



Big Brothers
Big Sisters.
OF MERCER COUNTY



2022 Annual Impact Report



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

When an organization is founded on the idea of bringing adults and youth together in mentoring relationships but the lingering effects of a pandemic continue to keep us apart, it can be challenging to carry out our mission. Nevertheless, that is just what Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County continued to do last year, thanks to generous donors, a mission-driven staff, a dedicated Board of Trustees, and of course, the volunteer Bigs who bring our mission of mentoring to life.

Last year, BBBS-Mercer collaborated in new and innovative ways in order to bring the gift of mentoring to more youth. We launched two new programs:

- Big Futures, a mentoring program created to provide support and mentorship to formerly homeless and at-risk young adults. In partnership with our friends at Anchor House we are providing mentoring to young adults ages 18-21 as they navigate entering the workforce, obtaining their college degree or GED, and living on their own for the first time; and
- Sports Buddies, which pairs The College of New Jersey students with elementary-aged youth in the Boys and Girls Club's after-school program in one-to-one mentoring relationships based on building sports-related skills and values.

In 2022 our team doubled the number of new school-based matches alongside the launch of a new mentoring program between Nottingham High School and Klockner Elementary. We also grew our Community-based matches by more than 50% and launched a new workplace partnership with Robert Wood Johnson Hospital.

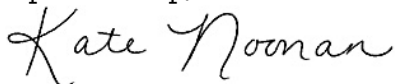
While our programs may have looked different – with our workplace partners meeting their Littles over video screens, our Community-based events taking place largely outdoors, and BBBS-Mercer providing virtual training to parents and volunteers to meet the challenges the pandemic continued to present – we remained steadfast in our commitment to help youth however possible, because the hardships they face haven't gone away. In fact, they've only been heightened by the pandemic.

According to Debra Howry, M.D., M. P.H. of the CDC, "The COVID-19 pandemic has created traumatic stressors that have the potential to further erode students' mental well-being. Our research shows that surrounding youth with the proper support can reverse these trends and help youth now and in the future."

As we begin the new year, our need for mentors is urgent. Providing underserved and under-resourced yet promising youth with a role model to support them on the path toward a brighter future has never been a more critical need in our communities – but it doesn't take a superhero. All it takes is a few hours each month and a desire to positively impact the life of a young person.

We remain dedicated to our critical mission and will continue to innovate, providing high-quality mentorship opportunities to our current Littles, serving our Waitlist Littles with monthly "Bigs for Day" programming with our corporate partners, and recruiting more volunteers from all walks of life to support our youth in achieving their best possible future. Thank you for supporting us in this important work.

In partnership,



Kate Noonan

Executive Director



A LETTER FROM OUR 2023 BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

After serving as BBBS-Mercer's Vice President for the past three years, it is my great honor to take on the role of Board President, working with our Executive Director and former Board Trustee, Kate Noonan, as we both entered new leadership roles at BBBS-Mercer, as Board Chair and Executive Director.

COVID-19 continues to take precedence as we navigate new variants and pivot to find new ways to serve our community. I cannot emphasize how proud I am of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County team, from my fellow Board members new and old to our dedicated staff, and most especially to our committed Bigs and our resilient Littles and their families, who have faced these challenges with optimism and hope. The isolation resulting from closed schools and quarantines placed Littles at even greater risk. The pandemic made us change the way we meet our mission, but could not force us to abandon it. Social distancing prevented Bigs and Littles from meeting at schools or in the community. Rather than throwing up our hands and simply waiting out the pandemic, our team worked through these obstacles and found ways for matches to maintain their relationships and continue to grow together. Remarkably, the staff was able to maintain many existing matches, and make new ones.



In many ways, the pandemic has brought about a "new normal," and that extends to BBBS-Mercer's fundraising efforts. This past fall, we launched Sports Buddies – a collaboration with the local affiliate of The Boy & Girls Club – to help recruit mentors that will reduce the number of boys on our waiting list. This program provides young people with unique sports experiences that promote physical and emotional health, the adoption of a healthy lifestyle, and a sense of community. We are truly grateful to everyone who strengthened BBBS-Mercer this past year through gifts of your time and resources.

As we look ahead, we encourage you to support BBBS-Mercer with an investment in better futures for the Littles – those currently in matches and those on our ever-growing waitlist.

