

Ontario Trillium Foundation Supports Recovery for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara

Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON – On Wednesday, Niagara area MPPs joined Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara staff, volunteers and funders at Queen’s Landing for a Volunteer and Funder Recognition Night to recognize the hard work, dedication and generosity of volunteers and funders. The event also celebrated \$110,300 in funding received through two Resilient Communities Fund grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which provided critical support to help the organization rebuild after the pandemic.

Before the amalgamation, OTF Resilient Communities Fund grants supported both BBBS agencies in Niagara to help rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Specifically, Big Brothers Big Sisters of North and West Niagara (BBBSNWN) received a \$52,000 Resilient Communities Fund grant in spring 2022 to hire a Family Intake and Support Coordinator to support the increased needs of vulnerable families, children and youth.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Niagara (BBSSCN) also received a \$58,300 Resilient Communities Fund grant in spring 2022 to hire a consultant to research and develop new, sustainable fundraising models, while increasing staff engagement.

Both of these grants were critical to help the agencies rebuild after the pandemic. This support has been an important enabler to allow the two agencies to begin the process of amalgamating to become Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara.

Quotes

“On behalf of the Ontario government, I want to congratulate Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara as recipients of the Resilient Communities Fund of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The provincial funding recognizes the important efforts of Big Brothers Big Sisters in promoting community mentorship and healthy relationships across our region and for all kids in Niagara to realize their full potential.”

-Sam Oosterhoff, MPP for Niagara West

“The work that Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Niagara does in our community is so, so important. The impact of these grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation will have a lasting, positive impact on families and children right here in Niagara. I want to thank Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Niagara for the work they do every single day, and I want to thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the latest example of their great work in our community.”

-Wayne Gates, MPP for Niagara Falls

“The additional funding to Big Brothers Big Sisters in Niagara is a credit to the inspiring work they do to empower youth through mentorship. With the added support of new staff, the impact will only continue to grow in building a more inclusive and vibrant community.”

-Jennie Stevens, MPP for St. Catharines

“It is important for children to be exposed to positive role models, and your organization has been helping them to reach their full potential for decades. The heroes are the volunteers that play critical roles in mentoring our youth. I commend Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara and the work they do, and I know this OTF funding will assist in so many ways as they recover from the pandemic.”

-Jeff Burch, MPP for Niagara Centre

“The support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation will have a lasting impact on our agency. Our volunteers and families are still feeling the impacts left by COVID-19, support from OTF has allowed us to give them the time, resources and support they deserve. Over the past 11 months our Family Intake Coordinator, Morgan Proulx, has done an outstanding job. She has supported families through her intake role and connected them to additional supports they may need outside the organization.”

-Erin Graybiel, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara.

“We will be able to grow our agency in ways we never thought possible thanks to the support of the OTF Resilient Communities Fund Grant. Our consultant, Global Philanthropic, has helped us look at new angles of fundraising that will help to create more sustainable revenue streams for our agency.”

-Sarah Ludberg, Senior Director of People and Programs of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of Niagara

For 85 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been making a meaningful difference in the lives of youth ages 6 to 18 through our mentoring programs in Niagara. For both Big and Little, the mentoring experience becomes a life-changing relationship built on friendship, empowerment, and trust. Support from a caring adult mentor enables youth to experience essential developmental relationships, which help them to develop into healthy young people better able to deal with and overcome life's adversities. Youth with mentors are more likely to graduate from high school, go to university, secure full time employment and have on average higher incomes. For more information visit, <https://niagara.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/> .

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations celebrates 40 years of grantmaking in Ontario and making a lasting impact in communities. Last year, OTF invested nearly \$209M into 2,042 community projects and partnerships, which included funding for the Government of Ontario's Community Building Fund. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

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