



Big Brothers Big Sisters

of Mid-Florida

Experience Big Magic.

Newsletter

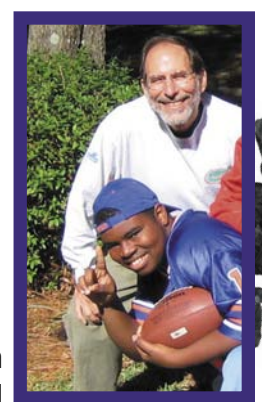
October 2010

New 2010 September Matches

- Kathryn / Amber
- Alexander / Darien
- Elizabeth / Sarah
- Meagan / Aulani
- Samuel / Corey
- Nadim / Darien
- Kristin / Toshiana
- Albert / Rasheed
- Darby / Ja'koria
- Mimi / Toutie
- Joshlynn / Akira
- Chris / Gregory
- Danielle / Miranda
- Theresa / Trinity
- Tomeka / Shyteria
- Amanda / Dasani
- Scott / Omar
- Florie / Jarquayvia
- Jennifer / Detroynneja
- Joyce / Danielle
- Keeley / Alisha
- Anthony / JaQuan
- Jessica / Kiara
- Melissa / Briana
- Kara / Khalia
- Stephen / Alexander

Match Spotlight: Eric & Rod

Congratulations to Eric and Rod who are celebrating their 9th year in the program this month. Eric has been Rod's Big Brother since he was 7. Throughout the years Eric has witness Rod grow both physically and emotionally. From being shy around strangers and his answers being one word at most, Rod has grown both in stature and in poise. Proudly, Eric states, "I like the way he can meet new people and shake their hand and have eye contact. He has a great speaking voice. He is big and strong. He has a certain confidence and yet a gentleness. I also like the way Rod has joined right in when I've challenged him to speak or try out new things. Since, at 16, he's now bigger than me; I like it that he doesn't hurt me when we play touch football and he's always willing to get together. That amazes me". He adds, "I really liked to see the energy and joy he exhibits when we do things that he has always wanted to do but was never able to do". Last year while doing volunteer work, they earned free tickets to Disney World. "We had an awesome time, as did his younger brother Mario, who went along with us". Rod's mother, Linda says that she couldn't ask for a better Big Brother. "Eric has helped him apply for a job, has taught him how to drive and to cook. He is both wonderful and a blessing".



To anyone considering becoming a Big Brother or a Big Sister, Eric states, "I would urge folks to become a Big, but who are willing to commit, and who will show up each week and do something with the Little. Just being there means a lot. Many Littles have had disappointments in their lives where adults have let them down, and they don't need that from a Big. They need consistency and presence, which tells them that someone cares about them and what they do".

Match Anniversaries

- | | |
|---|--|
| <u>9 Year Anniversary</u>
Oct 17 - Eric / Rod | <u>3 Year Anniversary</u>
Oct 12 - Patricia / Kallatta |
| <u>8 Year Anniversary</u>
Oct 8 - Tonya / Jameka | <u>1 Year Anniversary</u>
Oct 12 - Marcilyn / Derriona |
| <u>4 Year Anniversary</u>
Oct 2 - Natalie / Caitlin | Oct 17 - Jillian / Shel'landrya |
| Oct 13 - Susan / Briana | Oct 22 - Ja'mese / Irene |

To send a donation, please visit www.bbbsmidflorida.com.
 You may also contact Mr. John Bonacci, john@bbbsmidflorida.org,
 or call us at (352) 375-2525.

Community Leader: Dr. Stephanie Evans

Big Brothers Big Sisters Ambassador Dr. Stephanie Y. Evans emphatically stated that the mentoring organization is vital. "As is the case all over the nation," she said, "You can tell the by how you treat further explained such as the ones are important to have hungry kids kids or children a contradiction to claim we are."



"kids need help." level of a civilization your children." She how programs that BBBS provides democracy: "To or undereducated with no mentors is all the things we

Dr. Evans left her desk to read pieces of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune's last will and testament, which is framed on her wall. She spoke the words with meaning. "We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends."

