

# Big Sister

Bulletin

BIG SISTER ASSOCIATION OF GREATER BOSTON

## Making the Grade for Girls

**T**urnaround schools, MCAS scores, and achievement gaps made front page news as the school year began, and one-third of the most talked about schools are those in which Big Sister provides mentoring programs for girls. Research, such as that done by Dr. Jean Rhodes in *The Role of Gender in Mentoring (2009)*, shows that girls with Big Sisters experience improved academic outcomes. **Almi Abeyta, Boston Public Schools' Assistant Academic Superintendent for Middle Schools**, reinforced the significant impact of mentoring programs in our schools at a recent gathering we held for our Big Sisters. "We can't reach out to every girl ourselves; we need you," she said. "Each of you can make such a difference in one girl's life." She extolled the important role they play in supporting girls' healthy development and the value of mentoring as a complement to school resources.

Though the landscape of many Boston Public Schools has changed this year, Big Sister will continue to provide quality mentoring programs for girls where they are needed most. We offer a variety of programs in the

schools, including one-to-one mentoring relationships in our School-Based and Neighborhood-Based programs. We also lead Group Mentoring, which is specifically geared toward the social-emotional development of middle school-aged girls. All three models serve as a complement to our traditional



*A Big and Little Sister at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School work on a project together*

Community-Based Mentoring program. This allows us to holistically serve girls in many of Boston's neighborhoods, including the area identified by Mayor Menino as the Circle of Promise. This area includes schools in Dorchester, Roxbury, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain and the South End. The Circle of Promise will connect the comprehensive resources that are already in place to provide a "conveyor belt" for neighborhoods to seamlessly deliver services to the community. By identifying schools in this area to receive increased resources from the community, the goal is to provide greater opportunity for young people and their parents by implementing place-based supports, boosting student achievement and eliminating the cycle of poverty.

As part of our effort to immerse ourselves in the neighborhoods, we provide multiple

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*Boston's At-Large City Councilor, Ayanna Pressley, is also a Big Sister*

## Ayanna's BIG Challenge

On Saturday, September 11, Boston's At-Large City Councilor Ayanna Pressley, kicked-off her campaign to promote youth mentoring, **Ayanna's BIG Challenge**. She aims to recruit 50 mentors per month to volunteer through Big Sister Association of Greater Boston and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay, which serves boys in Boston.

**With Ayanna's BIG Challenge you'll be inspiring women to become Big Sisters. How will you encourage them to take that first step and apply?**

I would tell women that Big Sister's programs are designed to take away all your excuses. They make mentoring work for you and your schedule. I don't think any woman needs to be sold on the value of mentoring or how rewarding it is. The real challenge in recruiting Big Sisters is just letting interested women know there's a program that will work for them.

**Being the At-Large City Councilor keeps you pretty busy. What made you decide to become a Big Sister and how do you make time for it?**

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### Highlights

- ★ Our 2010 BMW Raffle Winner
- ★ Big & Little Sisters Explore New Cultures
- ★ Diversity Council Milestones



Big Sister Association  
of Greater Boston

Share your thoughts with us!  
E-mail: [mjohnson@bigsister.org](mailto:mjohnson@bigsister.org)

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Sometimes it can be a challenge to balance my professional commitments with my Big Sister responsibilities. But that's true for every Big Sister. I'm fortunate in that I have the ability to make my own schedule and I have a staff to help me do that. I'm so impressed by the other Big Sisters who don't have the same flexibility I do, yet remain a regular presence in their Little Sister's life.

**You created, and currently chair, the Committee on Women & Healthy Communities, so you often get the same question we get: "Why girls?" What do you say to this?**

Well, in case there was any doubt, I was once a girl so I do understand the unique struggles faced by our girls today. The reality is that broken girls grow up to be broken women. And broken women tend to end up raising broken girls. And those broken girls and broken women destabilize our communities. We need to be honest about the forces leading to broken girls and broken women and address them. It's a vicious cycle but we can put an end to it.

**You've been very candid about the challenges you faced growing up—being raised by a single mother, living in the inner city, trauma—how did you stay on the path to success?**

I think I did two things that helped me stay on the right path and find success. First, I never doubted for a second that I was entitled to the same future kids in more affluent neighborhoods were. That's very important. Second, I surrounded myself with people who always reminded me of that. I was very lucky to have people in my life who believed in me, who looked out for me and who made sure I was being true to myself.

