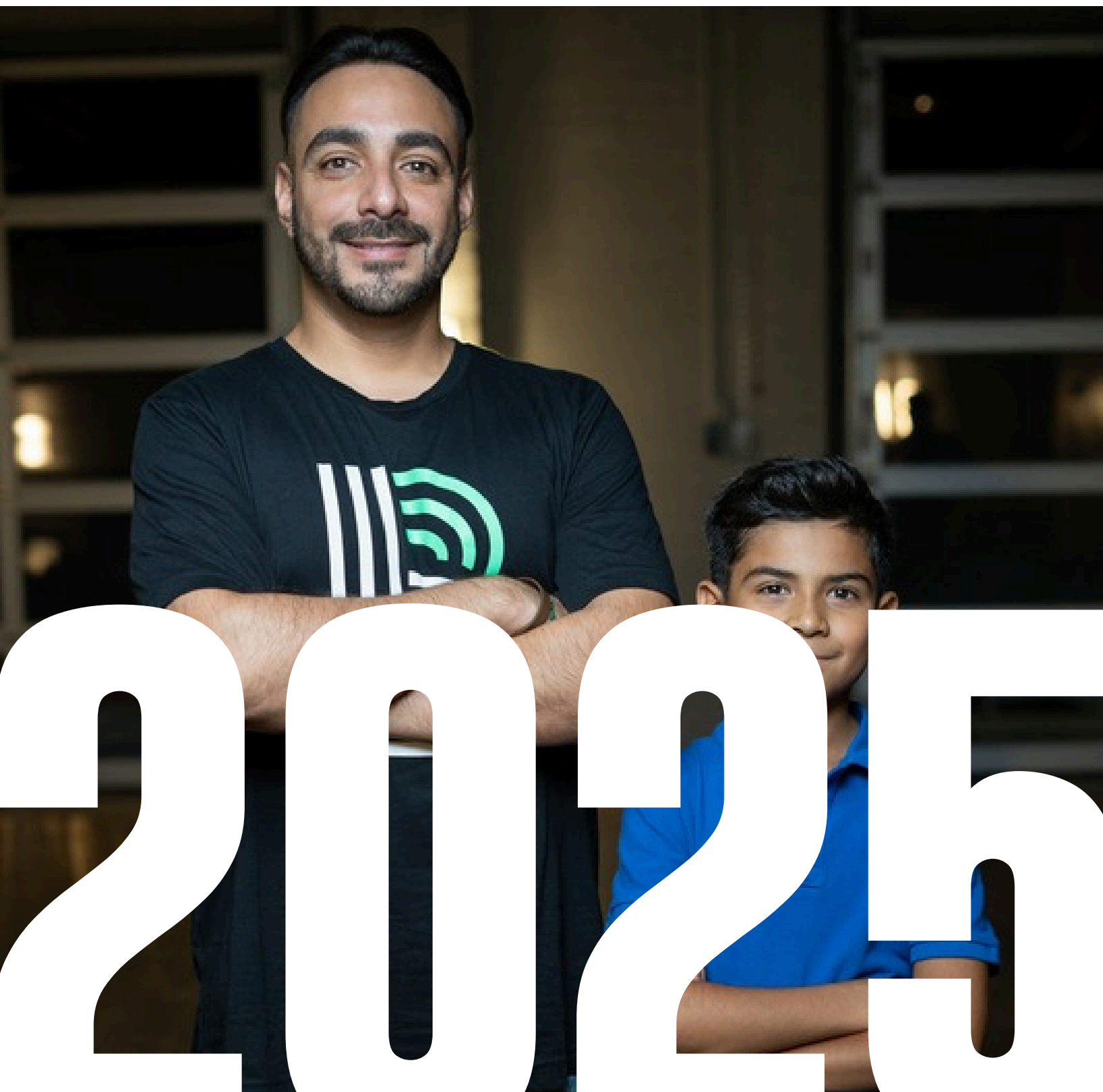


ANNUAL REPORT



Big Brothers
Big Sisters.
OF RHODE ISLAND



LETTER FROM THE CEO

Katje Afonseca

When our organization started in 1966, mentoring was a vision that a handful of people believed in. Today, researchers at Harvard and the U.S. Treasury can trace the effects of mentoring to a 15 to 20 percent increase in future earnings and a 20 percent increase in the likelihood that a young person will attend college.

