



## Big Brothers Big Sisters

### MEDIA ALERT

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### **Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region To Announce Expansion of Youth Mentoring Reach in City of Chester and Throughout Delaware County**

*Key Pennsylvania government officials and the Philadelphia Union Foundation join the region's leading youth mentoring organization to announce plans to empower and guide more underserved children in Delaware County*

**WHAT:** On **Thursday, March 10, 2016**, Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region (BBBS Independence), the region's leading youth mentoring organization, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) and the Philadelphia Union Foundation will announce BBBS Independence's expanded impact of its already successful one-to-one mentoring programs within the city of Chester, Pa., and throughout Delaware County. Media are invited to attend a press conference featuring remarks from **Commissioner Josh Shapiro**, chairman of the PCCD; Chester Mayor **Thaddeus Kirkland**; **Marcus Allen**, CEO, BBBS Independence; and **Stephane Bouvel**, with the Philadelphia Union Foundation. They can also see the BBBS Independence and Philadelphia Union Foundation's mentoring program in action.

At the event, BBBS Independence will announce it has received a \$135,818 grant from the **PCCD** through the Substance Abuse Education Demand Reduction (SAEDR) program. As a result of the SAEDR grant, over the next two years, BBBS Independence will match 100 children and youth with 100 caring and compassionate adult volunteer mentors in disadvantaged and underserved communities throughout Delaware County, with a focus on the city of Chester. BBBS Independence is actively seeking volunteers in Delaware County to serve as mentors. At the event on March 10, details of an upcoming **Call to Action Forum**, where volunteers can learn more about the power of mentorship in their community and how to become involved, will be announced.

Additionally, March 10 is a kick-off event announcing Chester-based **Philadelphia Union Foundation**, of Philadelphia's professional Major League Soccer team, as a partner in BBBS Independence's flagship Beyond School Walls<sup>SM</sup> (BSW) mentoring in the workplace program. Children in these programs not only have a new adult friend and role model, but are exposed to inspiring and diverse career opportunities — something they may have never experienced before. The Philadelphia Union Foundation is the first professional sports team to partner with BBBS Independence in its BSW program.



## Big Brothers Big Sisters

Approximately 25 employees at the Philadelphia Union and Philadelphia Union Foundation (“Bigs”), representing various departments, including ticket sales, operations and media, are matched with sixth graders (“Littles”) at Toby Farms Elementary School in Brookhaven. At the March 10 event, Littles will work with their mentors to create and fly their own paper airplanes, providing a fun introduction into the basics of physics while emphasizing the importance of teamwork.

**WHEN:**            **Thursday, March 10, 2016**  
                             **Suggested media arrival: 11:35 a.m.**

Students will arrive at 11:30 a.m. to get settled for the official program start at 11:40 a.m. The program is expected to conclude by 12:30 p.m.

**Key Audio/Visuals:**

**11:40 a.m.** Press conference (see speakers below)

**11:50 a.m.** Paper airplane mentoring activity with Bigs and Littles begins

**WHO:**

- **Marcus Allen**, CEO, BBBS Independence, will provide opening remarks
- **Commissioner Josh Shapiro**, Chairman of the PCCD, will announce the grant and briefly discuss the role of mentorship in crime prevention among youth in our communities
- **Thaddeus Kirkland**, Mayor of Chester, will speak to the need for mentors in Chester and Delaware County and announce the details of the upcoming BBBS Independence Call to Action Forum
- **Stephane Bouvel**, Chair of the Program Committee at the Philadelphia Union Foundation, will provide a brief overview of the Foundation’s unique mentoring partnership with BBBS Independence and introduce the activity with Bigs and Littles

**WHERE:**            **Talen Energy Stadium, Home of the Philadelphia Union**  
                             **Stadium Club Room**  
                             1 Stadium Drive  
                             Chester, PA 19013

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**About Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region**

Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region is a donor-supported organization that enriches, encourages and empowers children to reach their highest potential through safe, one-to-one mentoring relationships. Volunteering as a Big Brother or Big Sister is about making a measurable difference in a child’s life by sharing new perspectives and experiences. In Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties in PA and Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties in NJ, nearly 4,000 children annually are more successful socially and academically because of the work of Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region. Visit us at [www.independencebigs.org](http://www.independencebigs.org).

**About the Philadelphia Union Foundation**

The Philadelphia Union Foundation provides opportunities for children through the power of relationships to offer transformational change in the areas of education, community, health and recreation. It is our aim to have a positive impact on these children with respect to character development, academic performance and physical well-being. The Foundation will use soccer as a conduit for change by reinforcing character values of integrity, effort, accountability and pride.