**Did you have any mentors when you were younger? Who are your mentors now?**

As I've said many times before, my mother was, is, and will always be the greatest influence in my life. I can say absolutely that without my mother's guidance, support and love that I would not be where I am today. But growing up, I didn't have access to programs like Big Sister Association. There weren't many gender-specific opportunities for me and so outside of my mother, I really didn't have adult mentors.

As I became more interested in public service, I looked up to Congresswoman Barbara Jordan. She was a black woman, outspoken and eloquent, fiery and passionate who spoke about the issues I was just starting to realize I wanted to work on. Today, I wouldn't say that I have mentors but certainly I am fortunate to know some extraordinary

public servants who I emulate and am continually learning from.

**The media often focuses on your appearance.**

**What do you say to girls, like your Little Sister Arianna, about addressing gender roles and female stereotypes?**

What I try to tell Arianna, and all the girls I talk to, is that it's very important for girls to have a sense of entitlement, the same way boys often do. Girls need to know that there is nothing that their gender prohibits them from doing and they can compete with the boys.

**What are the biggest challenges facing girls in Boston today?**

The biggest challenges facing girls today in Boston are a lack of self-esteem and being trapped in unhealthy relationships. Lack of self-esteem just kills aspiration. Oftentimes lack of self-esteem is the result of poor body image, but what starts as a girl feeling bad about how she looks can lead to her making really bad choices. Those bad choices can put her health, safety, and future at real risk. Low self-esteem can also lead to girls engaging in unhealthy relationships. We need to do a better job of building girls' confidence and educating them about boundaries and self-respect.

**How about the biggest opportunities?**

Girls, no matter how challenging their circumstances, need to understand that while their past may inform their present, they are not hostage to their past. Gender is not a barrier to any opportunity. The critical part is that every girl needs to know that, believe that, and make the choices necessary to make the most of that opportunity.

**Can you share a favorite moment you've had with your Little Sister Arianna?**

Easy answer—spending the day at Camp Harbor View with so many other Big and Little Sisters.

**What does "Inspire a girl. Transform our community." mean to you?**

It's why I do the work I do, why I'm a Big Sister, and why I support mentoring. It's absolutely, 100% true that when you inspire a girl, you transform our community.

**Give us your three words for building a better Boston.**

Ayanna's BIG Challenge!



*Councilor Pressley  
with her Little Sister  
Arianna*

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programs within the community which allow us to reach more girls in need of Big Sister Association's support. In Dorchester's Grove Hall, for example, we offer Neighborhood-Based Mentoring, a one-to-one mentoring program for girls at the Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School on Saturdays, as well as a Group Mentoring program at the school during the week. Our High School Mentoring program in Grove Hall matches sophomores and juniors from the neighborhood's Boston Latin Academy with girls at the nearby William M. Trotter Elementary School. The Trotter is located within the Circle of Promise and has been identified as needing additional resources. Not only do the girls at the Trotter benefit from having a Big Sister, the Big Sisters in this program get the added support of leadership skills training, which is facilitated by a member of our social work staff each week before they meet with their Little Sisters. At another Circle of Promise school, Roxbury's Orchard Gardens K-8 School, a Little Sister in our Group Mentoring program told us, "I learned that I shouldn't let people get to me. Just move on and keep trying."

This year, Big Sister Association will provide more than 1,000 girls with a caring friend and mentor in more than 30 schools and after-school sites through our Site-Based Mentoring programs. As we strive to immerse ourselves in the neighborhoods most in need of our services, we look forward to the opportunity to expand our reach with quality, innovative mentoring programs for girls.



*Big Sister Tiera and Little Sister  
Myesha at our High School  
Mentoring program in Grove Hall*

## And the BMW Raffle Winner Is...

**T**he crowd at Faneuil Hall Marketplace collectively held their breath and crossed their fingers as the clock struck 1:00 on Friday, July 30. **Little Sister Empress**, 11, of Dorchester, pulled the winning BMW Raffle ticket with her **Big Sister Zoe Hathorn** at her side. And the big winner is...**Bill Hahn**, who purchased ticket #203! Hahn has purchased a ticket in the raffle since 2004 and couldn't believe that he won this year! "The most I ever won in a raffle before this was a loaf of bread," he joked. "You never think you're going to win these things, you just want to support a good cause." Bill decided to take the \$38,000 cash prize, rather than the car.

Generous ticket buyers helped make this, the 22nd year of our annual BMW Raffle, the most successful yet! They purchased 1,510 tickets, resulting in more than \$150,000 raised in support of our mentoring programs for girls. Once again this year, we witnessed random acts of goodwill from ticket buyers, including another purchase from the anonymous woman who asks only that her ticket be put in the name of someone who really needs it.

