



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Hereford, Inc.

October 24, 2011

Texas Rural Communities, Inc.
Attn: Sandra Tenorio
168 Cimarron Park Loop
Buda, TX 78610

Dear Ms. Tenorio:

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to apply for funding from Texas Rural Communities. While we embrace our rural community as a desirable place to live, work, and raise our families, we are also faced with many challenges to maintain a certain degree of quality of life. Social services in general have been hit hard by decreases in funding; unfortunately, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford was also affected by the recent legislative budget cuts.

Therefore, we are pleased to submit our application for Impact Grant funding from Texas Rural Communities in the amount of \$12,000.

Enclosed please find our Program Summary, application with six additional copies, attachments including our list of Board of Directors, current fiscal year budget, balance sheet, income/expense statement, and two letters of recommendation. Also enclosed is a flash drive with the application file.

Our program is vitally important to our children and their families, as well as to our community as a whole. Our children are the future of our community and a worthy investment for Texas Rural Communities. We thank you for your kind consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Veazey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Barbara Veazey
Executive Director

enclosures

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford Program Summary

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford has a 37-year history in our community of serving at-risk and disadvantaged children and youth with our program.

We offer our youth development program to eligible children and youth ages 7-18 for the purpose of academic achievement and character education. Our program is offered through site-based mentoring and through community-based mentoring. We provide the majority of program materials for our matches. We match screened and trained volunteer mentors with enrolled children in one-to-one match relationships. The matches receive guidance and support from the agency. Progress and outcomes are monitored through a variety of measurement tools.

The program's main goal is to help children achieve their highest potential through their one-to-one match relationship with their volunteer. This is accomplished through regularly-scheduled face-to-face meetings totaling 4-6 hours per month. Children in our program enjoy learning with the help of their volunteer mentor. They gain a better grasp of their academic subjects and learn positive social, developmental, and decision-making skills.

Children are referred by a multitude of sources in the community. Agency staff and board continually recruit volunteer mentors to serve the long list of referred children. Some staff and board members volunteer in the program. Children served in the program are primarily minorities from low-income households. Our services are offered free of charge and on a non-discriminatory basis.

Expected outcomes are that 85% or more of the enrolled children and youth will demonstrate higher grades, stronger interpersonal relationships, and increased self-esteem.

All volunteers are thoroughly screened and trained prior to being matched with a child. Our volunteers include community pillars, corporate employees, judges, law enforcement officials, school administrators, teachers, high school students, retirees, and homemakers.

Our program is 100% publicly funded by donations, fundraisers, grants, corporate gifts, and United Way. We are restricted to two fundraisers annually by United Way.

Due to recent state budget cuts, a portion of our funding was either reduced or eliminated altogether. We are requesting a program impact grant from Texas Rural Communities in the amount of \$12,000. These funds, if awarded, will be utilized for essential elements of program service including communications, program materials, and administrative supplies. No funds will be used for staff compensation.

Our program is enthusiastically endorsed by our community as evidenced by the enclosed letters of support.

I. Contact Information

Barbara Veazey
Executive Director
806-364-6171
barbara@bbbshereford.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford
244 Main Street
P.O. Box 1821
Hereford, TX 79045

II. Organizational Description

Mission Statement

The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford is to make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth through the professionally-supported one-to-one match relationship with a caring adult mentor thereby empowering these children and youth to achieve their highest potential.

Organization

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford is a full affiliate in good standing of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA). BBBSA sets the standards of practice for its more than 450 affiliate agencies across the United States. We receive approximately \$200.00 annually from BBBSA. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford is also a United Way member agency.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford is governed by a diverse 7-member volunteer board of directors. Agency staff consists of one full-time executive director, two part-time match support specialists, and two part-time site-based monitors. Our volunteer pool consists of approximately 210 screened and trained individuals.

Purpose

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford recognizes the positive, life-changing impact that a caring adult mentor can have on a child. Considering the numerous factors that place a child at risk including but not limited to poverty, minority status, learning disabilities, family history of crime and/or violence, and living in an under-served rural area, the protective factor of a volunteer mentor in the life of a child is a powerful counterpoint to those risk factors. Our mentors offer their friendship, guidance, and support in one-to-one matches with children and youth ages 7-18. Children and youth become more confident, competent, and caring individuals through their match relationship with a

consistent, committed volunteer mentor. Our program is preventive in nature with participants less likely to hit someone, less likely to engage in anti-social behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, and less likely to skip school or engage in serious misconduct. Empowered young people strengthen their families, their schools, and their communities.

History

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford has served the community's disadvantaged children and youth since 1974. We are an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our services are offered free of charge and on a non-discriminatory basis to all program participants. Our agency served a total of 227 children in 2010.

Accomplishments

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford has received several recognition awards for growth from Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. One of our greatest accomplishments is when a child who has successfully completed our program later applies with our agency to be a volunteer. These are success stories that we whole-heartedly celebrate because we know that our graduates have become productive citizens of society.

