

Winter 2015 Newsletter



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Rockland County

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Greetings from Gillian!

As I reflect upon the many snowstorms during the past few months and the hardships dealing with navigating snow and ice, I realize that I am not really daunted by adversities. It is my firm belief that each stage of our lives, like the weather, offers us diverse abilities for optimism and progression because, no matter what, we really have no option but to tolerate change and undertake commitment to life. Take for example, the BBBS mission which within its message, the battle cry is heard year in and year out - commitment. Indeed, like life itself we commit to our work and continue to sparkle with the possibility of new growth and service expansion helping more and more children each and every year to advance their independence, well-being, and equality.

That said, we are excited to say at this time, we are busy preparing for our 5th Annual Golf Classic fundraiser at the NY Country Club on Monday, May 18th. Fundraising is an integral part of our administration as it boosts the ability for us to not only sustain the many programs we offer each year, but also to provide the opportunity to expand upon them. Interested? Then email me: gballard@bbbsofrc.com.



SAVE THE DATE: 5th Annual Golf Outing

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland is excited to announce its 5th Annual Golf Outing on Monday, May 18th, 2015 at New York Country Club. Registration will begin at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast. Dinner will be served at 3:30 p.m. Raffles, fun, great company and a tremendous program will be supported by all wishing to golf or enjoy dinner.

Call today for details: 845 634 2199 x 5

[Pay through Brown Paper Tickets at the link below](#)

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(Click Donate Online Tab & Select One Time Gift - Include in comments for Golf Outing)



Tickets available now

BROWN PAPER TICKETS

Chuck E. Cheese Announces Corporate Sponsorship!

Chuck E. Cheese has announced that it will launch a month-long Pin-Up Campaign fundraiser from April 1-30 and all customers going to Chuck E. Cheese's in Nanuet will be able to donate \$1, \$5, or a custom amount through a pin-up.

Chuck E. Cheese will also open its door to all Big Brothers Big Sisters staff volunteers, Bigs/Littles, families, and friends on **April 14** at which time, 5% of all register sales from **5-9 p.m.** together with an additional 10% for mentioning you are a friend of BBBS, will be donated back to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County.



Welcome a New Member of the BBBS Team!

CJ Miller joins Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County as its new Director of Community Development with more than 20 years experience in journalism, public relations, fundraising and government.

I've had an amazing career so far - I got invaluable experience as reporter for the Journal News, Gannett Newspapers and the Our Town newspaper in Orangetown. I've also worked for two of Rockland's vibrant not-for-profit agencies before joining former Rockland County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef's staff as Director of Communications. During my nine-year tenure in county government, I served as Senior Advisor to the then-county executive and ended my career there with four years as Tourism Director for the County of Rockland.

My work with Rockland County's not-for-profit agencies has always provided me the most fulfilling challenges of my professional career, and I'm delighted to be back in this wonderful community at such a critical time, working for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rockland County.

I'm very excited to join Gillian Ballard, Big Brothers Big Sisters' President and Chief Executive Officer, and the staff at BBBS to help raise awareness about the agency, the oldest and largest youth-mentoring program in Rockland and throughout the U.S.

Providing mentoring services for at-risk youth, children and their families is a cause that is very close to my heart. Having come from a family scarred by addiction, I know first-hand the affects it can have on families and especially children. It is my absolute privilege to be able to help raise funds and awareness for BBBS. A moment of quality time spent with a child can change a life, and that's what BBBS is all about - changing lives for the better, one child at a time.

There is such a need for strong role models for our children and young people. I'm looking forward to working with Gillian, Sarah, Jennifer, Bonnie and our wonderful Board of Directors to ensure that Rockland's families and kids always have someone to rely on and look up to, especially in these difficult economic times.

Mentoring matters and it can make a huge difference. I'm proud to be a small part of the BBBS mission.

CJ Miller
Community Outreach Program Director
cjmiller@bbbsofrc.com



Welcome a New RCMC Program Director!

I am a semi retired teacher who met Gillian by chance. I taught for 28 years here and also in Brazil. I always felt my mission was to help children grow and find their talent to master the journey of life. I still love to teach.

One day some months ago, I inquired to BBBS about helping. When the person I spoke with asked me if I could pick students up in the car, I said I would rather teach.

Gillian heard about me and called me to see if I would be interested in the Mentor Program at Dominican College. I said yes, and this is how my new journey with BBBS began.

This is my first semester as Director of the Mentor Program, so I invited some wonderful speakers to help inspire the students, and I hope to invite more speakers in the future in conjunction with the T.O.M. Program.

I come from NYC, Park Slope in Brooklyn, I married an English photojournalist and traveled a lot, which I loved, as the world is a great teacher. I went to the New School in NY for Liberal Arts and Teachers College, Columbia for teaching and curriculum. I lived in Brazil for 6 years, and I am still passionate for the country and its people.

Lastly, I am a writer, and I write children's stories. I have two sons and two little grandkids, one of whom spends her summers in Italy. I believe it is our job to help this world in all ways and to see the light and potential in each child's eyes. One must not stop in life, rather create new things, do our best, help others, be grateful and thrive.

Celeste Bester

Rockland County Mentoring Collaborative at Dominican College



Welcome to JUMP Program Director!

JUMP is a juvenile mentoring program with children from the ages of 7-14 held on Tuesday evenings from 6-7:30 at the Haverstraw REC Center. The primary objective of JUMP is to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all of our mentees, and to encourage them to make positive decisions as they develop throughout their adolescence. Since the age group of our mentees falls directly in line with some of the primary years of development and influence in school, we aim to discuss topics that they are likely to encounter during their school day. Focus groups and activities are usually based around topics such as bullying, team building, personal responsibility/accountability, health, hygiene, and peer pressure. The program also has a strong focus on keeping the children active and healthy, bringing in guests such as Kid's Crossfit/Zumba instructors and Juvenile Diabetes speakers. Additionally, the program helps to inspire the children to use their critical thinking skills by incorporating science experiments and problem solving activities such as making GAK and using UV light to detect germs on surfaces.

A SUNY Oneonta graduate, Janelle currently works as a Stem Cell Scientist for Regeneron Pharmaceuticals. Equally as passionate for giving back to the community as she is for science, Janelle volunteers for Big Brothers Big Sisters, Team Rubicon, and Soup Angels Soup Kitchen in Nyack as well as several other organizations. She has been vegan for one year and vegetarian for eight, and is the proud pet parent to four rescues: Chewie, Tux, Scooter, and Itty Bitty Kitty. For fun, she loves traveling, hiking with her dogs, and Crossfit. Her favorite quote is "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." -Gandhi

I discovered Big Brothers Big Sisters JUMP program through Volunteer New York's volunteer website three years ago. I was looking for additional organizations to volunteer my time with and came across BBBS and have been with the program ever since! It has been an absolutely wonderful experience watching the children grow into young adults and do well in their high school careers after the program. We have even had some of the program graduates return to coach the younger mentees in sports!

Janelle Colon
Juvenile Mentoring Program Director
info@bbbsofrc.com



Junior Varsity Basketball Champion

Congratulations to our Little Jason!

This Winter Jason's Junior Varsity Basketball team made it to the 2015 Basketball Championships. Jason not only participates in basketball at school, but he also participates with leagues in his neighborhood. Jason, congratulations on all your hard work!



Black Achievement Award Recipient!

Congratulations to Our Little Sister Daphkar!

This Winter Daphkar received the Black Achievement Award at Rockland Community College due to receiving straight A's. Daphkar was one of 6 student to receive the award from her Elementary School. The staff at Big Brothers Big Sisters would like to express how proud we are of your achievement.



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