At Friday's drawing, Big Sister Zoe and Little Sister Empress were joined by **Big Sisters Judy Dombrowski** and **Evelyn Robertson**, and their **Little Sisters Ashlyn**, 16, of Jamaica Plain, and **Idalis**, 12, of Dorchester. Each match shared with the crowd what makes their friendship so special. They also got to pick the winning tickets for our fantastic runner-up prizes. Congratulations to all of this year's winners!

### Additional Prize Winners

Red Sox tickets: Matt Hudson, #1603  
Legal Sea Foods clambake: Arlene Taylor, #22  
Sunset dinner cruise: Cecil Gilbert, #911

### Online Mini Raffle Winners

Priceless Hank Aaron autographed baseball: Roberta Hurtig  
\$50 Oleana gift card: Margaret Nelson  
\$50 Starbucks gift card: Jeff Donnelly  
\$50 Amazon.com gift card: Thomas Beaudoin



*Big Sister Zoe and Little Sister Empress pull the winning ticket with Melissa Steffy of Herb Chambers BMW of Boston*

Big thanks to our raffle partner, **Herb Chambers BMW of Boston**, and to our site partners who allowed us to sell tickets on their properties: **Equity Office Properties**, **Verizon**, and **Faneuil Hall Marketplace**. We also could not have sold the number of tickets we did, without help from the **Larz Anderson Museum of Transportation** and the **Boston Department of Parks & Recreation**, who permitted us to bring the car to Copley Square.

Most of all, we want to thank each of you who purchased a raffle ticket. Even if you didn't win big this year, your generosity means that Greater Boston's girls do. We look forward to your continued support in next year's raffle. Who knows...it could be your year!

## Urban Beach Party a Summer Success

**N**o summer rain storm was going to keep Boston's young professionals from coming out to support Big Sister Association on June 24. The clouds cleared just in time to set the perfect scene for our sold-out Urban Beach Party, hosted by Big Sister's Young Professional Board. Guests got down and gave back, to the tune of nearly \$30,000. The proceeds will benefit our mentoring programs for girls through Team Big Sister in the Rodman Ride for Kids.

Boston's waterfront and Mother Nature teamed up to provide the backdrop for celebrating summer in the city. More than 200 young professionals enjoyed Asian and ocean-inspired fare from **Legal Sea Foods** as they watched the ships sail across the harbor and volleyed around a beach ball on the patio of the Exchange Conference Center.

As the sun set, **DJ Deja** heated up the party while guests tore it up on the dance floor.

Everyone enjoyed summery libations provided by **Barefoot Wine & Bubbly** and **Sam Adams**, and cooled off with trips to the raffle and silent auction tables. Lucky winners went home with gift certificates to the South End's hottest restaurants, a North End shopping spree, Sox and BC football tickets, tiki bar service for their next backyard barbecue, a Nantucket getaway, and more! To commemorate the evening, groups of friends donned

wacky accessories, packed into a photo booth, and took home pictures complements of **Photo Fun Booth**.

Big Sister and Young Professional Board member, **Robyn Barros**, rounded out the evening by sharing how the transformative power of mentoring has not only affected her Little Sister Serina, but her as well. "I will admit my reasons for wanting to volunteer were somewhat selfish at first. I felt like I needed to find a way to give back," she said. "My relationship with Serina has taken time to develop, but in the last few months, I have noticed a real change. I completely underestimated the impact that I would have on Serina's life and vice versa."

Big thanks to Urban Beach Party sponsors **Lawrence-Carlin Insurance**, **the Ingalls Family**, and **Colliers Meredith & Grew**. We would also like to thank Legal Sea Foods, Sam Adams, Barefoot Wine & Bubbly, DJ Deja, Photo Fun Booth, and **MAX Ultimate Food**. We appreciate all those who supported the event and look forward to even more fun in the sun at next year's Urban Beach Party!



*The dance floor heated up when the sun went down at Urban Beach Party*



*Guests took advantage of the gorgeous weather on the patio at the Exchange Conference Center*

# Where Are They Now?

FORMER BIG AND LITTLE SISTER ELIZABETH ECCHER AND MAYBELLINE PANTA

**N**early 15 years ago, Maybelline Panta and her mother moved from Peru to the U.S. to live with Maybelline's grandfather in Brighton. Two years later, Maybelline's father joined them, they moved to Waltham, and her mother soon gave birth to a baby boy. Eleven-year old Maybelline felt isolated by her limited English, which made it difficult for her to make friends, and with a new baby at home she now had to compete for attention from her mom and dad. The family struggled to adapt to their new culture, especially with English as their second language. Maybelline's mother recognized that her daughter needed someone outside the family who could give her one-to-one attention and support, while helping her become more comfortable with American culture. When she heard about Big Sister Association at their local library, she thought it might be the perfect fit.