In 2025, BBBSRI provided mentors to **309** young people, supported **246** active mentor-mentee matches and more than **2,500 individuals**, provided more than **2,500** hours of professional case management services and distributed **\$34,848** directly to families through our Family Empowerment and Investment Fund, often covering the kind of unexpected expenses that can destabilize a household. And our Donation Center kept more than **4 million** pounds of goods out of Rhode Island landfills while generating the revenue that funds the mentoring itself.

What stays with me, though, is something the data almost undersells. When we surveyed the young people in our programs, every one of them told us they feel special when they're with their mentor, and every one said they feel happier since being matched. I have read a great deal of program data over the years, and I can tell you those answers don't show up by accident. They show up because an organization does the deep work of following up with every participant with a focus on quality and strengthening a young person's outcomes.

In 2025 we said goodbye to Bonney Sevellon, the founder of our Donation Center operation. Through her ingenuity and business savvy, Bonney built a legacy, which is what the best among us manage to do, and we feel her absence in ways large and small.

There are still kids on our waiting list, which means the work is not finished. Thank you for being part of it, this year and all the years before!



→ **100%**

of mentors say BBBSRI mentoring had a positive impact on them

→ **100%**

of parents say their child is well-matched with their mentor

→ **100%**

of young people say they feel happier since being matched

GET TO KNOW BBBSRI

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island has been pairing young people with Mentors since 1966. We are a statewide agency serving youth from Providence to South County, connecting kids who need a consistent, caring adult with people who show up week after week, year after year.

We operate two interconnected organizations. Our mentoring programs pair young people with volunteer Mentors and support those relationships with professional staff assigned to each individual.

The Donation Center Foundation of Rhode Island (Donation Center), [DonateRI.org](https://donateri.org), is one of Rhode Island's largest clothing and household goods collection operations, generating revenue that sustains a significant portion of the mentoring programs and supports partner nonprofits across the state.



Vision

→ All youth achieve their full potential.

Mision

→ To create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.

→ Who We Serve

74% of mentees identify as BIPOC. **57%** identify as female. **2%** identify as non-binary or transgender. **50%** of families reside in Rhode Island's urban core. **64%** of families earn less than **\$30,000** per year.

→ Recent Awards

In 2025, we completed our 2023 to 2025 strategic plan and received the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America Growth and Impact Award for 2024. We were also named a Best Place to Work in Rhode Island. Our CEO, Katje Afonseca, received the Trailblazer in Mentorship Award at the R.I.S.E. Women's Leadership Conference. And our CFO, Jack Blatchford, was recognized with a C-Suite Award from the Providence Business News. These acknowledgments reflect a team that has been building, not coasting.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, BBBSRI operated across two revenue streams: our mentoring agency and our Donation Center. Together, they generated the resources that kept 309 young people in active programs, launched a new group mentoring initiative, and funded \$142,064 in contributions to partner nonprofits across Rhode Island.

The Donation Center is the financial engine of the organization. In 2025, the sale of donated goods generated \$3,267,904 in revenue. The Donation Center contributed \$990,000 to the agency's mentoring operations while also covering its own program costs and community giving. On the agency side, grant income totaled \$460,309, fundraising events brought in \$154,382, individual contributions added \$145,071, and investment income contributed \$79,234. Program services represent approximately 82 percent of agency expenses, meaning the vast majority of resources go directly to the work.

Revenue

→ Donation Center Transfer to BBBSRI	\$990,000
→ Grant Income	\$460,309
→ Fundraising Events	\$154,382
→ Contributions	\$145,071
→ Investment Income	\$79,234

Agency Expenses

→ Program Services	\$1,572,424
→ Management & General	\$256,426
→ Fundraising	\$86,824

A YEAR OF IMPACT

In 2025, we served 309 young people through 1:1 and group mentoring, with **246** active matches in place at year's end. We created **30** new matches and logged more than **2,500** hours of case management to keep those relationships strong.

We also launched something new. **The Little Brotherhood** is our exciting small-group mentoring program built for boys on our waiting list, young men who needed support before a 1:1 match could be arranged. The program enrolled **33** mentees and 11 mentors in its first cohort. It is not a substitute for a 1:1 match. It is a bridge, and for the young men in the first cohort, it was a real one.

Our staff delivered over **102** hours of Mentor training. Eighteen Mentees were sent to summer camp through Cat's Camperships, representing 54 total weeks of camp provided. **\$34,848** was distributed directly to families through the Family Empowerment and Investment Fund, covering essential needs that often stand between a crisis and stability.



