

SPRING 2024

# BIGNEWS

A newsletter for friends of Big Brothers Big Sisters



Big Brothers  
Big Sisters®

## YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION

Meet Morrigan! She's been a part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters family since she was ten years old. For the last four and a half years, she's been matched with Big Sister Clair. The two have built a wonderful relationship and are still going strong over the years.



*Little Sister Morrigan with Big Sister Clair at her wedding.*

Morrigan is a senior in high school and is thinking about how to make her dreams a reality. Morrigan recently joined BBBSM's new Big Futures program and took the first big step to make it happen.

Big Futures helps older youth create a plan for future success after high school. Mentees work one-on-one with our Big Futures Program Coordinator to turn their interests into something they might want to do next. Big Futures helps connect youth to college contacts,

job shadowing opportunities, military recruiters, scholarship information and much more.

Your support is making it possible. **Thank you for helping ensure kids across our community are ready for their big futures.** Your commitment ensures hundreds of kids have the tools for future success.

Morrigan is looking for a career where she is kept busy and on the move. She's interested in becoming an esthetician or a chef and recently connected with Chevy Kozisek, owner of Skin by Chevy. Chevy is a seasoned esthetician and entrepreneur. Chevy has 27 years of experience and shared her journey from salon receptionist to successful business owner. Chevy offered Morrigan valuable advice and insights into the industry. She loved the experience and was eager to learn more about her other interests.

Last month, Morrigan had the opportunity to meet with chefs at V. Mertz, a contemporary fine-dining restaurant. She talked with Chef John Miller and Sous Chef Witney Stanley. Both chefs emphasized the diverse paths to becoming a chef, highlighting the demanding yet rewarding nature of the profession. Morrigan savored the chefs' advice and is continuing the journey to her unlimited potential.

Your generosity is helping empower the next generation of leaders here in our community. **Thank you for your dedication to kids across our community.** You are creating a big future!

# BOWL FOR KIDS' SAKE

Let's party like it's 1999! Bowl for Kids' Sake is here again, and we're kickin' it 90s style this year!

Some organizations walk, run and dance, but we bowl at Big Brothers Big Sisters! BFKS is our largest fundraiser, raising the necessary funds to support hundreds of kids year-round. It'll take the goodness of our whole community to hit our big goal of \$200,000 this year. It's easy to join in the fun.



- 1. Gather a team of 4-5 friends and family**
- 2. Register online and set up your personal and team fundraising pages**
- 3. Fundraise online, at work, via text, etc.**
- 4. Celebrate with us May 9th, 10th and 11th!**



Scan the QR code or visit [BBBSMidlands.org](https://BBBSMidlands.org) to learn more and register!

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As we welcome the spring season, I look forward to new opportunities and growing potential. We have big plans for 2024, and your support is making it all possible. Thank you for helping power the mentoring movement locally for hundreds of kids.



The recent combination with Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln continues to transition smoothly. Through this alliance, we intend to solidify our role as the preeminent leader of one-to-one mentoring throughout eastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

The combination will increase partnership opportunities to support more families and improve program impact. We're already working to employ more staff for program support, recruitment and fundraising. The combination and our new strategic plan mark a significant milestone in our journey toward positive impact and expansion.

Your support is charting a course for sustained growth and increased effectiveness in our mission. I'm grateful for your dedication and generosity, which have brought us to this moment. I'm confident that our shared commitment to our mission will drive us toward new heights of success. Thank you again, and I wish you a vibrant and prosperous spring season!

***P.S. Over 60 kids are waiting for a mentor. Please continue to bring them hope. Your gift right now will make a big difference for kids on our waitlist!***

*Nicole*

# A LIFETIME OF MENTORING

Having a mentor was more than just an opportunity. It was a lifeline. Former Little Sister Kaylee experienced years of guidance, friendship and invaluable life lessons with Big Sister Crystal by her side. From bowling to going to the movies, Kaylee learned to appreciate the simple joys of life. One of her favorite memories was attending her Big Sister's wedding.

**Your generosity ensures the proven power of mentoring remains strong in our community.**

Thank you for carrying on the commitment thousands have made to help kids succeed and thrive in life!



*Former Little Sister Kaylee visiting Austria*

**"Not every kid gets the opportunity to do things like that. My Big Sister helped give me a little bit of normalcy in my life," says Kaylee.**

Kaylee's journey with Big Brothers Big Sisters began in 2002 when she was matched with her Big Sister, for an incredible six-year journey.

Throughout their relationship, Kaylee learned valuable life lessons. "If you work hard, you can be rewarded accordingly... but also enjoy the ride." Despite facing challenges throughout her youth, Kaylee found support and a trusted friend in her Big Sister. Mentorship gave her an escape from reality and the opportunity to be a kid.

Even today, Kaylee maintains contact with her Big Sister, cherishing their shared connection. Their bond continues to inspire Kaylee's perspective on mentorship and its pivotal role in shaping her life.

**"I would not be who I am today without the support of my mentor. Thank you for taking a chance on me," says Kaylee.**

Your unwavering support makes it possible to create thousands of success stories just like Kaylee's. You are helping strengthen our community for the next generation! Thank you for helping create transformative experiences that change lives for the better.

SAVE THE DATE!

THURSDAY  
**MAY 30<sup>th</sup>**

**FORE**  
*potential*

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# GAME CHANGERS

*Thank you for helping ignite the potential of youth!*

Fred Hunzeker and Carly Turner aren't just donors. They are the epitome of impact Game Changers. Fred's journey with Big Brothers Big Sisters began nearly two decades ago when he joined the Impact Circle as a founding member. He didn't know much about the organization at the time, but since then, he has established a lasting legacy. For Fred, the countless success stories he's encountered motivate him to support the transformative power of mentorship.



*Fred and Carly during the 2023 Impact Circle*

**"Meeting the Bigs and Littles and witnessing the impact firsthand is what brings me in, and it's what keeps me coming back," says Fred.**

Carly has long been a part of local youth-serving organizations and wants to continue making an impact. She joined the BBBS Board of Directors in 2023 and is committed to making a big difference. Carly brings a wealth of experience and a keen understanding of the organization's

needs. Carly most enjoys getting "gritty" and hands-on with her work. In the coming year, she's looking forward to helping guide the agency as it expands its reach and impact and to help tell the story of mentoring here in our local community.

**"Mentorship speaks to me. It reaches kids across our community and exposes them to new and different opportunities," says Carly.**



*Fred and Carly exploring the pyramids of Giza*

The duo has been extra involved in the BBBS mission these past few years. Fred and Carly graciously hosted the 2021 Impact Circle Celebration and Update and most recently served as Impact Circle Chairs in 2023. Their involvement has risen above the role of donors to become Game Changers within the organization. "There are endless opportunities to make a difference here in our community, whether through time, resources or advocacy. Find a cause that resonates with your passions and dive in headfirst," says Fred.

Fred and Carly can most often be found at BBBS events, trying out new restaurants, cheering on the Supernovas or traveling the world.

We're genuinely grateful for Fred and Carly's commitment to powering our mission. Their continued support has helped us meet our community's ever-changing needs. Thank you for helping make it all possible.