Maybelline was a soft-spoken, sixth grade student who dreamed of eliminating racism and becoming a scientist. In school, she liked math, science, and reading, even though they were challenging for her. Maybelline was put in bi-lingual classes at school because she was still learning English, and she often felt like she was behind compared to the other students. When asked what she wanted in a Big Sister, Maybelline said she hoped the woman would be understanding, expose her to more of the American culture, and teach her how to ride the T.

On April 24, 2000, we matched Maybelline with Big Sister Elizabeth Eccher, a professor of accounting at MIT, who lived with her husband in Arlington. Elizabeth and her family moved to Illinois from Italy when she was two. Elizabeth quickly understood the challenges her new Little Sister faced in being part of a family that was unfamiliar with the language and norms of a new country. When they first met, Elizabeth and Maybelline decided to go for a walk around Maybelline's neighborhood so they could get to know each other better. "I remember she used the word 'nice' a lot because she didn't have many other expressions in her vocabulary at the time," said Elizabeth. Maybelline agreed that she was nervous on that first outing. "I was worried that I wouldn't know what to say or how to express myself because I was still learning the language," she said. The next time they got together, Elizabeth decided on a trip to the Children's Museum. Maybelline was ecstatic about trying a new activity and having the opportunity to go into the city.

Each week Elizabeth and Maybelline would try different activities. They visited several museums, went to the movies, baked cookies and cakes, and on one particularly memorable occasion, found a recipe for shrimp—Maybelline's favorite—that they cooked on Elizabeth's grill. Elizabeth understood that her role was not one of a tutor, but she often heard Maybelline's frustration with her performance in school when they were together. Maybelline wanted to do well, but her parents were unable to help her with homework because of the language barrier, so Elizabeth and Maybelline set aside

15 minutes at the end of each of their visits to review Maybelline's homework. "Just having that little bit of help was enough. Once she got over that, it was like 'I can do it myself!'" said Elizabeth. Maybelline's grades began to improve and she became more confident in her schoolwork.

Maybelline and Elizabeth also attended every Big Sister-sponsored activity they could. "Those events gave us a chance to learn more about each other," Elizabeth said. "I was always impressed with how at ease Maybelline seemed with the other girls. She was always willing to share and she didn't judge others." Elizabeth remembered being particularly in awe of Maybelline's tenacity and creativity at the Big Sister-sponsored Halloween parties. Maybelline was disappointed that she and Elizabeth did not win a prize in the costume contest their first year together when they went dressed as Dorothy and Glinda from *The Wizard of Oz*. Maybelline took note of the categories and was determined to win the next year. When October approached, she shared her idea with Elizabeth. She would go as a headless football player (complete with her real head hidden inside her costume and a fake head to carry around) and Elizabeth would go as the grim reaper. Maybelline was sure they would win "scariest costume"...and they did! "My sewing machine got a major workout Friday night and Saturday morning as I rushed to finish my flowing black cape, but it was worthwhile just to see the delight in Maybelline's face when our number was announced as the winning entry," said Elizabeth.

As she entered high school, Maybelline had made many friends, and relied on Elizabeth less for companionship. However, the two still met frequently and talked about boys, dating, school, and Maybelline's future. "Having a person I could talk to who understood what was going on meant a lot to me," said Maybelline. Maybelline knew from a young age that she wanted to go to college. Her parents had both attended college in Peru and encouraged their daughter to earn her degree as well. Like many high school students, Maybelline found the college application process stressful, but her Big Sister helped ease some of the anxiety. "Having Elizabeth there to support me made it easier," she said.

Maybelline was accepted to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and earned a degree in microbiology. She and Elizabeth continued to e-mail each other while Maybelline was away. Elizabeth occasionally would visit Maybelline at college, and they would get together for Sunday brunch when Maybelline would come back to Waltham on the weekends. Elizabeth attended Maybelline's college graduation, where Elizabeth presented her Little Sister with a poem she wrote for her. "I wanted to give her something personal," said Elizabeth. The poem memorialized many of their special moments as Big and Little Sister:

*Dorothy and Glinda and giggling while sewing,  
Headless footballer who still kept on going,  
Trimming the tree for a bright holiday,  
These are a few of my memories with May...*

Currently, Maybelline is doing lab research at UMass where she is earning her master's degree in microbiology. She is considering going to medical school, but like her 11 year-old self who wanted to become a scientist, she would like to do research rather than become a medical doctor. "She has really pulled it together in a major way," said Elizabeth of her former Little Sister. "Being a Big Sister is a very special, personal experience. I've been able to see Maybelline blossom. She would have done great things without me, but I made it a little easier around the edges for her."