III. Program Description

Community need

Hereford, Texas, population 18,374, is located in Deaf Smith County which has a low population density of 12 people per square mile. The 2010 census lists the median household income for Hereford as \$33,680 with 19.3% of the population living below the poverty level. Hereford's median household income and poverty levels are lower than that of the state of Texas, and the state of Texas numbers are lower than the national levels. Hereford Independent School District is a Title I school district with 76.78% of students receiving free or reduced lunch. These statistics combine to illustrate the lower economic status of a large segment of our rural community's population. Additionally, Hereford has fewer resources available for its young people than other geographic locations.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford's program provides vital, unduplicated services to the community's at-risk children and youth. We work with school administrators, community pillars, the judiciary, law enforcement, probation departments, and churches to identify eligible children. We match disadvantaged children and youth with trained, caring, and committed volunteer mentors for the purpose of higher academic achievement and character education. These are one-to-one matches—one child, one volunteer. Our program is so successful because of the one-to-one structure of the

match relationship. Few children have the opportunity to be the focus of a caring adult during the course of their day. We applaud our teachers for their great work; however, the size of the average classroom makes it impossible for teachers to spend a concentrated amount of time with each of their students. Furthermore, with more and more families suffering from various fractures and parents working shifts, many children do not receive this beneficial focus in the home either. Our volunteers are making a positive difference in the lives of children by focusing on them as little as one hour a week. Children in one-to-one match relationships feel better about themselves. Children who feel better about themselves do better in school. That is the power of the one-to-one match relationship.

Program Description, Goals & Objectives

Enrolled children are each matched with a volunteer mentor who meets with them for approximately 4-6 hours a month. Our school-based matches meet at the schools while our community-based matches get together in the evenings or on weekends. Additionally, there are numerous agency-sponsored activities that matches can attend. Matches are supervised by agency match support specialists who “check in” to monitor progress and offer assistance when needed.

Goals are set for each enrolled child, specifically with regard to higher academic achievement and positive character development. Our match support team has frequent, regularly-scheduled communication with each child, his/her teacher, parent/guardian, and volunteer mentor.

Volunteers assist children with their homework assignments, concept comprehension/mastery, reading skills and retention, test preparatory instruments, character education through games, role play, and activities; social and behavioral issues through positive role modeling; and anti-bullying materials, as well as offering friendship, guidance, and support.

Program Demographics

Our program serves children and youth ages 7-18 who are referred for a plethora of reasons including being raised in a single-parent or extended family-member home, at risk of academic failure, for positive character development, and for help with behavioral issues.

Ethnicity of individuals in our program is 84% Hispanic, 3% African American, <1% Native American, and the remainder is Caucasian. We serve 52% boys and 48% girls. We expect to serve approximately 220 children in 2012.

Impact Grant Information

- Our program is unique in that it is not a drop-off service. There is one individual for each child in our program who meets with that child on a regular basis.
- BBBS collaborates with numerous community and state groups including Community Resource Coordination Group, adult and juvenile probation, the school district, YMCA, City of Hereford, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Texas, Texas Education Agency, Department of Family and Protective Services, Department of Public Safety and Child Protective Services.
- BBBS serves over 200 children annually.
- BBBS is a conservative and responsible steward of resources.
- Our school-based program has been successfully replicated at four additional schools since its inception in 2000.
- Our program's success is communicated through a variety of channels including newspapers, radio stations, social media, emails, other social service organizations, community presentations, brochures, and at community events.

Proposed Budget

Our request is for an impact grant in the amount of \$12,000 to partially replace grant funding that was entirely eliminated or decreased by more than 50% in the last State legislative session. These funds are mission critical to enable us to continue to serve new clients and sustain existing clients. A lesser amount is acceptable should TRC be unable to grant our requested amount.

1. Program Materials consisting of activity workbooks, reading books, educational games, character development curricula, charts, puzzles, craft supplies, incentive prizes, crayons, refreshments, dictionaries, and card stock paper. Annual expense = \$4,000; requesting \$2,000.
2. Administrative Supplies necessary to provide client services including applications, surveys, program evaluation tools, and cost-effective laser printer cartridges. Annual expense = \$3,000; requesting \$1,000.
3. Liability Insurance that we are required to carry at prescribed levels by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Annual expense = \$4,000; requesting \$1,350.
4. Communications including land phone lines, mobile units and internet, all necessary to provide a smooth interface with clients, families, schools, and volunteers. Annual expense = \$2,500; requesting \$1,500.
5. Training materials for volunteers to help them be the best mentors possible for our clients. Annual expense = \$2,500; requesting \$750.
6. Copier lease and copy charge that is more cost effective than paying an outside service. Annual expense = \$1,200; requesting \$400.

7. Postage for all client, volunteer, family, and school mailings that is essential for our program. Annual expense = \$800; requesting \$400.
8. Mileage necessary for agency staff to travel to program locations. Annual expense = \$1,000; requesting \$600.
9. Occupancy (including utilities) of office space utilized for but not limited to client, family, and volunteer intake processing, program activities, and volunteer training. Annual expense = \$8,600; requesting \$4,000.

Total = \$12,000

Expected Outcomes & Measurement Instruments

The expected outcomes of our program are that 85% or more of enrolled children will demonstrate increased scholastic efficacy (competence), strengthened interpersonal relationships (caring), and increased self-esteem (confidence).

We utilize several instruments to measure our program's impact. Our Program Outcome Evaluation (POE) is administered semi-annually and is completed by each child's volunteer and teacher or parent/guardian. The POE relates to the child and tracks 21 points under the categories of confidence, competence, and caring. Additionally, we administer the Youth Outcome Survey on an annual basis that consists of 10 questions about the match relationship and is completed by each child. These measurement tools provide Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hereford with an accurate snapshot of each of our matches and allow us to monitor each child's progress throughout the year.

Timeline

The timeline for our program and expenditure of proposed grant funds would be for twelve months and commence when grant funds were received.