

SFY 2024 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 $475,000 ($500,000 minus $25,000 for DEED administration) in [Minnesota Session Laws – 2023, Chapter 53, S.F.3035, Article 20, Section 2, Subdivision 3 (hhh)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2023/0/Session+Law/Chapter/53/) for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 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 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 2024, the BBBS agencies in the Twin Cities, Central Minnesota and Southern Minnesota had a goal to serve at least 1,500 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 and 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, such as AVID in Southern Minnesota, Leaders Inspiring Futures Today (LIFT) in Southern Minnesota, Dr. Potter Bigs on Campus in partnership with St. Cloud State University in Central Minnesota, the Career Ambassador Program in the Twin Cities area, and Graduation Coaches Program in partnership with Hope Community Academy in St. Paul.

# Program Activities

Described below are highlights of activities delivered during the period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

* **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://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 2024 funds ran from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. The participant data for this period is below.

## Demographic Data

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC** | **NUMBER SERVED** |
| Total Served | 2,034 |
| Male | 803 |
| Female | 1,184 |
| Trans/Other | 46 |
| Age 12-13 | 516 |
| Age 14-15 | 513 |
| Age 16-17 | 621 |
| Age 18-19 | 283 |
| Age 20-21 | 101 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 166 |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 32 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 66 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC** | **NUMBER SERVED** |
| Black/African American | 484 |
| White | 959 |
| Multi-racial | 128 |
| Other/Unreported Race | 199 |
| 8th grade student or younger | 493 |
| 9th-12th grade student | 1,331 |
| High school graduate or equivalent | 210 |
| Post-secondary education student | N/A |
| Family qualified for free or reduced-price school lunch | 1,125 |

## Program Services, Activities, and Other Related Assistance

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SERVICE PROVIDED** | **NUMBER SERVED** |
| Education or Job Training Activities | 606 |
| Work Experience Activities | 40 |
| Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities | 2,034 |
| Post-Secondary Exploration, Career Guidance and Planning Activities | 2,034 |
| Mentoring Activities | 1,498 |
| Support Services | 2,034 |

## Customer Satisfaction

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CUSTOMER RATING** | **NUMBER SERVED** |
| Program Experience “Excellent” | 159 |
| Program Experience “Very Good” | 147 |
| Program Experience “Average” | 42 |
| Program Experience “Below Average” | 1 |
| Program Experience “Poor” | 0 |
| Number of Participants Completing Customer Satisfaction Survey | 347 |

# Program Outcome Measures

### Healthy youth development, focused on the social, emotional, and academic development of youth

* + Percentage of participants who maintain or strengthen their social competence – goal 80%, actual 87%
  + Percentage of participants who maintain or strengthen grades and academic performance – goal 80%, actual 88%
  + Percentage of participants who maintain or strengthen their educational expectations for the future – goal 80%, actual 94%
  + Percentage of participants who maintain or improve emotional regulation skills – goal 80%, actual 90%
  + Percentage of participants who report having an encouraging, caring adult in their lives – goal 80% actual 96%

### High school graduation

* + Percentage of high school seniors in a mentoring relationship at the beginning of senior year who will graduate – goal 80%, actual 98%

### Youth skills and knowledge related to career, training and college readiness

* + Percentage of youth who report having an increased understanding of the careers or topics presented at events – goal 80%, actual 76%
  + Percentage of youth who report having a stronger connection between their interests and future goals after participating in career exploration and readiness programming and activities – goal 80%, actual 63%

# Expenditure Data

Expenditures from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 were as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Budget Category** | **Expenditures** |
| Administration (up to 10% allowed) | $28,984.97 |
| Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits | $0.00 |
| Direct Staff Services | $443,686.08 |
| Support Services | $2,328.95 |
| Total | $475,000.00 |

# Program Success Stories

### Southern Minnesota Success story:

### In the fall of 2023, Joe and Lohgann were matched in the REACH program. As their friendship grew, they decided that they would like to meet outside of school as well. Their match expanded to become a community-based match. They both enjoy sports and are very competitive, and they look forward to the many outings they can do this summer. On the day of the match introduction, Lohgann was so excited and full of smiles. After the match introduction, they went to a park and played basketball. They are continuing to meet and have made several plans over the summer.

### Central MN Success Story:

### Each year BBBS of Central Minnesota is proud to award The Federated Challenge Scholarship to past Littles or High School Bigs who are continuing their education in a non-four-year post-secondary program at an accredited Minnesota post-secondary school that is focused on apprenticeship, certificate, trades, technical, or community college programs. This spring, BBBS of Central Minnesota awarded 14 Federated Challenge® for Kids Scholarships to current and former Littles and High School Bigs. Learn more about the honorees and their future plans here: <https://bigdefenders.org/2024/05/06/bbbs-announces-federated-challenge-scholarship-recipients/>. Three additional youth received other exclusive BBBS scholarships (BriAnna Kruzel Memorial Scholarship - $500, and Dahlias Alongside Grand Lake Scholarship - $1000 each).

### Twin Cities Success story:

This past spring, BBBS Twin Cities brought the FabLife, a financial literacy simulation game, to several partnership schools. The game puts each student in a scenario and they must “shop” for housing, utilities, food, clothing, and other items and services that best fits their budget and needs. The activity is fun, engaging, and educational, illustrating to youth that often tough decisions between what one wants and needs have to be made in order to balance a budget. Some of the remarks from youth included "Kids can't be this expensive!”, "No way groceries are $300 a month!", and "How do you have so much money left? I'm -$1,417!"