Though Elizabeth and her husband recently moved to Chicago, she and Maybelline know that distance will never weaken their bond. "I feel like I have a life-long friend," said Elizabeth. "Definitely," agreed Maybelline.



*Elizabeth and Maybelline at her graduation from UMass*



*Elizabeth and Maybelline at their match meeting in March 2000*

## Match Highlight

BIG SISTER TRICIA LUONG AND LITTLE SISTER SHARLICE

**L**ittle Sister Sharlice is a spunky 10 year-old who loves cats, watching fireworks over the Charles on the Fourth of July, and her Big Sister Tricia. Sharlice lives in Cambridge with her grandparents, her aunt, and her younger brother. Sharlice often wanted to spend time with her aunt, but she was usually too busy to play with her. At the same time, Sharlice's grandmother became concerned that she was acting out in school. She heard about Big Sister Association and felt that a caring, supportive adult outside the family might be just what Sharlice needed.

Little did Sharlice's family know that the perfect person was living only a few blocks away and Big Sister Association was about to bring them together. Tricia Luong had just moved to Cambridge to attend the New England School of Art and Design. Tricia had been pursuing a PhD in political science, but realized that she longed to do something more creative with her career. This new path led her from Maryland to Massachusetts and a degree in interior design. While Tricia felt confident in her new career choice, she couldn't help but notice something was missing. "I was no longer doing something for the greater good," Tricia said. "There was a gap, a 'contribution void' in my life." It was at that time that Tricia decided to volunteer as a Big Sister.

Big Sister Tricia was matched with Little Sister Sharlice in December 2007. During their first visit they went ice skating, drank hot cocoa, had their faces painted, and talked the entire time. "We were together for a very long time that day," laughed Tricia. Sharlice was happy to have the one-to-one attention and felt the burden of being the older sister at home had lifted. "I feel like I'm finally young," said Sharlice of her time spent with Tricia. The two have continued to do a variety of activities that usually mix fun and learning. They

have seen the opera version of *Hansel and Gretel*, visited the Museum of Fine Arts and the Butterfly Garden, taken yoga classes, gone to many different

cultural festivals, and have even spent a significant amount of time together learning how to do cartwheels. Tricia shared some of her Chinese heritage with her Little Sister as well. They've eaten traditional foods such as dumplings and spinach with tofu. "I thought it was chicken!" moaned Sharlice, who later admitted it actually wasn't too bad. Tricia has also helped Sharlice set goals. When the two recently came across a kit that would enable them to grow a butterfly from a caterpillar, Tricia encouraged Sharlice to devise a plan to save up the money to purchase it. Each week Sharlice sets aside at least one dollar she has earned in a piggy bank that she keeps at Tricia's house. When she's saved up enough money they will buy the kit together.

Tricia and Sharlice were clearly fast friends from day one, but their relationship has also evolved into a deep bond over the years. "She gets really excited to tell me things," said Tricia. "She's always been open, but over time she's opened up to me a lot more." Sharlice sees Tricia as an extension of her family. When it came time for Sharlice's first communion, she made sure to invite Tricia. "Being there on such a special occasion was a window into Sharlice's family life and her life with the church. I hadn't seen that aspect of her before," said Tricia.

Sharlice hopes to follow in Tricia's footsteps as she gets older. When asked what she wants to be in the future, she replied, "I want to be a Big Sister like Tricia!" For now, the two are simply looking forward to choosing their costumes for Big Sister's annual Halloween party. Sharlice, who has attended the party dressed as her favorite animal—a cat—in the past, has bigger plans for this year. "I'm going to be something really cool; cooler than a cat!" she said. As for the rest of the year, being Tricia's Little Sister is plenty cool enough for Sharlice.



