deanna reflected on Sylvia’s diverse career experiences, stating, **“At first, during my freshman year, I wanted to go into UI/UX or something to do with computer science, and Sylvia put me in contact with one of her colleagues and gave me some useful information about the field. Then in my sophomore year, I was interested in architecture. Sylvia used to be in that field, so**

**we discussed the field and schooling. And now, in my junior year, I’m also interested in music. Sylvia used to be in chorus, so she understands the passion around music and really makes me feel validated in my interest in pursuing it. I’m still interested in UI/UX and architecture and with Sylvia’s help, I definitely think I can make an informed decision on what field to go in and how to balance all of my interests as I prepare to enter my senior year.”**

With Sylvia’s encouragement, Deanna has not only gained career insights but also learned valuable life lessons. Sylvia’s outgoing nature and public speaking skills have inspired Deanna to step out of her comfort zone and engage more confidently with others.

In 2023, Deanna nominated Sylvia for BBBSMA’s “Defender of Potential” award. Sylvia won the award, recognized for her efforts on “Big Appreciation Night.”

# our donors

## Institutional Donors

### Miracle Maker (\$500,000+)

The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation  
The Marcus Foundation, Inc.

### Memories Maker (\$100,000+)

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America  
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative  
The Cousins Foundation  
Georgia Power Foundation  
Georgia Governor's Office of  
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Impact Grant  
Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation  
United Way of Greater Atlanta  
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### Marvel Maker (\$50,000+)

The Ammon Foundation  
Chick-Fil-A, Inc. Corporate Social Responsibility  
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City of Atlanta Youth Development Grant  
Fulton County Department of Community Development/  
Youth & Community Services Division  
Georgia-Pacific Foundation  
Google, Inc.  
Insight Global  
The Sartain Lanier Family Foundation, Inc.  
The UPS Foundation  
The Waterfall Foundation

### Friendship Maker (\$25,000+)

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Centene Corporation  
First Horizon Foundation  
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Sky Ranch Foundation  
State Farm Insurance Companies

### Dream Maker (\$10,000+)

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ASK Consulting  
Atlanta Foundation  
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CIBC Private Wealth Management  
The Coca-Cola Company  
Dalton Family Foundation  
DeKalb County Human Services Department  
Delta Community Credit Union  
Douglas J. Hertz Family Foundation, Inc.  
ECMC Foundation  
The Erbrick Family Foundation  
Fifth Third Bank  
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For a complete list of donors, including in-kind gifts, visit, [bbbsatl.org](http://bbbsatl.org)

## Individual Donors

### Leadership Society

#### Defenders Circle (\$10,000+)

Arthur M. Blank  
Arlene and Terry Brantley  
BSPG Carolinas, LLC  
Mark Dalton  
Vanessa and Michael Erbrick<sup>^</sup>  
Stefanie and Samuel Johnson<sup>^</sup>  
Shannon and John Karafanda  
Kirkwood Foundation  
Brittany and David Moeller<sup>^</sup>  
Jeannie and Ron Stewart

#### Ignitors Circle (\$5,000-\$9,999)

Baston-Cook Development Co.  
Joumana and Joe Beverly<sup>^</sup>  
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#### Mentors Circle (\$2,500-\$4,999)

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Diana and Mark Tipton

### Empowerment Society

#### Founders Circle (\$1,960-\$2,499)

Alison and Douglas Bentley  
Reiko Ann Kerr  
Peil Charitable Trust  
Meagan and Carrie Scott<sup>\*</sup>  
Camille and Tim Wilkerson

#### Advocates Circle (\$1,000-\$1,959)

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BlueFletch Mobile  
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Sally and Robert Cramer  
Danielle and Theodore Davies  
Todd B. Davis  
Harry Douglas  
Cathy and Reid Funston  
Haydn Fusia  
Matt Gonsalves<sup>\*</sup>  
Kim and Rodney Hall  
Ainsley LeBlanc and Thomas Hamlin  
The Goddard School, Erika and Talbert Hill  
Krystle Howard  
Claire and Brian Hulsey  
Hardie Jackson  
The Anne and Clint Kibler Foundation  
Leigh Koffler  
James Long  
Deborah Makerson  
Alex Manning  
Marietta Drapery and Window Coverings  
Maria and John Miller<sup>\*</sup>  
Laura and Dave Newinski  
Tim O'Toole  
Cody Partin  
Earlece Pearce  
Michele Pearce<sup>\*</sup>  
Jackson Poe<sup>\*</sup>

- <sup>\*</sup> Matchmaker Monthly
- <sup>+</sup> Ben Rohrer Scholarship Fund
- <sup>^</sup> Mackenzie Match Challenge

Ken Poon  
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George Zaharatos<sup>+</sup>  
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#### Champions Circle

