2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Big Brothers Big Sisters
Where do I even begin? From start to finish, 2019 was jam-packed with incredible joys and heartbreaking struggles. From record-breaking financial contributions to handling a global pandemic, our agency has experienced immense growth as we learn from both our successes and our challenges.

At every point, we have continued to prioritize empowering our youth.

Over the course of the year, we made almost 300 new matches and continued to provide the highest quality support to over 1,400 matches across all of our programs. While all our programs thrived this year, the Big Futures program blew everyone away. Big Futures aims to provide additional tailored support to older Littles as they graduate and move towards enlistment, enrollment, or employment. Due to a generous grant from Wells Fargo, Big Futures experienced a record-breaking year, with 37 senior Littles graduating from high school.

The Big Future program shines through as the final piece of our founder, Don Wolf’s, vision for the agency. When Don first started Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Fort Wayne in 1972, the agency mentored 27 young men. Dedicated to the community, Don continued growing the agency and its impact for years while serving as President. This year, we set out to honor him and his legacy through the Big DONation. This fundraising campaign aimed to raise $90,000, matched by Do-It Best, to celebrate Don’s 90th birthday. By the end of the campaign, we raised over $220,000 through our generous donors, supporters, and partners.

At the outset, we did not realize the tribute that the Big DONation would become. When Don passed away in September, our entire community lost a hero, mentor, and champion. His legacy lives on in every match that we make and every Little we support. He was at the heart of everything we did and his vision remains at the forefront of everything we continue to do.

As we remember Don and continue the work he started, we know that our growth this year is not because of us. It is because of you and your benevolent time and monetary contributions. Your support enables us to create and professionally support these life-changing, community-changing mentoring relationships. This year, through grants, personal donations, and special events, we have experienced your generosity like never before through record-breaking fundraising – and we cannot thank you enough. Whether $10 or $10,000, we thank you. The Board and I assure you that we use every dollar to the fullest potential to fulfill potential in our youth, our agency, and our community. Our Board has really stepped up in every way including this regard. It’s been an incredible journey to work with our Board that won the 2019 Board of the Year among all agencies.

Thank you for enabling and empowering our agency, for seeing our vision, for caring deeply about our community, and for taking action. Your support has impacted thousands of people. Because our matches do more than change the life of the Little, they impact the life of the Little’s parents, guardians, siblings, teachers, and friends. You have created a ripple effect, making our community a better place.

Of course, like everyone, we have also experienced massive agency changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From equipping the staff to work remotely to reimagining all our events, helping matches stay connected digitally to expanding our volunteer and student intake process for virtual meetings, we have remained committed to defending the potential of youth in our community – in a safe and healthy manner. Because we know that even amidst a global pandemic, our youth still need a Defender, Encourager, and Supporter – a Big – maybe now more than ever before. Unfortunately, just like the rest of the agency, our waiting list has also grown – over 400 youth still need a Big. Disproportionately, these waiting youth are boys, especially boys of color. These boys need local men to step up to mentor them and make next year record-breaking in not just capacity but in variety. Our youth already have the capacity to succeed – they just need someone to encourage them to live up to their fullest potential.

While the year to come will bring a new set of challenges from pandemic adjustments to ever-growing costs to more waiting children, we will overcome these obstacles but only with your help and support. Even six feet apart, we are still united together as Defenders of Potential. Courageous, strong, and dedicated.

Josette Rider, Executive Director
As I transitioned into the role of Board President this last year, I have been astounded by the complexity and intricacy of the agency. On a daily basis, the agency is managing programs, planning events, managing volunteers, and seeking donors. I cannot stress enough how much hard work the staff, volunteers, and donors put in to bring about the growth and development we experienced as an agency in 2019.

We grew our fund development in a record-breaking way. The strategic partnerships curated and supported by the Board of Directors coupled with the tireless effort of the development team built a strong foundation for the rest of the agency to thrive.

As I have come to work even more closely with the agency staff this last year, they have both surprised and impressed me. In every department and team, leaders are emerging to move the agency forward in a way I have never seen since joining the Board. These leaders have a renewed sense of ownership, responsibility, and urgency for our mission. They face any challenges head on even through the most difficult and uncertain circumstances.

Nothing has deterred this staff – not a pandemic, not remote adjustments, not immense changes. The staff has developed exponentially throughout 2019 and it shows in every aspect of the agency from the quality of program support to effectiveness of special events to everything in between.

