



### A Message from Executive Director William Salcedo

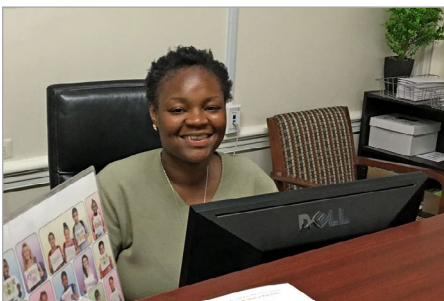
Dear Friends,

I hope you are enjoying summer! This month, we are focusing on our need for volunteers and funds to continue providing local youth with caring, positive mentors.

BBBSMMC is fortunate to have former Little Sister Marlyn interning at our agency. Marlyn was matched with her Big Sister Leslie in 2008 and our staff has enjoyed watching Marlyn grow and mature and their match flourish. Marlyn and Leslie have the type of friendship that we strive to create every day. I hope you will take a moment to read Marlyn's story.

Our agency is providing mentors for 720 youth throughout Monmouth & Middlesex Counties and our goal is to serve 1,000 children by 2021. Please consider donating or volunteering to help us reach that goal of providing more children like Marlyn with their own positive adult mentor that can change their life for the better, forever.

William Salcedo  
Executive Director



Marlyn Interning at BBBS!

### THE POWER OF MENTORING by Marlyn Marcellus



Marlyn & Leslie at the Spring Carnival in 2008

Almost ten years ago, during a very difficult period in my adolescent stage, I found my guardian angel, my Big Sister Leslie. She is my rock. From the first day that we met she showed me a different and greater world than I was ever exposed to. Both of my parents are from Haiti and came to America later in their lives so there were many things like the ice skating rink and Renaissance Festival that they had no clue ever existed. Every single time that I am with Leslie, she opens my eyes to all of the best things that life has to offer like love, happiness, true friendship, and exciting memories. As a result of this, I want nothing other than all of these things for my life. She has taught me very important lessons in life like following my heart and instincts and working very hard on whatever I decide that I want to do. Leslie supports me through the good times and the bad when I need a shoulder to cry on.

I can remember one specific period in my teens where I was rebelling against everything and everyone that I knew and I also started to avoid Leslie. The combination of being bullied, life's drama, and trying to find out who I am, was very intense for me. I became very depressed to the point where I would stay in the house all day and decline phone calls because I did not want to talk about anything and I assumed that no one could know what I was going through.

After weeks of not hearing from me, Leslie got in her car and drove to my house to check up on and talk to me. That love and compassion that I have found in my Big Sister still blows me away and continues to guide me throughout my life.

There are so many children out there that are going through the same rough stages that I went through. The hardest part is that a lot of them are probably going through it alone with no one to talk to, no adventures to brighten their smiles, and no role models to remind them how special and incredibly unique they are. I was that kid until Big Brothers Big Sisters helped me find Leslie. Today, I am a senior at Rutgers University - Newark, double majoring in Criminal Justice and Journalism Media Studies.



Leslie & Marlyn – Then and Now

My relationship with my Big Sister Leslie has brought so much hope into my life. I am me because I was fortunate to have a positive influence in my life. Words will never be able to express how grateful I am for Leslie. I hope that you will consider making a donation or becoming a Big and changing a child's life just like my Big Sister did for me.