Thank you so much for standing by BBBS-Mercer through our year of transitions, and we look forward to partnering with you toward our shared mission for many years to come.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Marx". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Gary Marx

Principal | Blue Cap Advisors

About BBBS-Mercer

OUR HISTORY

The Mercer County Chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters was founded in 1973 by a group of educators and concerned citizens. Their goal was to serve and support the unmet needs of at-risk youth – many of whom were impoverished, living in single-parent homes, and losing their way in turbulent times.

Fashioned after and affiliated with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (founded in 1904), the chapter remains a vital part of the social service structure of Mercer County.

In 2002, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County (BBBS-Mercer) was reconfigured and reincorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Today, the organization serves Mercer County youth through its Community, School-based, and Workplace Mentoring programs.

MISSION

The mission of BBBS-Mercer is to promote one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the promise of youth. We pursue our mission by matching underserved youth in Mercer County, ages 6-18, with caring adult mentors who provide emotional and intellectual support to help them navigate whatever challenges they may face.



TRENTON: A COMMUNITY IN DISTRESS



47.7 of students graduate high school



65% are eligible for subsidized lunches



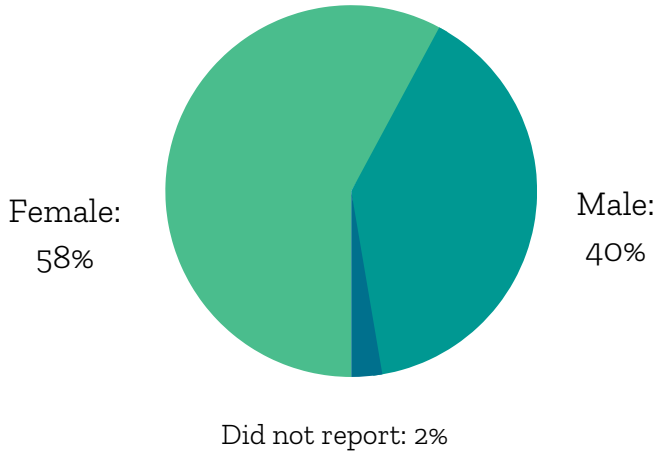
12.7 of students did not complete the 9th grade



~47% of families with children are living in poverty

278 YOUTH SERVED IN 2022

LITTLES' GENDERS



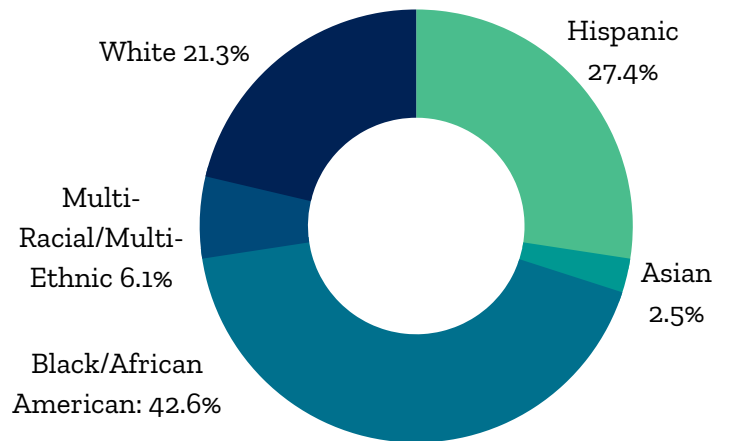
WHERE THEY LIVE

TRENTON:	43 %
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP:	23 %
HAMILTON:	15 %
PRINCETON:	6%
EAST WINDSOR:	3%
EWING:	2%
OTHER:	8%

47%

of Littles qualified for free or reduced lunches

Race/Ethnicity of Youth Served (reported)



AGE RANGE OF OUR LITTLES



NEW IN 2022

BIG FUTURES

This BBBS-Mercer initiative – new in 2022 – is a partnership with Anchor House, an organization that provides transitional housing and programming to formerly at-risk youth ages 18 to 21 years of age. Young adults in this program are matched with seasoned mentors who share life knowledge and career experience – both degreed and non-degreed – with them. BBBS-Mercer supplements Anchor House’s programs with monthly seminars presented by corporate partners, providing valuable networking opportunities to secure entry-level positions. This program is consistent with one of the tenets of BBBS: providing young people with mentorship and plan for their future.



