LEGACY AWARD – Dan & Lisa Falasca

Since the first time Dan attended a Big Brothers Big Sisters event and heard Paul Gramm tell his story about being a Big Brother to Kyle we think he’s been hooked or as some would say...he drank the cool-aid. Which he then shared with his whole family.

Big Brothers Big Sisters is so lucky to have the Falsaca’s in our family.

Over the years, the Falasca’s have been leaders both personally and professionally. From community partner, event sponsor, to society member, and most recently their donation of the Car Barn and chairing a very successful golf tournament their generous support continues to take our breath away.

We appreciate everything Dan and Lisa do to support our mission and vision.

BEST KEPT SECRET – PRESTON CENTUOLO

Here he comes to save the day or in this case the Big Night. Just when you think everything is going to run smoothly the sound system is not able to fulfill the needs to help one of our most important fundraising events be successful.

Not once but twice Preston Centuolo came to our rescue with no time to spare and our guests had no idea we were in a desperate situation. He humbly, quietly, and quickly saved the night.

Congratulations Preston!!!! You are our Best Kept Secret and we thank you for saving our Night.
KEVIN LUDWIG

Dr. Kevin Ludwig, veterinarian and owner of the Animal Clinic of Millville was matched to Little Brother Marcus on January 11, 2011. To fourteen-year old Marcus and his Aunt Julie (Marcus’ guardian), Kevin is just “Kevin”.

But in reality, he is so much more. He is a Big Brother. Friend, Father-figure. Life-changer.

What he does to help others is done anonymously, without any fanfare or recognition, carrying on in his quiet manner as if he isn’t completely changing the world around him, though he is most certainly changing the world for at least one young man, his Little Brother Marcus.

Thanks to Kevin, Marcus’ life is forever changed. He has the skills, outlook, confidence, and compassion to avoid the pitfalls of substance abuse and crime that would otherwise be Marcus’ fate. Big Brothers like Kevin challenge us to continue in our work, changing lives one Little at a time. Though this humble and caring man would never seek out recognition, it is without hesitation that this year Kevin was selected as this year’s Big Brother for our agency and the state of New Jersey.

Congratulations! This is an award which is well deserved.

(pictured above left to right: President/CEO Donna Bennett, Big Brother of the Year Kevin Ludwig, Director of Programs Tygh Powell, Board President Shayne Bevilacqua & Director Adult-School Based Mentoring Danielle Clementson)

2018 Life Saver Recipient
Dolphin Swim Club & Athletic Club

Each year the Dolphin Swim and Athletic Club host Big Brothers Big Sisters of Cumberland & Salem Counties’ Bigs, Littles and families for an annual summer picnic. A fun-filled day for all who attend is also an opportunity to learn about pool safety and swim instruction, that is provided by the Dolphin Swim and Athletic Club staff.

We are honored to have the support of The Dolphin Swim Club.
Patty and Chakyra were matched on July 26, 2012

At the time Chakyra was just 12 years old and living with her great grandmother who was raising her. Chakyra was getting into trouble at school, so her great grandmother decided to contact Big Brothers Big Sisters. Chakyra and Patty had an instant connection and after only a few outings Chakyra stated, “I love her already”.

They have an amazing relationship. Chakyra is now 17 years old. She gets good grades, she has learned to talk things out and she has excelled in the sport of basketball. Patty has proven to be a great role model and mentor. She has an extremely busy life, but she always finds the time to get together with Chakyra which has made all the difference in her Little Sister’s life. Patty also helps the agency whenever she can, and she is one of our biggest cheerleaders.

For these and many more reasons Patty has been selected as Big Sister of the Year for our agency and the State of New Jersey.

_Congratulations! This is an award which is well deserved._

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**2018 Santa’s Help Recipient**

**Newfield National Bank**

For more than a decade Newfield National Bank has been a valuable partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters as a Community Partner, Event Sponsor, Board Leadership, and most importantly Mentors for our School-Based Mentoring Program.

We recognize Newfield National Bank and all their associates that participate as Santa’s Helper with our Annual Christmas Holiday efforts by sponsoring multiple families during the holiday season.