Behind the scenes supporting the staff, our Board of Directors have provided incredible insightfulness and attentiveness. We have a Board rich in diversity of thought and even richer in thoughtful discussion. This is the most vocal Board that I have ever been on. At every meeting, they engage deeply and critically on often sensitive topics to continue encouraging development and growth in our agency.

Of course, 2019 had its own difficulties. In September, we mourned the passing of our founder, Don Wolf, along with the entire Fort Wayne community. I did not know Don Wolf personally, but I have heard many stories about him. Don’s passion is unparalleled in the history of the agency and in the history of Fort Wayne. He always spoke about servant leadership and he truly epitomized it. Because of him, countless lives have been changed for the better in our community.

As we continue to live out Don’s legacy, we have found ourselves in unprecedented and unfair times, especially for the underprivileged and at-risk youth we serve. When I look at the agency – the staff, board, volunteers, and supporters –, I see a united and determined group of people trying to make a difficult time a little less difficult for these kids. That mission – our mission – is not always easy to live out. Even still, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana has dedicated themselves to defending the potential of every child in our community, regardless the obstacles. As Board President, I am honored and humbled to serve alongside them, changing our community for the better one child at a time.

Matt Stout, Board President
With his passion for service, Don Wolf founded Big Brothers of Greater Fort Wayne in 1972, serving as the first president. Through his extensive work and philanthropic spirit, Big Brothers of Greater Fort Wayne grew into our agency today, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana. Don enabled our agency to become one of the largest and most respected chapters in the United States.

Wholeheartedly believing in the growth of potential in others, Don built tremendous organizations by encouraging, mentoring, and empowering the people involved. In 1989, he began Study Connection with Fort Wayne Community Schools that helps train volunteer tutors to assist students every year. Since then, he has supported and empowered countless philanthropic organizations in the community.

Professionally, Don began his career in the home improvement sector with Hardware Wholesalers, now known as Do It Best Corp, in 1947. Don was eventually named the CEO, and from 1967 until his retirement in 1984, he led the company to become one of the largest home improvement cooperatives in the world.

Our Founder Defender of Potential

In Memory of

DON WOLF

1929-2019

This last September, our founder Don Wolf passed away at the age of 90. A man of strong values and convictions, Don saw the best in everyone. He epitomized service to others and created a legacy of building others up.
1992, remained in that role. During that time, he utilized the same legacy of commitment and service to develop Do It Best into a billion dollar company.

Living by his four keys to a happy and productive life, Don never sought recognition, instead humbly and quietly dedicating his life to serving others. Over the years, his service earned numerous awards including: the Sagamore of the Wabash, Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters (from both Purdue University and Vincennes University), Pathfinder Award from Youthlinks Indiana, Junior Achievement Hall of Fame, and American Red Cross Humanitarian of the Year. In 2013, he was awarded the state of Indiana’s highest honor: the Sachem Award for his lifelong contributions.

In honor of Don Wolf’s 90th birthday earlier this year, Do it Best Corp. created the Big DONation, an offer to match up to $90,000 of donations for Big Brothers Big Sisters. At the unveiling event, Don spoke a few words, acknowledging others instead of himself, and even pledged a large donation himself to kick-off the fundraiser. After his passing, the campaign became a tribute to Don and his legacy of service at Big Brothers Big Sisters.

A mentor, encourager, and advisor to the end, Don is sorely missed by his wife, family, friends, and the entire Fort Wayne community. He remains an inspiration to everyone at our agency. We are humbled and honored to carry on his legacy.

### Don Wolf’s 4 Keys to a Happy and Productive Life

1. **Treat Others as You Would Like to Be Treated**
2. **Be Happy and Have an Optimistic Attitude**
3. **Think For Yourself – Don’t Be a Follower**
4. **Hoe to The End of The Row – Finish the Job**

Don Wolf’s legacy has left an imprint on more than just Northeast Indiana, and we could never thank him enough for all the good he created in his life that continues to persist. As a way of showing thanks and promoting service to others as Don himself embodied, we began the Don Wolf Jean’s Day. On this day, community members throughout Northeast Indiana donned jeans, shirts, and pins with Don’s 4 keys to a happy and productive life.
Providing crucial support and guidance, our Board of Directors is a group of passionate and dedicated individuals serving by our side to defend the potential of youth in our community.

Their work and unending commitment received national recognition from Big Brothers Big Sisters of America this last year.

We’re proud to celebrate our 2019 Board of Directors!