Launched a new Workplace Mentoring Program with RWJ-Barnabas Hospital and Trenton Central High School

Increased our Average Community-Based Match Length by 11 months to 38 months.

Partnered with CM Consulting to conduct audit of our programs and train staff.



SPORTS BUDDIES

Sports Buddies is a nationwide initiative aimed at encouraging youth to be physically active while also providing them with valuable mentorship and sports-related skills such as teamwork, good sportsmanship, and resiliency. Through a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, we pair youth one-to-one with a college-aged mentor from The College of New Jersey. Together, they participate in twice-monthly sessions where they learn different sports and develop life-changing relationships with their volunteer Bigs.

COMMUNITY-BASED MENTORING

Community-based mentorship was first pioneered by BBBSA over 100 years ago. This program screens and matches volunteer adult mentors from within the community ("Bigs") with children aged 6-18 ("Littles") for a minimum of one-year. Matches meet on their own time, typically spending 4 – 6 hours a month working together to build a lasting bond. Mentors provide children with friendship, support, and exposure to new ideas, advice, and fun events in the community.

98%

of program participants stated they had a special adult in their life, up from 56% at the start of the program.

101

children served in 2022

BIG SISTER BRIANNE & LITTLE SISTER JAELYN



"I love that kid!"

That was Brianne's exclamation after just one year of mentoring Little Sister Jaelyn - a creative and energetic 12-year-old from Hamilton, NJ who has struggled with in-school bullying and sometimes acts out when she's feeling overwhelmed.

Brianne and Jaelyn spend their match time grabbing lunch, going to the mall, or taking fun trips. Jaelyn's parents agree that Brianne has been a positive influence. Brianne notes, "Jaelyn's come such a long way since I first met her. It means so much to be that I can - hopefully - continue to help set her up for success. I'm looking forward to the next year!"



SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING

This program is particularly effective in reaching those who live in vulnerable neighborhoods or who live in homes with non-English speaking parents. Students are referred by teachers and school staff. Bigs - who are often high school or college students - meet with their Littles for one to two hours a week in a school or after-school setting to provide homework support and/or tutoring in English and reading. Littles build their social networks and self-esteem while developing life-long friendships.

56%

Littles surveyed improved their grades in social studies, languages and math.

100

children served in 2022

BIG SISTER SNEHI & LITTLE SISTER JOHARI

Little Sister, Johari, was referred to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County shortly after moving to NJ. Her school counselor quickly realized that Johari would benefit from having a mentor that she could collaborate with and talk to as she navigated school in a new place.

She was soon paired with Snehi, a biology major at The College of New Jersey from West Windsor.

Snehi and Johari have been matched for over a year. They meet weekly during Johari's lunch break, enjoying their time together talking, making art, and working on school projects. Johari also loves hearing Snehi's opinion on world events.



"Johari always makes me laugh!"
-Big Sister Snehi

"Snehi always listens to me and never judges. She even gives me good advice about school."
-Little Sister Johari

WORKPLACE MENTORING

Launched in 2013, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County's Workplace Mentoring Program (WPM) was designed to introduce at-risk high school students to the vast array of possible career paths. Working in collaboration with our corporate partners, students from local high schools - some of whom are first-generation college seekers- are matched one-to-one with dynamic employee/mentors who encourage and inspire them to explore wide-ranging career options and to visualize themselves in advanced, professional settings.

94%

of program participants believe that they will graduate from high school.

77

youth served in 2022

Bloomberg

With our Bloomberg partnership, Trenton Central High School students were invited to sessions that, among general career advice, specialized in financial information, including budgeting and financial aid in college, as well as business-related topics, such as public speaking, marketing, and analytics.

NJM, partnered with Foundation Academy Charter School in Trenton, NJ, has made a huge impact on students interested in learning about business careers. Matches in the program also participate in health-related session and community service projects together.

NJM Insurance Group



PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Our partnership with Princeton University has been a key relationship in empowering Hightstown and Trenton Area High School girls so they can feel good about who they are in the present and confident in who they will be in the future. Programming, among the core tenets of WMP, has specialized in health, gender issues, higher education, and career opportunities, among other relevant topics.

The St. Francis Medical Center program provided students with a plethora of information and resources surrounding medical careers. Taking a holistic approach, students had the opportunity to learn from practitioners to administrators.



Solvay, our 2022 Corporate Sponsor of the year, in addition to providing mentorship, has added great content and resources into the banks of students interested in both STEM-based careers as well as business.