The staff at Newfield National Bank always go above and beyond to help families during the holidays. Each year we are more amazed by their generosity and when we make the deliveries to the families it feels like we are presenting them with a winning lottery ticket.

_We appreciate all Newfield National Bank has done to support our Littles and their families._

_Pictured above left to right: Newfield National Bank Vice President, Joseph Kenney, Jr.; BBBS President/CEO, Donna Bennett; Director of Programs, Tygh Powell, BBBS Board President, Shayne Bevilacqua and Director of Adult School-Based Mentoring, Danielle Clementson_
Quoted from 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 ‘Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.’

When Big Brothers Big Sisters was looking for a new location for our Annual Holiday Party we decided that we wanted to be centrally located for our families that live throughout Cumberland and Salem counties. Without hesitation Bridgeton First Wesleyan Church opened their doors to Big Brothers Big Sisters to not only set up the night before but to also turn their church into what looks like the North Pole for 24 hours.

*Congratulations to Bridgeton First Wesleyan Church. You are our Cheerful Giver and we thank you.*

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**Best Supporting Business – Sweet Things with Style**

Sweets, sweets, and more sweets. Isn’t that what everyone enjoys? Each year we can count on Sweet Things with Styles for their support by donating individualized gift bags filled with sweet goodness for every Little that attends our Easter Party and Holiday Party then, if that wasn’t enough, we can also count on them to donate a ‘Chocolate of the Month’ gift package for a lucky winner at the Big Night Wine Tasting and Auction.

*Congratulations! We appreciate your efforts and support.*
Cheerleader Award

Esther Carter

Mrs. Carter, school guidance counselor at Indian Avenue School in Bridgeton, has assisted Big Brothers Big Sisters as the school coordinator for her school for many years. The program has seen many changes in those years, but Mrs. Carter has been a dedicated partner in promoting the school-based program. In the 2017 and 2018 school years, a surge of new teachers and students became involved as Bigs and Littles, forming meaningful and lasting relationships for some of the students most at risk for becoming overlooked. The matches at Indian Avenue School have truly become part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters family, participating in agency activities throughout the year and becoming connected with other resources available to their families. We thank Mrs. Carter for making us feel at home at Indian Avenue School and for continually promoting the mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters in her school community. We look forward to continuing this growth with even more matches in the fall of 2018.

Congratulations Mrs. Carter (pictured left). We appreciate your cheerleading style.

Helping Hands

Melissa’s Mittens

Melissa’s Mittens has been a supporter of Big Brothers Big Sisters for quite some time. Volunteering at various events we are honored to be able to count on Melissa’s Mittens. Whether it is distributing books or working with Littles on arts and crafts projects the members of Melissa’s Mittens are always willing to lend a helping hand.

Congratulations and THANK YOU to Bob & Agnes Sharp and the members of Melissa’s Mittens
Margie Varesio has been matched to her Little Sister since 2016, however she first became involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters in 2015. Margie is a great Big Sister and role model, but she decided to take her commitment a step further by becoming an office volunteer.

Whenever needed Margie helps with our office mailings, which can be extremely large at times and she also helps with activities and events. Margie always finds the time to lend a hand to the agency. This year we would like to show our appreciation by presenting Margie with the 2018 Biggie Award for Best Friend.

We thank Margie for all the time, effort, and support she gives to Big Brothers Big Sisters.

High School Big of the Year

Madison Benevento (pictured right)

We proudly present the 2018 High School Big Sister of the Year Award to Vineland High School senior Madison Benevento for her consistent attendance and caring attention to her Little Sister, Leeyiah, for the last two years at Johnstone School. She advocated for Leeyiah throughout the year and worked diligently to help her achieve her academic goals. With Madison’s help, Leeyiah was able to improve her grades. Madison modeled a hard-working and positive attitude at all times and was an excellent example for her Little Sister and the other Littles in the High School Mentoring Program.

Congratulations Madison, thank you for your service as a High School Big Sister! We know you will continue to make a positive impact in all you do!