Nationally recognized 2019 Board of the Year
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana Board of Directors

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana 2019 Board of Directors
2019 Indiana State Big of the Year

Recognized at the state level for their dedication and excellence, we’re proud to celebrate our incredible Indiana State Bigs of the Year.

**Indian State**

**Big Brother of the Year**

**MATCHED SINCE 2010**

**Brian Dunkin & Little Brother Adrian**

Big Brother Brian has been matched with Little Brother Adrian for over a decade. Through their years together, Brian has continued to encourage and support Adrian regardless the challenges. He pushes Adrian to fulfill his potential academically and strive for better grades. This past year, Adrian's graduated from high school and has decided to pursue further education at Manchester University to become an orthopedic surgeon. Through their friendship, Adrian gained the confidence to dream big for his future – and now, he’s making those dreams a reality. According to Adrian, “Brian always listens to me and helps me grow by encouraging me. Brian is my real big brother. He is just different than anyone I've ever known, and it's what I want to be like too.”

Brian & Adrian receiving their award.

**Indian State**

**Big Sister of the Year**

**MATCHED SINCE 2012**

**Natalie Axel & Little Sister Abby**

When Big Sister Natalie and Little Sister Abby were first matched, the two connected instantly. They quickly found that their favorite activity was simple: just being together. As Abby has grown older, Abby and Natalie have continued to stay close. They talk openly about the challenges that Abby faces and, through them all, Natalie remains encouraging and loving, always reminding Abby of her incredible potential. Abby speaks highly of her Big Sister, saying, “I really love being around Natalie! I like hanging out with her since she is fun and easy to talk too. I wouldn’t change a thing about my match.”

Natalie & Abby receiving their award.
Big Brother of the Year
MATCHED SINCE 2016

Andy O’Shaughnessy & Little Brother Jobe

As part of the Big Futures program, Big Brother Andy and Little Brother Jobe were matched when Jobe was in 10th grade. Initially, Jobe’s interest in the medical field and Andy’s experience as a physician provided them a common connection. After only one meal together, the pair knew that they had much more in common than professional interests. Jobe commented after this first meet-up that “Andy seems like a great guy. We share a lot of interests and connected on a lot of things.”

In the years to follow, simply getting together to talk became a central feature of Jobe and Andy’s match. Whether over a meal, another activity, or simply in the car, Jobe valued those conversations together. He once commented,

“Andy takes the long way to my home every time, but I don’t tell him because I like talking with him for the extra time.”

Thinking about and preparing for the future has always been a strong focus of Jobe and Andy’s. Using his professional connections, Andy helped Jobe shadow multiple jobs in the medical field. Through these experiences, Jobe got a clearer idea of what future career he wanted. Their relationship went far beyond career aspirations. When Jobe experienced difficulties during high school, he turned to Andy for support and guidance. Whether practicing driving or learning household maintenance projects, Andy was ready to help Jobe grow and develop any way he could. When Jobe began looking at colleges, Andy was by his side with advice, guidance, and support through the entire process.

As Jobe finished high school and began college, Andy remained a strong support for him, keeping in contact through texts or calls when distance or busyness or a pandemic kept them from meeting in person. Throughout the challenging transition to university, Jobe has relied upon Andy’s encouragement from afar, savoring their opportunities to see each other on breaks or over the summer.

Now, Jobe has just completed his sophomore year at IUPUI majoring in psychology with a minor in American Sign Language and Special Education. He is seriously considering pursuing a master’s degree once he has completed his bachelor’s degree.

Over the years, Jobe has been incredibly vocal about how his Big Brother and the entire Big Futures program positively impacted his life.

He says, “Quickly after meeting my new Big Brother and joining the Big Futures program, I was able to do many activities that would help me toward my personal future. In less than a year I changed my whole perspective on life. When my mom first told me that I was being offered this opportunity with Andy and with the Big Futures program I was very hesitant. Looking back now, joining this program has completely changed my life. I am so grateful for all that this community and my Big Brother has done for me. Thanks BBBS and Big Futures!”

Big Brother Andy & Little Brother Jobe at Jobe’s high school graduation.
As a kid, Little Sister Sidneya struggled with being unmotivated or disinterested for much of her primary school years. Many times, she had no one encouraging her to put in extra effort or go the extra mile. That began to change when she was met her Big Sister Irene.

Throughout the years, Irene and Sidneya have spent their outings exploring creative or artistic pursuits like painting, drawing, fashion, or whatever other art medium interested Sidneya at the time. During their time together, Irene repeatedly and persistently reminded Sidneya of her potential and encouraged her to dream bigger, to follow through, and to work hard to achieve her goals.