BBBS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Big Brother Oniel and Little Brother Yabneel: Matched 8 Years

Oniel grew up in Puerto Rico and was the first in his family and community to go to college. Growing up he never had a mentor to help him "figure things out." Knowing how valuable that can be, he was excited to be paired with Yabneel, a 15-year-old Hispanic from Trenton, NJ, who was struggling with depression and anxiety.

Like Oniel, Yabneel came to New Jersey as a teenager, when he was 13 years old. His guardian described him as helpful around the house, but moody, without many friends, a change from his life in Honduras, where he was always surrounded by his peers.

Since spending time with Oniel, his guardian reports that Yabneel is clearly happier. He is more talkative and making new friends at school.



Big Brother Lucky & Little Brother Malik: Matched 8 Years

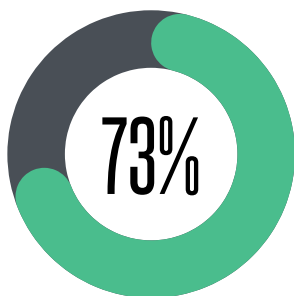
Malik was a nine-year-old African American boy from Trenton, NJ when he got lucky – or rather when he met Lucky, an Asian from Papua, New Guinea who signed up with Big Brothers Big Sisters to be a mentor.

Seven years later, Malik (now 17) considers his Big Brother as part of the family, so much so that Malik and his mom attended Lucky's wedding. Malik's mother credits Lucky with inspiring and motivating his Little Brother to do better in school; Little Brother recently received an award for the National Honor Society for Spanish and was inducted at his school for having a GPA of 3.8. He's thriving and looking forward to going to college.



Malik & Lucky then....

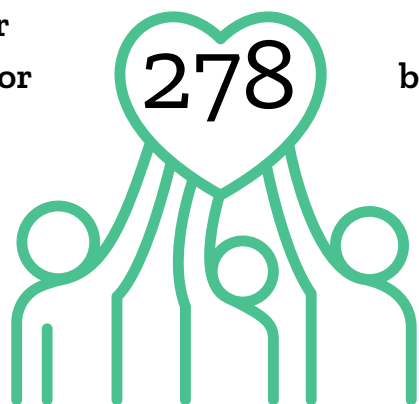
ACROSS MERCER COUNTY IN 2022



of program participants maintained or improved their relationship with their parent or guardian

100%

of program participants were competent in avoiding risky behaviors like tobacco, drugs, and alcohol



Number of youth lives changed by BBBS-Mercer programs in 2022

“

My match with Lucky is going awesome. I couldn't have asked for anyone better to be my Big. The past 7-8 years with him have been phenomenal. I feel supported by him & I truly feel like he is one of my own siblings.

– Malik

”



...Malik & Lucky now

EVENTS IN 2022

May 19

BBBS-Mercer's Annual golf outing and fundraiser included brunch, golf, prizes, auctions, dinner, and a lot of fun.



June 12

Annual Summer Picnic: Bigs, Littles, families, Board, staff, and supporters of BBBS-Mercer came together to celebrate a successful year.



October 21

Autumn Culinaire: Our largest fundraising event of the year, honored Big Brother Lucky Rajeswaran, Big Sister Jessica Hoppe-Dagci, and our Corporate Partner Solvay.





November 9

When our annual Car Raffle ends, someone takes home a brand new car! In 2022, it was Susan from Princeton Junction who took home a 2023 Mercedes-Benz.



December 17

Holiday Party: Where the BBBS-Mercer community gets to come together and celebrate the holidays as a family.



Mark Your Calendars 2023

JUNE 5
GOLF
OUTING



SPRING 2023
CAR
RAFFLE



OCTOBER 19
AUTUMN
CULINAIRE



BIG SPOTLIGHT

"I am a better human, dad, and CEO because I mentor."

Flint Lane knows the value of mentoring firsthand. As a child in a single-parent home, he developed a strong, nurturing relationship with a neighbor who gave him the confidence to accomplish anything. In school, a teacher nurtured his love of computers, which would one day lead to a successful career.

Later, as an adult, he saw his wife Kathy generously giving her time to causes she was passionate about. Feeling a responsibility to do the same, Flint found Big Brothers Big Sisters and signed up to be a mentor.

