



## LEADERSHIP PROFILE



**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta**  
**Atlanta, GA**

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**“Transforming Atlanta, one child at a time.”**

*--Headline from BBBS Atlanta 2017 strategic plan*

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### THE OPPORTUNITY

Through the power of one-to-one relationships between young people and their adult mentors, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta has been “Transforming Atlanta, one child at a time” for nearly 60 years.

Thousands of Atlanta’s young people have benefited from the power of long-term relationships with a Big Brother or Big Sister, and thousands of adults have had their own lives deeply affected by the gifts—often unexpected—which they themselves have received from such relationships.



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This year, BBBS Atlanta will support mentoring relationships for nearly 2000 children and teens ages 8-18, split about equally between boys and girls. These relationships have a meaningful, long-term impact in the lives of the at-risk population of children served by the organization.<sup>1</sup> The mentoring relationships themselves are deep and sustained, with the average child/adult pairing lasting an average of 44 months.

For over a third of its existence, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta has been led by Janice McKenzie-Creighton, CEO since 1992, who recently announced her intention to retire.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the Board of Directors has launched a search for a compelling leader who can perpetuate the powerful relationships and programs already in place while extending the organization's capacity significantly.

The goal? Expanding the organization's impact—without compromising quality—making professionally supported mentoring a reality for the untold number of eligible and deserving Atlanta-area youth not yet benefitting from such potent interactions.

## THE ORGANIZATION

A leader in the national movement promoting impactful matches between adult volunteers and at-risk children, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta (“BBBS Atlanta”) has been a backbone organization for children and youth in the region since 1960.



The staff of about 40 support and are in turn supported by an extensive network of volunteers, program partners and stakeholders. The 2017 budget is about \$3.8 million.

All are enriched by the impact the organization is having on metro Atlanta's youth every day. The results are both impressive and consistent; for example,

- 97% of high school seniors in BBBS Atlanta mentoring relationships graduate on time—vs. just 63% of their peers statewide and 71% for the economically disadvantaged students across Metro Atlanta<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 90% of the children come from low-income households, 77% live in single-parent homes, and nearly half have a parent who has been incarcerated.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ajc.com/lifestyles/mckenzie-crayton-ceo-local-big-brothers-big-sisters-retiring/kZP89mGS1k98P6941ScIyK/>

<sup>3</sup> “State of Education in Metro Atlanta: Baseline Report 2017,” available [here](#).

- 88% of BBBS students enroll in post-secondary education opportunities, vs. about 75% of all metro area public school graduates
- Just 1% of mentored children become enmeshed in the juvenile justice system—an especially telling statistic given the family experience with incarceration shared by such a large percent of children in a BBBS mentoring relationship.

The [leadership](#) of BBBS Atlanta is experienced, committed, enthusiastic and diverse, and their collective ability to support matches with first-quality training and guidance is a source of great pride. For example, 30% of the current staff has at least conversationally fluent in Spanish, a real asset in which Hispanics and Latinos constitute one of the fastest growing demographic groups regionally. The Atlanta BBBS affiliate is regarded as a thought-leader within the national Big Brothers Big Sisters network, and Atlanta staff members are known for their entrepreneurial spirit.