Gradually, Sidneya grew from a shy second grade kid to a confident, strong young woman. Irene describes it, saying “Sidneya has grown a lot in the last few years and she has matured into a bright young woman with a lot of potential.

Following Irene’s encouragement, Sidneya got a job during high school which sparked an incredible surge of growth for her. Sidneya began realizing her own capability and potential, even beginning to consider attending college for the first time. Having seen Sidneya’s potential all along, Irene became her biggest supporter in this process. From visits to applications, Irene stayed right beside Sidneya offering her the guidance and encouragement she needed.

After graduating in 2018, Sidneya decided to attend Indiana Tech to study radiology – and, like always, Irene was there to help her adjust to college life. As the pair have adjusted to this new season, their relationship has grown stronger than ever. According to Sidneya, “Irene is kind, supportive, and wise. She is fun and intelligent, and she is always there for me, taking an interest in my life.”

Through every moment of their journey, Irene has remained beside Sidneya to encourage her, challenge her, and support her.

According to Sidneya, “Irene is so intelligent and hard working. She’s always helping out in the community and I always feel like she has something to add to the world. She’s been such an inspiration to me.”
Big Couple of the Year
MATCHED SINCE 2017

Andrew & Charita Niedermeyer & Little Brother Shayne

2019 Northeast Indiana Big of the Year Recipients

From their first outings, Little Brother Shayne immediately liked his Big Couple Andrew and Charita. With Shayne being shy to open up, Andrew and Charita focused on building their relationship patiently through consistent and fun outings. These times together helped the Match build a strong, close relationship – particularly between Little Brother Shayne and Big Brother Andrew.

Soon after the match started, Shayne was diagnosed as having autism. Andrew and Charita found this incredibly insightful and used the diagnosis to inform and more effectively encourage Shayne. They researched and attended trainings to learn effective ways to uniquely support Shayne.

Recognizing that Shayne’s autism made him sensitive to overstimulation, the couple began planning alternative outings like the library, games at their house, or other places that Shayne was familiar with and could enjoy visiting. All the while, Andrew and Charita stayed in close contact with Shayne’s mother to ensure that all three worked together in supporting Shayne as best as possible.

According to Little Brother Shayne’s mother, “Shayne always comes home happy after hanging out with Andrew and Charita. He really likes the blend of spending that one-on-one time with Andrew and having some time with both Andrew and Charita.”

Big Couple Andrew and Charita focused very intentionally on teaching Shayne life lessons. They helped him grow in maturity, emotion management, conflict resolution, and learning to get back up after failing. They did this through one-on-one conversations with Little Brother Shayne as well as through additional outings of just Shayne and Andrew. With Shayne having taken a strong liking to Andrew and with Andrew having developed a wonderful way to respond to Shayne, these outings in particular helped Shayne grow. The time spent together has brought many moments of growth in Shayne who is becoming an emotionally mature kid.

According to Little Brother Shayne, “I like Andrew and Charita. They’re fun and they’re really nice people who have helped me a lot.”
Real Men Reader Cory Dietz has been reading to students for almost 10 years. He continually goes above and beyond for the students in his classroom. Cory visits the combined 1st to 3rd grade classroom every single month, never missing a visit. Through this consistency, he has built a strong bond with many of the students. Over the years, Cory has helped grow the classroom’s library and even helps students obtain new books by authors they enjoy. To keep students engaged and reading outside the classroom, Cory started a summer reading program the last few years. Undeterred by the virtual classes this spring, Cory even videotaped himself reading the remaining chapters to share with the students. His classroom teacher has shared that, “I am just so thankful to have someone so committed to our kids!”

When Big Brother Matt and Little Brother Maki were first matched, Maki found reading difficult and challenging. Over their weekly lunches together, they began reading to each other, playing board games, or working through challenging schoolwork. Matt intentionally encouraged literacy and educational growth for Maki, even working with Maki’s teacher to put together an incentive program. Through these efforts, Maki’s reading abilities have skyrocketed – as has his overall academic performance. Beyond academics, Matt has found and created opportunities to discuss other areas of personal growth with Maki. Thanks to these conversations, Maki has continued growing emotionally, becoming more mature and responsible. According to Maki, “I like spending time with Matt. The best thing is that he’s funny and I like that he always asks me about my day. He’s easy to talk to and I know he cares about me.”
SERVING YOUTH WITH THE GREATEST NEED AND THE LEAST OPPORTUNITY