Flint recalls fondly the friendship he built with his first Little Brother, Ross. Each time they had an outing planned he would arrive to find Ross already waiting outside for him, eager to do whatever they had planned together. Their match provided Ross with a much-needed break from the challenges he faced, as well as undivided attention from a caring role model who was supporting him on a path toward a bright future.

According to Flint – a CEO and father – anyone can make the time to mentor. "There is plenty of time in the week," he says. "It's all about how you prioritize it. Maybe it's one less Netflix show or trip to the gym, but the payoff is worth it."

Flint sees the impact of volunteerism in his career, too. "Employees who lead a balanced life are far better for the company." His experience has encouraged him to develop a company culture that promotes volunteerism and life balance at his company, Bill Trust. "Leave at 5:30. Go do something for the community or with your kids." As a result, Bill Trust employees across the globe frequently give back with service days and projects.

Flint notes that the benefits of mentoring are numerous for both the mentor and mentee and also the larger community. Those who are mentored often go on to mentor others. Flint saw this firsthand at a BBBS summer picnic he attended with his second Little Brother, Liam. The two were having a catch when a younger child came over to join in. Liam turned to the younger boy and started teaching him how to play.

For those on the fence about becoming a Big, Flint shares, ***"I'd encourage folks out there to give it a try. In 20 years, you don't want to look back and wish you had done this. The world will be a better place for it."***



"It's far easier to find the time than you possibly think, And you will wildly underestimate the impact it will have on a child's life and on yours."

-Big Brother Flint Lane



More about Flint:

Flint Lane is a two-time Big Brother, former BBBS-Mercer Board Member, an incredibly successful entrepreneur. He is also a generous donor to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County. Through their financial contributions, Flint and Kathy have supported more than 150 matches, some of which have lasted a decade or more.

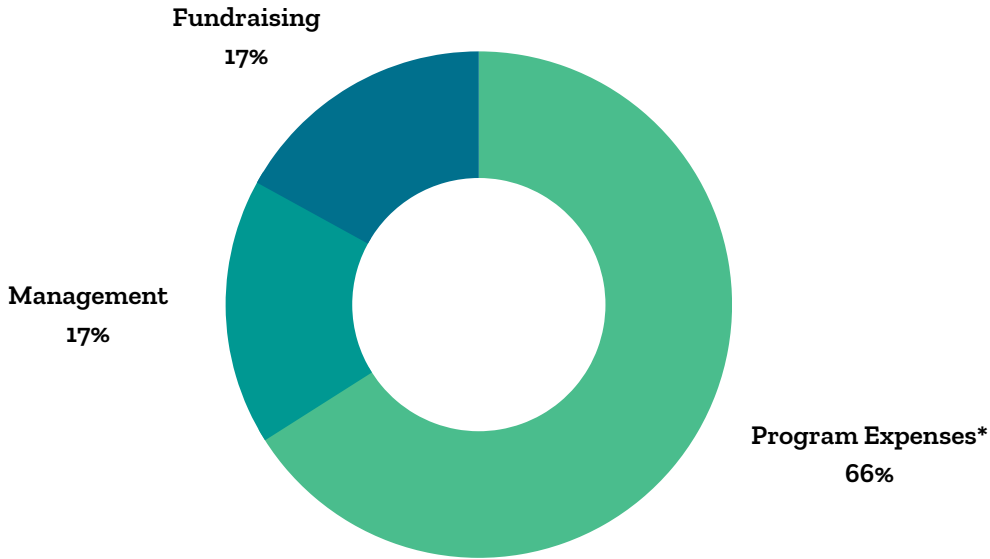
For Flint and Kathy, the goal has always been to show their children that the accumulation of wealth isn't the only benchmark of a successful life. As a result, they now have grown children who share their spirit of volunteerism and give back themselves.