*Big Sister Tricia and Little Sister Sharlice made a splash at our summer picnic*



*Big Sister Tricia and Little Sister Sharlice at our annual Halloween Party in 2008. They're keeping this year's costumes a secret!*

## Big Sister Goes to Camp

**I**t was the perfect summer day for 50 Big and Little Sister matches on Saturday, July 10! Thanks to generosity of **The Connors**

**Family Office**, Big Sister Association held our

annual summer picnic at Camp Harbor View on Boston's Long Island. During the week, the camp serves 700 boys and girls from Boston's underserved neighborhoods, but on Saturday Big Sister took over

the grounds with fun activities, special guests, and the makings of a day not soon forgotten.

**Mayor Thomas Menino** welcomed the Big and Little Sisters and was presented with a lei by Little Sister Sierra. As he spoke to the women and girls, he reminded the Little Sisters how fortunate they are to have a caring and supportive adult like their Big Sisters in their lives. The camp itself holds a special place in Mayor Menino's heart, as it was the brainchild of the Mayor and Jack Connors, Jr., who wanted to create a safe space for Boston's youth to enjoy sun, sea, and sand during the summer months. Though it was just one day, the girls got to experience all these aspects of the camp.

The Big and Little Sisters enjoyed a range of activities: building sandcastles and playing volleyball on the beach, making friendship bracelets and swimming in the pool. **Mattapan's Pit Stop Barbeque** was on hand to grill a tasty lunch and **b.good's** Harvey truck stopped by to give everyone free fruity smoothies. Impromptu hula

hoop competitions and water balloon tossing rounded out a day of fun in the sun. There was even a live DJ who had everyone getting their groove on throughout the day.

Special thanks to Camp Harbor View, b.good, and those who volunteered to help run activities and make the day a memorable one!



*Little Sister Amaia shares some sealife with Big Sister Brenna Downing*



*Big Sister Jilena Furr and Little Sister Ja'Najia build a sandcastle on the beach at Camp Harbor View*



## 2010 MATCH MAKER CLUB

The following individuals, corporations, and foundations made gifts of \$100 or more to Big Sister Association between June 17, 2010 and September 24, 2010. Thank you for your generous support!

### Friendship Maker \$2,000 - \$4,999

Heidi & John Kowalchyk  
Rick & Kathy Lieb

### Match Maker \$1,000 - \$1,999

Geoffrey Dancey  
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### Smile Maker \$100-\$499

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\*Denotes Legacy Society  
members: current and  
former Big Sisters

Thank  
You!

## Diversity Council Celebrates One Year

In August 2009, Big Sister Association formed a Diversity Council as a means to recruit more women of color to become Big Sisters and better reflect the diversity of our Little Sisters. Council members include several current Big Sisters, former Big Sisters, Board members, and community organizers. As they celebrated their first year's accomplishments, it was an opportunity to look back at what they have achieved and look forward to new goals! Their efforts over the past year have included:

**Representing Big Sister at community events.** Angie Vargas, Ana Leon, Shannon Robinson, Eneida Roman, Essence McGill Arzu, Kia Prescott, Keisha Pierre, Amanda Martinez, Ivys Fernandez, Charmain Jackman, Lesley White-Buefort, and Manolia Charlotin have all attended various gatherings on behalf of Big Sister and connected us with many corporate and community leaders in addition to bringing in new volunteers.

**Identifying recruitment and networking events** for Big Sister staff to attend which allowed us to tap into a broader, more diverse audience than ever before.

**Garnering media exposure in diverse outlets** such as El Mundo, Revista Hispana, Ethniconline.com, Color magazine, Touch 106.1 (thanks to Diversity Council member and radio personality, **Courtney Leonard**), and Hot 97. Council members and Big Sisters, Eneida Roman and Amanda Martinez, have also been featured with their Little Sisters in Big Sister publications, as well as on NECN and in the Building Impact e-newsletter.

**Planning and recruiting volunteers at The Hunt for the Next Big Sister**, a recruitment event that took place in the South End's Blackstone Square. The event attracted a diverse group of women and brought in applications and inquiries from more than 25 of them...including two former Little Sisters!

The result? Applications from 423 women of color over the past year. Since August 2009, the Council has helped us increase the number of women of color who are Big Sisters from 27% to 28%. While this is a significant accomplishment, the Council is not slowing down. They plan to drastically increase their recruitment goal in 2011. Of the more than 300 girls currently on our wait list, 226 live in Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, and the South End. These neighborhoods are areas of focus for the Diversity Council. They hope that with increased efforts, a formal recruitment campaign, and their role as Big Sister Association ambassadors, they will create a larger pool of Big Sisters who represent the diversity of the communities we serve.



