

New matches!



Johniece and Denise



Richard and Zachariah



Ayanna and Toreyana



Coreyana and Annie



Big Buddy Program

August 2011 Newsletter

Of all Black fourth graders in the nation, 58% are functionally illiterate.
A recent study by the California Mentor Foundation found that 98% of young people matched with mentors stayed in school.

*Taken from National CARES Mentoring Movement website at: www.caresmentoring.org

Upcoming Events

8/10 New Mentor Orientation, 6-8 pm at LRCE

8/18 Traditional Mentor Training, 6-8 pm at Big Buddy Office

8/20 Splash Day at BREC Liberty Lagoon Water Park, 11 am—2:30 pm at 111 Lobdell Ave.

8/25 Match Ceremony, 6-7:30 pm at LRCE

*Event coordinator/contact person: Kristi LaMattery k.lamattery@bigbuddyprogram.org

Save the Date! Day of the Mentor: Friday, October 28. More info soon...

Events from July



Making new friends



Getting to know each other at Match Ceremony:
Annie and Coreyana

Match Ceremony



Getting to know each other at Match Ceremony:
Ayanna and Toreyana

**Big Buddies and Little Buddies
at the Big Buddy Summer
Luncheon**



Big Buddy Celeste and Little Buddy Aleyria



Tirione and Tyra paired for Lunch



Big Buddy Denise and Little Buddy
Johniece

**Apprenticeship presentations at the Big
Buddy Summer Luncheon**



Back to front Layne, Jasmine (Deborah's Apprentice) Justice, Shane, Chad, Dione, Deborah, and Gaylynne.

Thanks to the Dancing for Big Buddy Star Dancers for a wonderful event and opportunity to expose our youth to the workforce by taking them to work with them, and allowing them to experience one day in their career. They also provided a beautiful luncheon for the Big and Little Buddies to enjoy and spend time together.



Layne, CEO of Noesis Data,
paired up with
Apprentice Justice



Chad from Channel 2 News
(weekend sports anchor) with
Apprentice Shane

Looking Ahead

School starts August 10th Big Buddy after school programming starts Sept 12th. Going to see your Little Buddy at school for lunch is a fun way to get to see them in their environment and get to know them better. You can also visit with them at their after school program and talk to their teachers and Big Buddy site staff to find out how they are doing.

If your Little Buddy is struggling in school, you can help motivate them to do their best by getting involved and making contact with their home room teacher on Black Board. If you are interested in going to the orientation with them, give their parents a call, let them know you would like to meet them there so you can meet the key players in your Little Buddy's school setting. If you are able to access information, like home work projects, you can then support your Little Buddy and talk to the teacher about specific challenges or success in your Little Buddy's work.

So go see your Little Buddy at school! Don't forget to wear your Big Buddy T-shirt if you have one!

Changes in the Air

- Traditional trainings will now be held once every three months. You can attend before you are eligible to be matched traditionally, so please attend the next traditional training on August 18th, if you have not attended one yet.
- New, as well, is our incentive program to get our stats reported to our funders on time so we can continue to do the work we love. All mentors who have attended activities, and have 20 hours or more of contact with their Little Buddy so far this year will receive a free Big Buddy T-shirt. Also, your volunteer hours are tax deductible. If you can get them to us each month, we will compile them for end of year reporting, which can be sent to you.

So, remember to send your Monthly Contact Report to us by the 10th of each month.

Just for Mentors

- In an effort to put supports in place for the work you do as Mentors, we are looking for input from you as to some possible dates for a once a month brown bag lunch date to meet here at the office on Main street. We would like to have a dialogue on mentoring and cultural diversity within our community and how it impacts the children we serve. We could hash out case concerns, share perspectives on issues that affect our youth, provide resources, and allow the opportunity to make some valuable and supportive connections between Mentors.
- Our goal would be to have a one and a half hour time frame in which people could come and go within that time and still make it back to work on time. For example 11:30am till 1:00 pm on the last Friday of every month. If anyone has some dates that work well with your schedules please let us know.

Contact Kristi LaMattery: k.lamattery@bigbuddyprogram.org

Fun Events for Traditional Pairs

Pennington Hot Air Balloon Competition

When: Aug 5,6,& 7th from 3-10pm

Where: Pennington and BREC park at Kenilworth

What: Children's village, live band, Parachute Demonstration, Balloon Glow, vendors.

Art in the Park

When: Aug 13th from 10 am till 2pm

Where: 1515 Dalrymple Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70808

What: Baton Rouge Gallery Artists Demonstrations

Storytelling by O'Neal Isaac

Sidewalk Chalk Contest

Kids Art Activity Tables



Big Buddy Program



Mentor of the Month: Christopher Carter



Chris and Jeremy have been matched since February of 2010. Jeremy is a bright 12-year-old who gets great grades and loves to be challenged. Chris has been working with Jeremy, the oldest of five siblings, to help him understand the role of a big brother. Chris has also helped Jeremy find positive things to do while out of school. Jeremy is interested in spy novels and Chris motivates Jeremy to read by calling him and discussing the books. Chris helped Jeremy identify odd jobs he can do around the house, and works with him to build his self esteem by showing Jeremy how good it feels to do things that make him proud of himself.

When Jeremy was asked what was it like having Chris for a Mentor, he said, "Chris is always there when I need him. My grandma and brothers and sisters all like him too. When they see him coming, the little ones run to him and ask him to throw them up in the air." Chris has a good relationship with his Little Buddy's family; he has worked hard to establish trust and show that he cares about them. Chris was also able to give Jeremy some first-time experiences. According to Jeremy, "He is the first person who took me to the movies and restaurants, and I think he is easier to talk to than anyone else. If he ever left, I would be sad."

Jeremy says his life has changed since having Chris around. "When I first met Chris, my anger was bad. Now, it's calmed down because I can talk to him and it just be me and him and we click. I wish he will always be there."

When I first met Jeremy, he was a very reserved child who was shy and withdrawn. The next time I saw him, Chris was there and Jeremy's entire attitude was different. He absolutely had more confidence, he was communicating, and joking around. I could see his comfort level with Chris and it was beautiful. When Jeremy was asked if he could say something to Chris about being his Mentor, he said: "Chris, you are like a dad to me." He went on to explain, "Without him, I wouldn't have accomplished the goals I have. Like, in school if I didn't study or wasn't ready for a test, I would call Chris and he would tell me about what he would do cause he didn't have a dad either. And he would tell me he looked at God like a dad, so he would talk to God about it and he would feel better. Then he could go take the test. Well I did it and it worked for me. I follow what he says and his advice, it works for me. The things he does, they work for me too."

So thank you, Chris, for your amazing passion and dedication to Jeremy. He thinks you are so important to him and I see your invaluable contribution, especially to this rough time in his life. I can't imagine how hard the last few months would have been for him if he didn't have you there, still believing in him and caring about him!