



## Big Brothers Big Sisters

### **Big Brothers Big Sisters Agencies Southeastern Pennsylvania and Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties Merge**

*New Entity Named Big Brother Big Sisters Independence Region  
To Reflect Expanded Service Area and Mission to Serve Nearly 4,000 Children in 2016*

**PHILADELPHIA, PA (January 11, 2016)** — Big Brothers Big Sisters Southeastern Pennsylvania (BBBS SEPA) today announced it has officially merged with neighboring New Jersey affiliate Big Brothers Big Sisters of Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties (BBBS BCG), effective January 1, 2016.

The merged entity, named Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region (BBBS Independence), will enable the nonprofit to impact more children in a broader service area including Philadelphia, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware Counties in Pennsylvania, and Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties in New Jersey. The new organization has 81 employees and is estimated to serve approximately 4,000 children in 2016 — making it the third largest Big Brothers Big Sisters agency in the nation.

BBBS Independence is the latest evolution in the organizational history of an agency that has positively impacted Greater Philadelphia for more than 100 years. Marcus Allen, CEO of BBBS Independence, stated, “Historically, we have merged with neighboring affiliates whenever it allowed us to operate more efficiently and reach more kids in need of our services. We are excited about this merger because it allows both agencies to take advantage of important business considerations such as staffing infrastructure, innovative programs and processes, enhanced technology and organizational economies of scale. At the end of the day, it all comes down to strategically positioning ourselves for future growth and positively impacting the lives of children who need it most.”

The merger offers several key benefits for serving children across the region, including:

- Continued service in existing Southeastern PA and Southern NJ counties, including brick-and-mortar office space in NJ.
- Combined mentoring resources and increased opportunities to participate in activities throughout the region.
- Streamlined technology and database systems, allowing for improved efficiencies and enhanced program and fund development efforts.
- Increased financial stability, attractive to a broader array of individual and corporate donors.
- Reduced administrative costs as we increase the number of communities we serve.
- Stronger Board of Directors, allowing for better board recruitment, dedicated regional boards in PA and NJ, and access to potential new partners.
- Dedicated government affairs staff, to help identify NJ grants targeted toward the most difficult populations to serve.
- Continued leadership and innovation in mentorship programs and the ability to bring those new programs to children in NJ.

“We have high hopes for building new programs such as Beyond Schools Walls, BBBS SEPA’s successful workplace mentoring program, which has not yet been implemented in southern New Jersey,” said Lloyd Freeman Esq., Board Chair of BBBS BCG. “We believe there is potential for significant partnerships in all three New Jersey counties.”

“BBBS SEPA has demonstrated success working with children in the juvenile justice and foster care



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systems, and aims to replicate that over time in all counties,” said Ernest Pighini, Board Chair-elect of the merged organization. “We are always looking for ways to help more children in need. This merger will allow us to serve more children with the highest quality mentoring programs, bring continued innovation to our region, and ensure increased relevancy as a stronger community partner.”

The agency will use a new website URL ([www.independencebig.org](http://www.independencebig.org)) and can be found on social media using @independencebig.

### **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. Serving 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.independencebig.org](http://www.independencebig.org).

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