LITTLES’ LIVING SITUATION

- 74% | Household Income Less than $30k
- 67% | Single-Parent Homes
- 60% | Single-Mother Homes
- 48% | Minority Children
- 23% | Household Income Less than $10k
- 19% | Incarcerated Parent
- 13% | Do Not Live With Either Parent

- 308 | New Matches
- 286 | Real Men Readers
- 641 | Volunteers Recruited
- 582 | Waiting Littles
FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenue: $3,458,016
- Fundraising: $808,870
- Foundations & Grants: $841,031
- Contributions: $867,848
- United Way: $162,700
- In-Kind Contributions: $152,975
- Other Income: $624,592
Includes $494,697 of unrealized gain on investments

Expenses: $2,613,768
- Programs: $2,130,949
- Fundraising: $318,362
- Management/General: $164,457

2019 Total Net Assets: $5,557,379 (includes endowment campaign)
CORPORATE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Special thanks to our Corporate Community Partners for underwriting our programs and for supporting our children in the communities during 2019.
Special Events Committees

The Big Celebration
Alyx Bates
Kanda Boggs
Laster Boggs
Liz Decker
Terry DuPont
Alma Jimenez
Lisa Koshnick
Kathy Kurosky
Chris Leeuw
Sue Poyner
Michelle Smith LeDrew
Andy Swihart
Wanda Tiltges

Brad Miller Gala, Auction, and Golf Outing
Mike Dennison, Co-Chair
Tony Tranquill, Co-Chair
Rachel Burtnett
Sarah Dazey
Chris Johnson
Laura Kapp Miller
John Marshall
Norm Meintel
Matt Montel
Joe Myers
Ryan Pruitt
Susie Rogers
Angie Schmidt
Mike Weyer
Chris Yesh

Bowl for Kids’ Sake
Kalen Cartwright, Co-Chair
Angela Schmidt, Co-Chair
Cindy Elzey
Tahl Glass
Troy Hartman
Rick Hoffmann
Jimmy Knight
Carey Schmucker
Aaron Schaffer
Mark Witte

Women’s Champagne Brunch
Kathy O’Shaughnessy, Co-Chair
Laura O’Shaughnessy, Co-Chair
Tiffany Bostic
Alison Brough
Katie Brown
Kim Carpenter
Michelle Chambers
Dawn Clpton
Corrina Ladd
Jessica Maxwell
Stephanie Rennie
Heather Rush
Leah Schoenle
DaVanna Seifert
Melanie Snider
Delania Thomas
Val White Xayarath
Latissha Williams

Gourmet Dinner
Jerry Wood, Chair
Morgan Boudler
Joe Cohen
Mike Dahm
Leanne Fager
Dale Gajewski
Tim Haffner
Dr. Brett Hagedorn
Bob Hall
Jerry Henry, Jr.
Chris Johnson
Kent Maggard
Dr. Mike Mastrangelo
Don Mauch
Doug Nelson
Sarah Noack
Shelly Schmidt
Troy Smith
Scott Swogger
Don Wolf

Ambassador Committees

Adams
Dan Kintz, Chair
Sandy Brown
Dean Fuelling
Jessica Thieme

Allen
Lauren Caggiano, Co-Chair
Joci Plank, Co-Chair
Art Augspurger
Ryan Sybulski
Sally Eddington
Angie Schmidt

DeKalb
Sara Brown
Sue Carpenter
Lili Hand
Katie High
Doug Lockwood
Josh Metcalf

Huntington
Kayla Brunner
John Garrott
Mert Mullins
Trista Niswander
Becky Sandlin

Kosciusko
Sheri DiRico
Liz Decker
Jefferson Hankins
Alma Jimenez
Chris Leeuw
Terry Milton
Andy Swihart
Wanda Tiltges

Noble
Cheryl Barker
Mike Gordon
Linda Leighty
Deb Robertson
Rick Robertson
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Indiana Celebrates
2019 Award Recipients

DON WOLF AWARD
Pizza Hut of Fort Wayne
and Dick & Deanna Freeland

DIANE HUMPHREY AWARD
Natalie Axel

CHARLES D. SMITH AWARD
Maple Leaf Farms

HONORARY DEFENDER OF POTENTIAL

In Memory of
MARK MULQUEENY
SUEDHOFF
APRIL 10, 1962 – SEPTEMBER 28, 2018
Mission
To create and support one-to-one mentoring relationship that ignite the power and promise of youth.

Vision
To see all youth achieve their full potential.