2025 by the Numbers

→ Active matches at year's end	246
→ New matches created	30
→ Hours of case management	2,553
→ Hours of mentor training	102
→ Secondary beneficiaries (caregivers, household members)	1,525
→ Weeks of summer camp provided	54
→ Distributed to families, Family Empowerment Fund	\$34,848
→ Scholarships awarded (Dr. D + CAC combined)	\$27,000

MATCH STORIES

Theresa & Eliyanah

Matched in 2024, Theresa and Eliyanah have built a strong relationship by embracing new experiences together, from rock climbing and painting to hockey games, skiing, and escape rooms. Through these shared experiences, Eliyanah has grown more confident in trying new things, stepping outside her comfort zone, and setting personal and academic goals. A meaningful milestone in their match has been Eliyanah's increased self-confidence and willingness to embrace new opportunities—an achievement made possible through the trust and encouragement they have built together. Their relationship is a powerful example of how mentorship helps young people discover new possibilities and realize their potential.



**Years
matched**

2 years

Bob & Jayden

Matched since September 2020, Bob and Jayden have built a strong relationship rooted in trust, encouragement, and shared experiences. Over the past five years, they have bonded through their love of sports, attending games together, staying active, and participating in community events. A meaningful milestone in their match has been reaching five years together—a testament to the lasting impact of consistent mentorship and the trusting relationship they have built. Through Bob's steady presence and support, Jayden has gained confidence, developed new skills, and benefited from having a dependable mentor by his side.



**Years
matched**

6 years

NELITZA VELASQUEZ

Director of Operations

The Dr. Dorothy Pieniadz Visionary Leadership Award recognizes an individual who demonstrates exceptional leadership, innovation, and unwavering dedication to the mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island.

Dr. Dorothy, BBBSRI's founding mother, inspired everyone she met with her vision, determination, and relentless belief that there was always a way to do better. She never accepted "no" as the final answer and continually challenged those around her to think bigger and strive for excellence.

The 2025 recipient, Nelitza, embodies that same spirit. Since joining BBBSRI nearly six years ago as a Match Support Specialist, she has consistently demonstrated determination, compassion, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Over the years, she has grown into an exceptional leader, recently earning a promotion to Director of Operations for the Donation Center.

Throughout her journey, every supervisor has praised her willingness to go above and beyond, challenge the status quo, and lead with both heart and purpose. Nelitza's leadership reflects the legacy Dr. Dorothy created. She is a testament to the power of growth, perseverance, and a deep commitment to serving our community. We are proud to recognize her with the 2026 Dr. Dorothy Pieniadz Visionary Leadership Award.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

How Our Finances Work

BBBSRI operates as a dual-entity organization. The Donation Center is its own operating division with its own income and expenses. It contributed **\$990,000** to the mentoring agency in 2025. The agency draws on that transfer alongside grants, individual gifts, fundraising events and activities, and investment income.

Combined, the two entities brought in roughly **\$5.8 million** in 2025. Program services represent approximately **82%** of agency expenses, reflecting our commitment to keeping the majority of resources in direct service.

Agency Income Statement

→ Donation Center Transfer	\$990,000
→ Grant Income	\$460,309
→ Fundraising	\$154,382
→ Contributions	\$145,071
→ Investment Income	\$79,234
→ Other Income	\$11,518

Agency Expense Summary

→ Program Services	\$1,572,424
→ Management & General	\$256,426
→ Fundraising	\$86,824

Donation Center Summary

→ Revenue from Donated Goods	\$3,267,904
→ Other Income	\$6,298
→ Transfer to Agency	\$990,000
→ Program Operations	\$1,693,476
→ Management & General	\$196,982

Audited financial statements are available upon request.

Contact: advancement@bigsri.org.

OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

- Yomayra Reyes, President
- David Fontes, Vice President
- Ted Turnbull, Treasurer
- Tiana Ochoa Teo, Secretary
- Rosie Fernandez
- Michael E. Smith
- Aida Crosson
- Tom Furey
- Rhonda Lapham
- Glen P. Martin
- Tiffany Nguyen
- C. Paul Oberg
- Leeanna Raposo
- Ted Turnbull
- Aderito Dos Santos
- Katje Afonseca, Ex-Officio



GET INVOLVED

Become a Mentor

Mentors are the heart of this organization. If you have a few hours a month and you're willing to show up consistently, we want to hear from you. Apply at bigsri.org or email mentoring@bigsri.org.