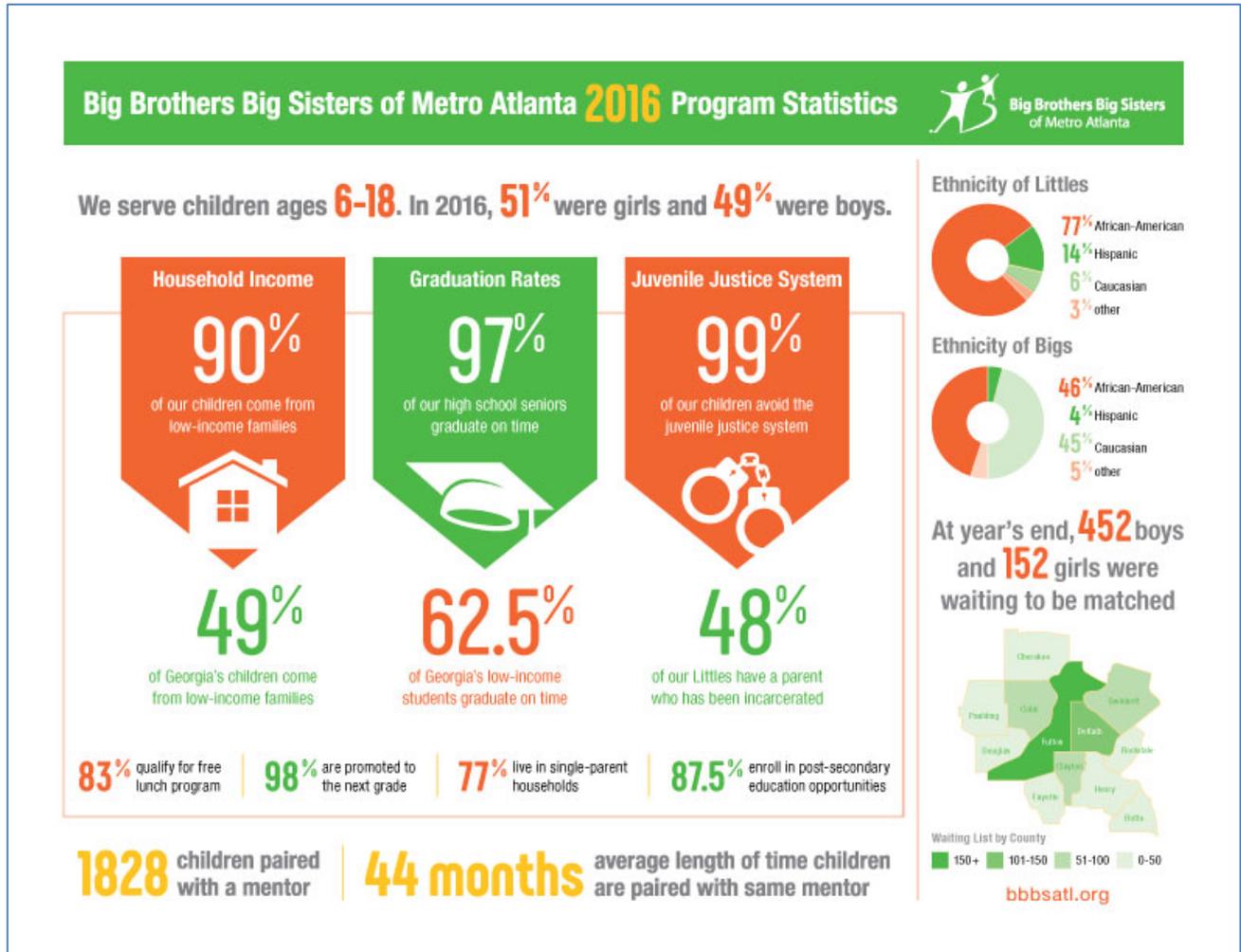
The organization is governed by a 25-person [board of directors](#) drawn from a cross-section of metro area business and civic leaders. The seven-person CEO search committee includes current and former trustees and representatives of significant, long-term funders.

In 2012, BBBS Atlanta relocated to headquarters in Midtown Atlanta, supported by a successful \$7.7-million capital campaign. The facility is a magnet for staff, students and volunteers alike, but the campaign was slowed significantly by the recession's lingering tail, and thus paying down the expansion debt took longer than planned. Annual fundraising support from donors has remained consistently strong throughout, but overall revenue (excluding the capital campaign) has vacillated between \$2.5 million and \$3 million for the past several years.



The number of new matches has been similarly flat over the past five years. Since the metro area population has been surging and local attention to educational inequality, economic mobility and the impact of stable relationships on a child's future has never been greater, the board is excited by the opportunity for expanded impact.

Not only are there at least 600 children already on the organization’s waiting lists for matches, there are thousands more at-risk kids in area school systems who could benefit significantly from sustained adult mentors—if such could be made available to them.



The strategic plan adopted by the BBBS Atlanta board of directors earlier this year calls for a major expansion of matching and mentoring capacity in the coming years. Such an increase will require innovative use of technology, strengthened financial resources, targeted recruitment efforts, and appropriate staff support to maintain the unwavering commitment to quality that has long been a core component of the mission’s success.

The organization cherishes its focus on impact. Deepening that impact—on individual children, their families and their communities—will be a major focus for the new CEO, as s/he develops the expanded relationships and resources needed

to provide more children with the enriching experience of a durable connection with a Big Brother or Big Sister.

For more information on Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta, please visit the organization's [website](#).<sup>4</sup> Information on the national organization can be found [here](#).<sup>5</sup>

## THE MANDATE

The next CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta will inherit a foundation built on programmatic excellence. The energized board seeks a CEO who can leverage the organization's heritage to have even greater impact for the at-risk children of our community. To that end, the CEO can anticipate a set of interlocking priorities and expectations:



1. **Stability.** Leadership transitions are stressful for any organization but especially so for one that has only recently overcome the financial challenges of a major physical move undertaken in the midst of a recession. With diligence, persistence and the support of loyal donors, the benefits of the beautiful facilities are now being fully realized. Nevertheless, a laser focus on BBS Atlanta's capital needs in the past several years understandably affected organizational and programmatic energy. Staff and stakeholders can be forgiven for feeling taxed, and yet opportunities for service to Atlanta's at-risk youth have never been more compelling.

With stable financial footing now reestablished, the new CEO must lead an emboldened staff towards a refreshed strategy to convert aspirations into reality.