These ideas influence Dr. Evans work. She is the Director of African American Studies and an Associate Professor of African American Studies and Women's Studies at the University of Florida. In 2003, she received her Ph.D. in African American Studies from the University of Massachusetts. Interestingly, she didn't start her higher education until age 25. "No one in my family went to college," she said. Yet when she started, she said she felt at home. Dr. Evans married her colleague Curtis D. Byrd in May 2009. She has lived in Gainesville for seven years.

This semester, she is teaching courses titled Mentoring At-Risk Youth and U.S. Women of Color. Dr. Evans said her passion for teaching has two focuses. First, she said excellence is a priority. She sets high standards for her students and added, "It's okay to not be great; it's not okay not to try." Second, she values ethics. "You don't have to be brilliant, but you have to be honest."

She also has a twofold goal for African American Studies. She said she wants to create a bachelor's degree program and make the department strong by developing partnerships.

Dr. Evans paused to think about her life's path. She said she couldn't have made it without the guidance of mentors. There was a high school teacher who helped her with her transition to college, a college professor who helped her along and another mentor who helped her when she reached graduate school. However, she said Pam Copley, her eighth grade dance teacher, was the most important.

Copley taught her, "Dancers don't sweat, they glow." The two had the same birthdays, and Mrs. Copley gave Dr. Evans her phone number. She would later dial it as she faced some of life's greatest struggles. Dr. Evans said her teacher "literally saved her life." "She treated us like gold – like we were the most important people in the world. That's why I do what I do," Dr. Evans said. She teaches classes such as Mentoring At-Risk Youth and supports organizations such as BBBS because of the impact that a mentor once had on her.

BIG thanks to our Sponsors

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CDS Family and Behavioral Health Services, Inc. SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH T-Shirt Design Contest

Win a \$100 gift certificate! Create any black and white art that incorporates the name "Spotlight on Youth" and portrays the idea that "Art is Prevention."

Deadline: Nov. 24, 2010

Talent Show

All high school students in North Central Florida are invited to audition to perform on March 5, 2011 in the 12th annual talent show. Audition applications are due Nov 24, 2010

*For specifics on any event
or to submit applications,
contact Radha Selvester at
352.244.0628 ext. 3865 or
radha_selvester@cdfsfl.org*

To send a donation, please visit www.bbbsmidflorida.com.
You may also contact Mr. John Bonacci, john@bbbsmidflorida.org,
or call us at (352) 375-2525.

Big Fun

October 15

UF Homecoming Parade

*Bigs & Littles must RSVP
to our office by Oct 8th*

October 23

Sports Buddies Kick-off

*2pm-6pm at Howard Bishop Middle
1901 NE 9th Street*

October 31

Halloween Party & Haunted House

*5pm-8pm at Splitz Bowling Center
1311 NW 76th Blvd.*

*Bowling discount for Bigs & Littles
includes 2 games and shoes for \$6.00*

November 7

UF Big Olympics

*12pm-5pm at Norman Field
East of 13th Street across
from Sorority Row*

GATOR EXCHANGE CLUB IS SELLING RAFFLE TICKETS

The Grand prize contains 2 tickets to the FL/GA game on Oct 30, a 2-night stay for two at a hotel in Jacksonville for Friday and Saturday night, and \$300 for spending money. \$5 per ticket, contact pr@bbbsmidflorida.org if interested

Drawing is Oct 6th at noon.

The Deadline is Oct 4th.

Macy's Thanks for Sharing

Join Big Brothers Big Sisters in supporting Macy's 2010 Thanks For Sharing Program. Enjoy 10% rewards on most Macy's purchases from the date of your enrollment to December 31st 2010, while supporting a great cause as Macy's donates \$10 for each enrollment, up to \$15 million, to local and national charities including BBBS.

See your local Macy's for details.

Homecoming Parade

On Oct 15, we will have a float in the UF Homecoming Parade. If any of our Bigs and Littles would like to participate RSVP to our office 375.2525 no later than Friday, Oct 8th.