Donate Clothes

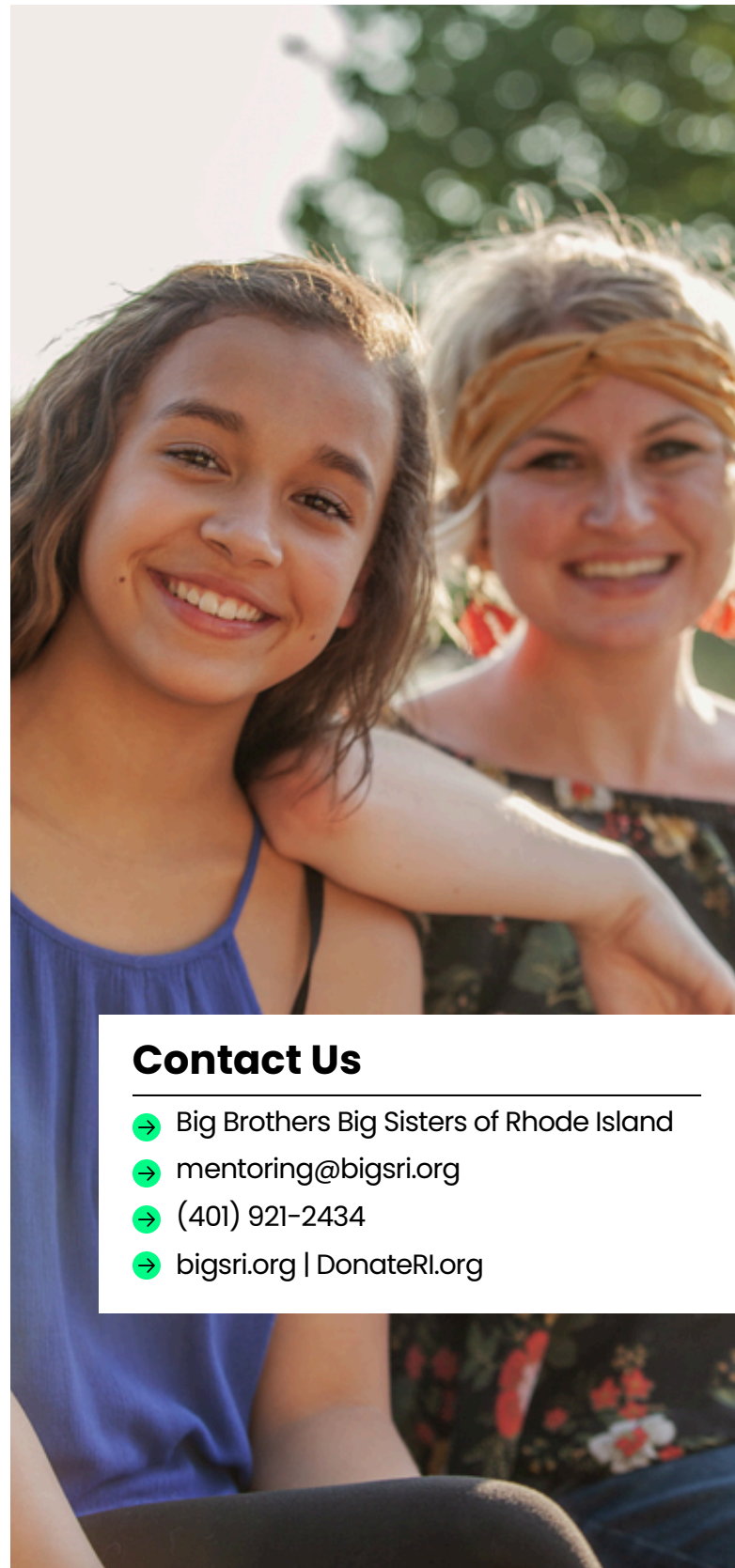
Every item donated to DonateRI supports a match. Drop off at four staffed BBBSRI locations, seven Savers partner stores, or one of 162 donation bins across Rhode Island. Schedule a home pickup at DonateRI.org. Donation Center: **(401) 921-2434** | Donations@BigsRI.org

Make a Financial Gift

Give at bigsri.org or contact events@bigsri.org to discuss major gifts, recurring giving, or corporate partnership opportunities.

Join Big Believers

Big Believers is our monthly giving program. Starting at **\$20 per month**, a recurring gift gives us reliable revenue we can plan around. Visit bigsri.org to join.



Contact Us

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Rhode Island
- mentoring@bigsri.org
- (401) 921-2434
- bigsri.org | DonateRI.org