



Big Brothers Big Sisters

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Mentoring Relationship Leads to First Generation College Student

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GREEN BAY, Wis. – Three years ago, Big Brothers Big Sisters received a call from a very ambitious Daniela Santiago asking if there was a mentor available for her to hang out with and help her reach her goals. At the same time, Theresa Stinski called Big Brothers Big Sisters to re-enroll as a mentor. She had been previously matched in another state and felt it was time to mentor in her new community.

At first, like any new friends, questions were asked of, “what is your favorite food... restaurant... movie, etc?” Theresa attended Daniela’s Quinceanera (15th birthday/adulthood party). Daniela learned from Theresa how to knit and bake cookies.

Fast forward three years. Daniela is now a high school senior asking Theresa to help her complete college applications. With a new driver’s license, part-time job, CNA certification and taking AP classes; Daniela is extremely goal driven. She is on track to be the first in her family to attend college.

Daniela stated, “I have my colleges narrowed down to UW-Madison, UW-Green Bay and Ripon College. I would like to pursue degrees in Pre-Med and Human Biology. In order to be successful you need to have a passion for what you’re doing. My goal in life is to be a Family Practitioner.”

National “Make a Difference Day” is Saturday, October 23. It is the perfect day for community members to start something and make an impact on the life of a youth. More than 75 youth are currently waiting for a community member to make a difference through Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Big Brothers Big Sisters doesn’t just talk about having an impact – it has proven results to demonstrate the impact. Nearly 90% of youth state their mentoring relationship provided them with guidance and support; and had a positive impact on their life.

When compared with their peers, youth who have a mentor matched via Big Brothers Big Sisters are:

- 52% more likely to remain in school
- 75% more likely to earn a 4-year degree
- 48% more likely to volunteer
- 81% more likely to hold a leadership role in an organization

-more-

Daniela submitted the following to describe her mentor:

An Angel

Theresa Stinski, a role model and hard worker, has impacted my life greatly. I look up to her all the time. When I need help with homework or need to talk, she is there for me. She is very enthusiastic when it comes to teaching me new things like knitting. Theresa is a person who I notice is very glad to take time off her schedule to be with me. I appreciate the fact that she does that. When she feels I am in need for advice she will give it to me. Theresa is always full of energy, is responsible and respectful. For me, the moment that I will never forget is when she came to my golden party of 15. I hope Big Brothers Big Sisters goes on for many years so other kids like me have mentors who can help them out; not just to help, but to have fun.

Theresa stated, "As a mentor, you believe that the child is the only one benefiting from the relationship. However, you don't realize how much you receive as well... seeing them grow in confidence, their grades improving and they start to open up to you sharing their life. I've learned how much of an impact I can have by just giving some of my time and attention. Something so simple, yet valued by the child so much."

Theresa began making a difference three years ago by volunteering to mentor. During the past three years she has impacted Daniela's life. Saturday, October 23 is the perfect day to start something by volunteering to make a difference and mentor a youth.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeastern Wisconsin is the premier youth mentoring organization in the area, serving Brown, Oconto and Door counties. The agency's mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of youth through professionally supported mentoring relationships. Since 1972, this non-profit organization has expertly matched children ages 6 and up with volunteer mentors. For more information, visit www.bbbsnew.org.

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