Diversity Council member Shannon Robinson (right), helps recruit Big Sisters in the South End

*The following Big and Little Sisters celebrated match anniversaries between July 1, 2010 and September 30 2010. Congratulations to all on your lasting friendships!*

**12 YEARS**

Marcia Hirshberg & Ricketta

**11 YEARS**

Shannon Jennings & Chaniqua  
Dorothy Suput & Amoura

**10 YEARS**

April Cook & Staci

**9 YEARS**

Leanne Palmer & Cora  
Meg Timperi & Champagne

**8 YEARS**

Holly Charron & Meghan  
Jennifer Ostrosky & Ashlei  
Amanda Song & Mercedes

**7 YEARS**

Allison Cirino & Brenda  
Denise DeRoeck & Alina  
Kerri Norris & Ashley

**6 YEARS**

Renee Corcoran & Samantha  
Christine Crowley & Wandaisha  
Marcia Dobbs & Stephanie  
Aimee Floyd & Keysha  
Amy Lorenzo & Dominique  
Dawn Lovato & Heather  
Maureen McQuinn & Yvette  
Eneida Roman & Migleila

**5 YEARS**

Adrienne Appel & Krystal  
Michelle Cormier & Kyleigh  
Martha Curran & Shanica  
Alice Daly & Jasmin

Leslie Eckholdt & Allison  
Melissa Elmer & Lanelle  
Dara Khan & Ashleigh  
Neidine Lynch & Whitney  
Melissa Medeiros & Chloe  
Missy Pappas & Kalieyah  
Connie Ramelli & Tatianna  
Jessica Roy & Janelle  
Marcy Ruda & Kelly  
Kara Sweeney & Kelina

**4 YEARS**

Roberta Allison & Belinda  
Katherine Chum & Jasmine  
Kerry Dei & Kayla  
Beth Deveney & Jennifer  
Cynthia Diminture & Joslyn  
Sarah Hamilton & Shirley  
Mekkin Lynch & Asalia  
Mary O'Connor & Shanice  
Emily Pappas & Elizabeth  
Jessica Reardon & Victoria  
Paula Shebest & Briana

Jacqueline Soroko & Eva  
Kate VanZeLe & Veronica  
Carolyn Vicari & Delicia

**3 YEARS**

Candace Bon & Dyanna  
Sarah Bourgeois & Shakeyma  
Susan Brady & Rickiema  
Sarah Coen & Cassandra  
Charity Collier & Jada  
Lisa Conley & Deirdre  
Brittany Doran & Sihara  
Michelle Duggan & Erin  
Erin Fitzgerald & Ashley  
Jen Maitland & Shelkilya  
Maria Meehan & Janell  
Keneisha R. Murphy & Milan  
Prudent Peters & Carli  
Shaquanna Philip & Kiana  
Kristen Rafuse & Margaret  
Kari Russ Denitzio & Ashley  
Njoki Wamiti & Jalissa

**2 YEARS**

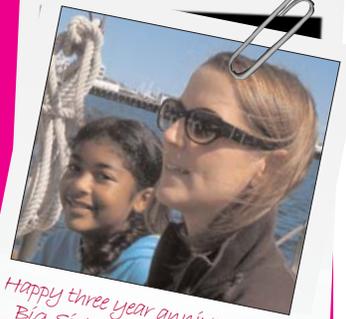
Meaghan Agnew & Nadira  
Mary-Elizabeth Aylouche &  
Ricsairis  
Gillian Brignac & Dayanara  
Francena Brooks & Khalya  
Sarah Chen & Jaliyah  
Heather Cloran & Briana  
Jennifer Cotter & Lydia  
Erin Dalbec & Rania

Wadlie Dolbrus & Daeja  
Heather Edmonds & Kiana  
Kristin Erekson & Katherine  
Leslie Feagley & Christa  
Lauren Fowler & Sylviana  
Allison Hackbarth & Miriam  
Judi Jackson & Alissabeth  
Ashley Jackson & Paula  
Erin James & Brianna  
Ashley Johnson & Sierra  
Katie Kilbride & Jasmin  
Avisha Lalla & Ebonie  
Nichole Lawton & Andrea  
Elyse Lindahl & Cheyenne  
Kristen Lynch & Latajah  
Mariel MacNoughton & Natasha  
Erica Manczuk & Moneajah  
Carol McKean & Brianna  
Regina McNally & Cindy  
Dawn Quinlan & Denishalee  
Jennifer Rouvina & Shakeema  
Meghan Sharkey & Meryam  
Maile Shoul & Nellyris

Jenny Silva & Eleanor  
Kimberly Strovink & Deonna  
Alana Tyler & Calaya  
Amy Unangst & Riley  
Kirsten Ward & Cindy