2. **Strategy.** The board has adopted a top-line strategy that is modest relative to the need but ambitious relative to the organization's recent history: Double the number of matches over the next several years, and strengthen measurably the readiness of BBBS youth for college or career. The mechanisms and resources to realize the new goals are not yet in place, and a staff already feeling taxed will be hungry for the pragmatic vision and support from the CEO needed to ensure full alignment on expectations.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bbbsatl.org/>

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3. **Focus.** As with many social service agencies, BBBS Atlanta is asking itself whether a tighter geographic or programmatic focus might enhance its ability to deepen its impact. For example, while the agency makes matches in 12 metro area counties, the majority take place in Fulton and DeKalb. In concert with funders, partners and the board, the CEO must ask such questions as “What impact might we have by doubling down our efforts *here?*” where “here” could be a major school system, a school cluster, or even a string of neighborhoods. Without prejudging the answers, the board expects the CEO to lead the process of focused discernment.
  
4. **Relationships.** Success at BBBS Atlanta depends on a strong staff supported by a broad range of stakeholders. Developing new partners and new ways to engage with partners of long-standing will be an ongoing priority. The organization is already well known in the broader community, but there is a clear appetite among funders and other stakeholders for stronger engagement, more forceful messaging and more interactive collaboration. Leadership for such initiatives must come from the CEO.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta is a valued community resource with an exceptionally bright future. Few organizations can match the power of the transformational matches BBBS Atlanta has spent six decades perfecting. By helping to seize even a fraction of the opportunity at hand, the next CEO could ensure exceptional impact on the lives of thousands of metro area children and a growing pool of adult mentors, truly “Transforming Atlanta, one child at a time.”

## THE RELATIONSHIPS

<b>The CEO reports to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board of Directors</li> </ul>
<b>And currently manages a staff of ~40 through three direct reports:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EVP &amp; Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• VP, Finance &amp; Administration</li> <li>• VP, Development &amp; Public Relations</li> </ul>
<b>While stewarding other important relationships, such as</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School and community leaders across BBBS Atlanta’s footprint</li> <li>• Active and potential supporters, both programmatic and financial</li> <li>• Individuals and organizations who could help expand the pool of prospective Big Brothers and Big Sisters</li> <li>• Community partners with shared goals around student readiness for post-secondary study or careers</li> </ul>

## THE LOCATION

BBBS Atlanta is located in Midtown Atlanta, the metro area's most vibrant live/work/play community.

## THE CANDIDATE

The board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta seeks an inspiring CEO capable of whose strengths in strategy, operations and relationship-building can coalesce to expand and sustain the organization's impact on at-risk kids, their families and their communities, all while ensuring the quality of mentoring for which the organization is already well known.

### ***Competence: We expect to hire...***

- A proven business or nonprofit leader with a demonstrated commitment to young people and their development
- A leader accustomed to building a sustainable model for a clearly defined mission in pursuit of lasting impact for BBBS youth, their families and their communities
- A community-facing leader ambitious for the mission, respectful of staff, nurturing of donors and volunteers and fundamentally committed to the kids
- A strategically minded CEO with the tactical sense to make bold goals tangible, captivating and achievable
- A leader with an innovator's mentality, someone experienced at taking ideas and entities to scale (the ability to incorporate technology more fully would be most welcome)
- An inspirational leader with demonstrated success in driving operations, strategy and people
- An executive who knows how to marry passion and vision with programmatic excellence and a clear, compelling definition of success.
- A Bachelor's degree is required; Masters preferred.



***Character: The ideal candidate will be...***

- An infectious champion for BBBS Atlanta, for the children and youth it serves and for the pervasive power of mentoring
- A collaborative partner respected for engagement across the broader community
- A builder of teams who combines high expectations with a nurturing management style
- Awed but undaunted by the magnitude of the opportunity at hand.

***Culture: The CEO must be...***

- Comfortable in a variety of cultural, ethnic, demographic and generational environments
- A magnet for the mission and a natural collaborator; someone who invites partnerships and is willing to invest in them, both internally and externally
- Sufficiently business-minded to make the case for a sustainable financial model; a CEO at ease demonstrating the return on social investment that BBBS Atlanta generates for the larger community
- A governance-savvy executive who knows how to embrace the board as a true strategic asset
- A self-aware leader energized by a staff unified by shared respect, commitment and ambitions for their work and each other
- A chief executive who can help a solid brand become an exciting one, a leader who will take personal and professional pride in growing the collective impact of a generation of at-risk youth imbued with new confidence, new skills and new expectations for their own futures.

**For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email**

**[BBBSatl@BoardWalkConsulting.com](mailto:BBBSatl@BoardWalkConsulting.com)**

**or call Sam Pettway or Joan Schlachter**

**at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392)**