2022 IN REVIEW



2022 Financial Overview

How BBBS-Mercer Spends YOUR Dollars*

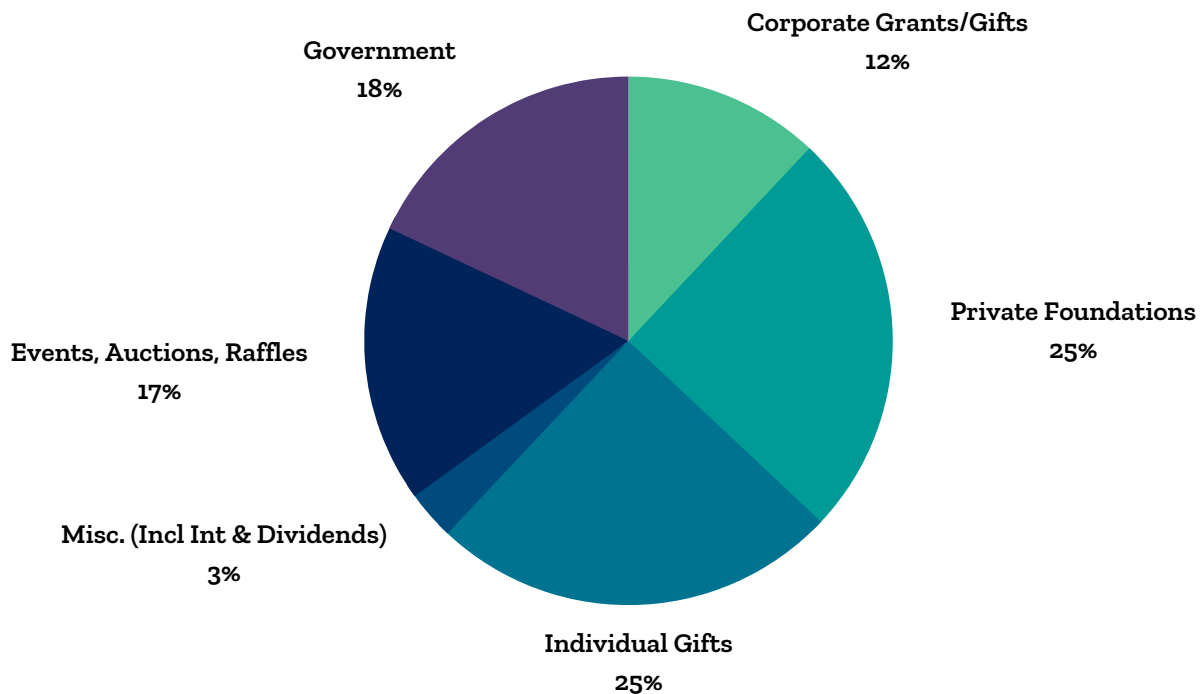


* BBBS-Mercer does not charge Littles, their families, or Big volunteers for any of our services.

All of our revenue comes from YOUR support throughout the year.

** BBBS-Mercer Program expenditures do NOT include in-kind contributions from our many corporate partners, nor does the total account for the nearly 17,000 hours donated by volunteer Bigs.

An Overview of Revenue Streams*



*Percentages are based on estimates; these numbers have not yet been audited

THANK YOU DONORS

MENTORS || GIFTS OF \$10,000 +

Anonymous | Cliff & Ellen Cramer | F & K Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation

GUARDIANS || GIFTS OF \$5,000 - \$9,999

Anonymous | The Bastian Fund in memory of Peter Oliphant | Mark Cannon
Michael & Christine Petrane | Ruby Hofmann & Mark Leenhouts

PARTNERS || GIFTS OF \$1,000 - \$4,999

Anonymous | Brian Lovett | David Thompson | Kirk Huckel | Mr. Allen & Melanie Boston
Simla Ozbek | Stephen Klein | Theresa Holzheimer

FRIENDS || GIFTS OF \$500 - \$999

Anonymous | Andrew Gordon & Courtney Westerlind | Bruce Gorman | Chris English | Deborah Runyon
Gary Marx | Janelle Hazell | Matteo Family Charitable Fund | Thomas Gray

SUPPORTERS || GIFTS OF \$499 and under

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**If we have inadvertently misspelled or left off your name; or if we have misrepresented your contributions to BBBS-Mercer, we offer our sincere apology.*

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COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



Mary Owen **Borden** Foundation



The **Wawa**
Foundation



PRINCETON AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
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Kate Noonan - Executive Director
Lorraine Goodman - Director of Advancement
Tara Belford - Director of Community-Based Programs
Prema Ramroop - Director of Site-Based Programs
Natalie De La Paz - Bilingual Case Manager
Jashvina Shah - Site-Based Case Manager & Social Media Manager
Jo Molnar - Customer Relations Specialist
Laura Leal - Volunteer and Family Referral Specialist

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Emily Bartow - NextGen Board Vice President
Jennifer Reis - NextGen Board Secretary
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Big Sisters®**
OF MERCER COUNTY

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