**1 YEAR**

Sophie Besl & Seanee Lee  
Kara Bowen & Ariana  
Connie Chu & Vivian  
Crisette Church & Leah  
Meredith Conant & Mitchka  
Margaret Connolly & Alyvia  
Samantha Cummings & Kayla  
Anokhee Dave & Corneilya  
Wendy Duffey & Ke'ara  
Christine Galatis & Logen  
Jennifer Garcia & Estephanie  
Dana Garczewski & Ashley  
Lindsey Getz & Evelyn Ann  
Kristy Guerrero & Shardonae  
Megan Healy & April  
Jamaica Kelley & Rakeima  
Emily Krusz & Maraina  
Judy Leon & Simone  
Sarah Levenson & Brittany  
Maurie Lewis & Sarina  
Kelly MacNeil & Paige  
Leigh Maroney & Stella  
Krisela Millios & Christina  
Elizabeth Mucci & Ariel  
Tara Pisani & Chrisleen  
Maryanne Raposo & Coliesha



*Happy three year anniversary to Big Sister Candace Bon and Little Sister Dyanna!*

Debra Savage & Olivia  
Kerry Shannon & Selene  
Colleen Shannon & Coliea  
Jennifer Tavares & Aiyana  
Erika Tchang & Jade  
Rolanda Walker & Oriana  
Monne Williams & Breona

# Happy Anniversary!



*On year together and counting for Big Sister Crisette Church and Little Sister Leah!*



*Congratulations on a decade of friendship, Big Sister April Cook and Little Sister Staci!*



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BIG SISTER ASSOCIATION OF GREATER BOSTON

## Big Sister in Brief..

### BIG IN BOSTON: A GIRL'S FUTURE IS NOW APPROACHING

On Tuesday, November 9, Big Sister Association and co-chairs **Jerry Rossi of The TJX Companies, Inc.** and **Fredi Shonkoff of Blue Cross Blue Shield**, invite you to join us as we celebrate our community and the transformative power of mentoring. BIG in Boston will be held from 6:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m. at The Westin Copley Place, Boston. The evening will include emcee, **Lisa Hughes of WBZ-TV**, Big Sister of the Year recognition, honoring **At-Large Boston City Councilor, Ayanna Pressley**, with the **Believe In Girls** award, words from a very special former Little Sister, and more! For sponsorship information and table purchases, please contact Alexis Bulkley, Director of Development, at 617.375.5753. For individual ticket sales, visit [www.bigsister.org](http://www.bigsister.org).

Special thanks to our BIG in Boston Leadership Sponsors:

**Holly McGrath & David Bruce**



No one does more to keep you healthy.

### BIG & LITTLE SISTERS SET SAIL

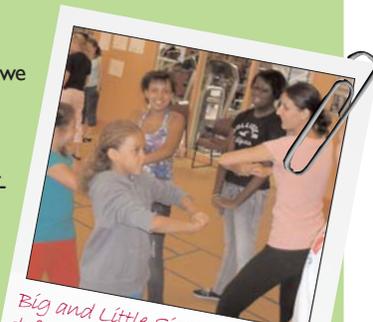
There's nothing better than spending a warm summer day on a sailboat—an experience that many of our Little Sisters, and some Big Sisters too—had never enjoyed. Big Sister supporter, **Ann Flannery of Legal Sea Foods**, was ready to remedy that situation this summer when she hosted four groups of Big and Little Sisters, and a group of our Neighborhood-Based Mentoring Big Sisters and Diversity Council members, aboard her boat, the *Tupelo Honey*. Flannery and Captain Don took each group for a tour around Boston Harbor on the 31' friendship sloop and even let the Little Sisters take the helm! "My favorite part of each trip was seeing the girls, especially those who were afraid at first, become comfortable with the boat and enjoy themselves," said Flannery.



*Little Sister Jameelsa takes the wheel from Capt. Don aboard the Tupelo Honey*

### SUMMER OF SELF-DEFENSE

Thanks to funding from **The Boston Foundation's My Summer in the City** program, we collaborated with **Girls' LEAP** on a series of self-defense workshops for 44 Big and Little Sister matches over the summer. At the Codman Square Healthworks, they learned self-defense skills, like the wrist breakaway and saying no forcefully. They were also reflected on the meaning of courage and constructed an acrostic poem about it. Additionally, the Little Sisters learned about the importance of advocates, like Big Sisters, in their lives.



*Big and Little Sisters learn self-defense techniques with some help from Girls' LEAP*