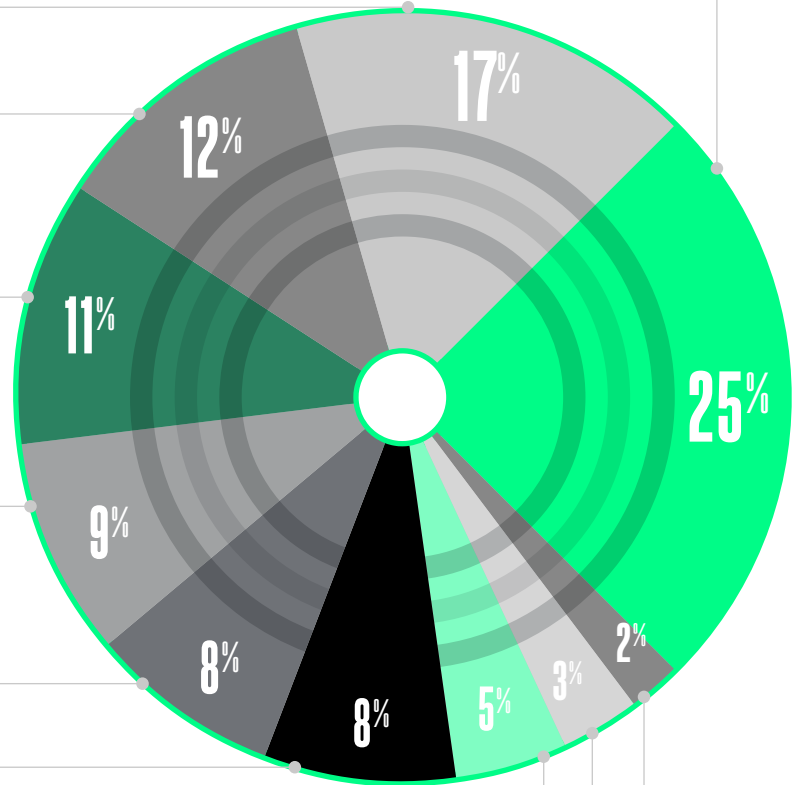
(Raised more than \$1,000 through peer-to-peer fundraising)

Keith Bell  
Mikael Berthiaume  
Consuelo Borden  
Kate Coffey  
Huston Collings  
Thomas Hamlin  
Kwame Johnson  
Peter Lauer  
Michael Lipton  
Richard Makerson  
Ellen Marsh  
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Chelsey Tabakian Odom  
Tony Poon  
Sarah Stansberry  
Shanice Stewart  
Bradford Wynn

# financials

## Revenue Breakdown

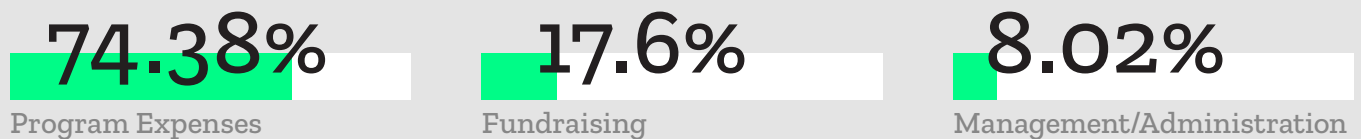
Foundation Grants	<b>\$1,871,000</b>
Corporate Contributions	<b>\$1,248,189</b>
MacKenzie Scott Funds	<b>\$866,000</b>
Other Income	<b>\$831,265</b>
Government Grants	<b>\$681,571</b>
Special Events	<b>\$594,955</b>
Capacity-Building Campaign	<b>\$592,741</b>
Individual Giving	<b>\$368,186</b>
School Funding	<b>\$229,159</b>
United Way	<b>\$162,500</b>



**TOTAL REVENUE \$7,415,568**

## Expense Breakdown

**TOTAL EXPENSES \$7,052,398**



# strategic plan

In 2023, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta made significant strides across all of the strategic themes we identified at the outset of our 3 to 5-year strategic plan, advancing our mission to empower youth and strengthen communities. Through a diversified portfolio of service delivery models, we were able to scale our impact on Metro Atlanta. With targeted recruitment efforts, streamlined enrollment processes, and an expansion of Level Up, we successfully served more Littles through quality mentoring relationships.

We're gathering feedback from our committed community of mentors and corporate partners to enhance our volunteer mentor experience and provide quality programming to Bigs, Littles, and families in our program. Through investment in staff development, culture-building initiatives, and diversified fundraising strategies, we elevated our organizational capacity, fostered a culture of belonging and trust, and expanded our financial resources for sustained impact.

## Priority Outcomes for Youth

- Littles form trusting adult relationships
- Littles are socially and emotionally healthy
- Littles cultivate their interests and strengths
- Littles develop a sense of purpose and agency
- Littles are successful in school
- Littles are prepared for life beyond high school

These priority outcomes will be defined by measurable progress indicators, and our performance on these outcomes will be reported annually.

## Strategic Themes

We have identified four Strategic Themes that will guide our work and advance the priority outcomes identified for the youth we serve.

### PORTFOLIO OF SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

#### Objectives

- Serve more Littles through a quality mentoring relationship
- Reduce number of Littles on the waiting list

### QUALITY PROGRAMMING

#### Objectives

- Enhance quality and consistency of the Little experience
- Improve outcome measurement, reporting and utilization

### STRENGTHENED INTERNAL CAPACITY

#### Objectives

- Increase staff retention and efficacy
- Elevate the culture of belonging, purpose and trust
- Increase and sustain revenue
- Expand funding channels

### VOLUNTEER MENTOR EXPERIENCE

#### Objectives

- Increase number of volunteer mentors heavily invested in the mission of BBBSMA
- Assess and increase satisfaction of Bigs
- Increase retention of volunteer mentors
- Reduce time of Littles on the waiting list



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# IT TAKES LITTLE



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