UF Big Olympics

BBBS is hosting the first ever Big Olympics on Sunday, November 7th between 12pm-5pm at the Norman Field. This event will consist of a series of contests to determine which of the Greek or student groups is the "Best" at getting students involved in their community.

Please let us know if you will be participating in the Big Olympics by Friday, October 15th. For questions or more information, please contact: Lauren Klein Event Coordinator at (352) 375-2525 or PR@bbbsmidflorida.org

Toy Drive

The holiday season is fastly approaching. We are seeking toy donations from our community, local companies and organizations. If our volunteers could each bring one toy, it would be greatly appreciated. The toys donated will be given to children in our program at our annual holiday party in December. If you would like to participate, please contact our office at **352.375.2525** or email us at info@bbbsmidflorida.org

Big Adventures LITTLE OLYMPICS



On Saturday, September 18th, our Bigs, Littles, and families were joined by the UF Women's Lacrosse Team and Erica LaGrow's First Year Florida students for an afternoon of fun Olympic-style games and loads of arts and crafts! Participants decorated t-shirts to kick-off the event and enjoyed delicious box lunches from Subway. A BIG thanks to Erica, one of our very own Big Sisters, and her mother for organizing and sponsoring such an outstanding day for us!

To send a donation, please visit www.bbbsmidflorida.com.
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Big News

CLUBS

“Little Ladies” Dance Troupe

will hold it's 1st meeting Tuesday Oct 12th from 3pm-4pm at our office.

“Little Spinners” Colorguard Squad

will hold it's 1st meeting Wednesday Oct 13th from 4pm-5pm at our office.

“Little Drummers”

Traditional African Drumming will hold it's 1st meeting Thursday Oct 28th from 5pm-6pm at our office.

“Little Rebels” Rollerskaters

hosted by the Gainesville Roller Rebels, is planning it's launch soon.

Contact our office if you're interested in reserving a place for your child.

Pen Pals 4 Haiti Program

BBBS is recruiting volunteers who want to make a difference beyond our borders and support the orphans of Haiti. We have established the Pen Pals for Haiti Program, in partnership with Caribbean People's Relief, to match Bigs as “pen pals” with the orphans of Montrouis, Haiti. Letters are exchanged monthly and outgoing letters are translated from English into Creole and/or French by volunteers in the community. If they choose, Bigs will have the opportunity to travel with Caribbean People's Relief at least once a year to visit with their Littles!

Sports Buddies Kick-Off Event

Sports Buddies is a program designed to match at-risk youth with mentors who can model good sportsmanship, teach life skills, and build solid friendships on the court, in the field, or at local sporting events! There is no bigger reward than helping a child learn the game of life, set goals and celebrate their victories. Bigs and Littles can either play through organized Big Brothers Big Sisters leagues at designated sites or out in the community. The minimum commitment is one hour a week for an academic year. Bigs must be at least 18 years old. Join us at our Sports Buddies Kick-Off Event, October 23rd at Howard Bishop Middle School, 1901 NE 9th St, from 2pm - 6pm.

Thoughts for Thanks

Big Brothers Big Sisters has the honor of working with outstanding volunteers every year that go above and beyond to better serve the families in our program. In addition to our amazing Bigs, there are other members of the community that lend a hand along the way and support our Littles. Whether they be relatives of Bigs who donate a few gifts to our Littles during the holidays or professionals who give free services (dental, medical, etc) to our Littles in-need, we know there are many people who have positively touched the lives of the kids in our program, and we want to give them thanks! For our November newsletter, in the spirit of the Thanksgiving season, we would like to publish the stories of these people who have selflessly supported our Littles over the years. We are encouraging Bigs, Littles, and parents/guardians to submit their stories of thanks to recognize our volunteers and share their acts of kindness with our community. Stories can also be submitted to our office at 1155 NW 13th St. in Gainesville, FL, or emailed to info@bbbsmidflorida.org no later than Friday, Oct 22nd.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mid-Florida

1155 NW 13th St.

Gainesville, FL 32601

www.bbbsmidflorida.org

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