



**BoardWalk**  
CONSULTING



## LEADERSHIP PROFILE

**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast**

**Sarasota, FL**

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**"To provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better."**

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# The Opportunity

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast is a part of the nation's largest donor and volunteer-supported mentoring network, matching adult volunteer mentors (Bigs) with youth (Littles) ages 6 to 18 years old throughout the Gulf Coast of Florida in Sarasota, Manatee, DeSoto, Highlands, Hardee, Charlotte, Lee, Hendry, Glades and Collier counties. Through the power of one-to-one relationships between Littles and Bigs, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast has been steadfast in the mission to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that **IGNITE** the **power** and **promise** of youth since 1968.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast believes a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization is one where all staff, volunteers, youth, and families feel valued and respected. Through an ongoing commitment to growth as an agency, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast is accessing tools to help children overcome equity barriers and forge a pathway to achieve their full potential.

Thousands of Florida'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 enriched by the gifts—often unexpected—which they themselves have received from such relationships. This year, BBBS of the Sun Coast will support mentoring relationships for nearly 1,800 youth. These relationships have a meaningful, long-term impact in the lives of children who are under-resourced. The mentoring relationships themselves are deep and sustained, with the average Little/Big pairing lasting an average of 3 years. However, many Bigs and Littles remain connected well beyond 20 years.



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Joy Mahler, President & CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast since 1983, announced her plans to retire in 2024. Under Mahler’s leadership and together with donors, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast has grown from a small Venice area nonprofit serving 30 children to a leading agency serving a ten-county footprint on track to serve more than 2,000 Littles by year-end. Mahler was central in the mergers of six previous Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies and the Family Resource Connection. Through her leadership, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast continues to be distinguished as a top agency. Accordingly, the Board of Directors has launched a search for a dynamic and innovative leader who can perpetuate the powerful relationships and programs already in place while extending the organization’s capacity significantly.

For more than 56 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast has been matching youth in meaningful, enduring, professionally supported relationships with adult volunteers who defend their potential and inspire them to achieve their biggest futures possible. Big Brothers Big Sisters’ evidence-based approach is designed to create positive youth outcomes, including educational success, avoidance of risky behaviors, higher aspirations, greater confidence, and improved relationships.

## The Organization

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast (BBBS) in partnership with parents, and caregivers, identifies caring adult mentors (Bigs) to match with youth (Littles). Bigs and Littles then jointly participate in programs and activities together in schools or otherwise in the community with ongoing staff case management, follow up and encouragement.

The staff of about 56 are supported by an extensive network of volunteers, program partners, donors,

and stakeholders. The current budget is about \$5 million, with assets in excess of \$9 million. The agency is near completion of its state-of-the-art Headquarters, expected dedication summer 2024, and is in the midst of a robust \$8 million capital campaign.

Armed with a 3-year Strategic Plan the next CEO will implement and innovate the vision to affirm youth significance - letting young people know they matter, they are loved, special, deserving and capable of amazing things. With the caring guidance and support of Bigs, Littles find security and friendship. They avoid mistakes that easily derail the future of our most vulnerable youth. The goals for BBBS of the Sun Coast mentorship programs make certain Littles are grade promoted, ultimately graduate high school with a plan, and enter adulthood with life skills that propel them into a bright future.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast offers both Community-Based and Site-Based programs. This removes all barriers to access the award-winning mentoring programs and case management services.

## Community-Based

Many relationships between Bigs and Littles fall under BBBS of the Sun Coast Community-Based programs. These are one-to-one outings and activities such as:

- Taking a walk in the park
- Going to museum
- Listening to music
- Hanging out and talking

Some Bigs meet their Littles on the weekends. Others get together with their Littles in the evenings. Each match is unique and develops a schedule that works for them.



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## Site-Based

Sometimes the best place to help a child realize their potential is on-site at their school, and some of the biggest supporters of BBBS of the Sun Coast programs are teachers, but the Site-Based Mentoring program isn't limited to the classroom. Littles will bond with their Big through different activities like:

- Talk with their Bigs about class.
- Do homework or read together.
- Shoot hoops in the gym.
- Play on the playground.

At the end of the day, it's really all about starting a friendship, providing guidance and inspiring Littles to reach their potential through one-to-one mentoring relationships that are mutually rewarding and sustained over multiple years.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast is missioned to inspire every child to succeed by offering [7 initiatives](#):

- **Decisions To Win** - Curriculum-based course on healthy decision-making.
- **Juvenile Justice** - Early intervention effort to prevent entering the Juvenile Justice System.
- **Beyond School Walls** - Exploring real-life professional exposure and career experiences.
- **Reading Bigs** - A literacy initiative to promote a love of reading and improve academic performance.
- **Gateway To Success** - Breaking the cycle of risky behavior by navigating the transition from middle to high school.



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- **Big With Badges** - Matching Littles with Civil Service professionals, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, the Military, and the forestry service.

The Board of Directors has designed a Strategic Plan with targeted measurable Strategic Goals. The next CEO will have the opportunity to implement processes to realize these goals:

- **Impact** - Increase the number of children served while maintaining the quality of programs and activities.
- **Intentionality** - Improve diversity at all levels of the organization.
- **Innovation** - Use technology to enhance growth and improve operations.
- **Sustainability** - Increase operating fund, the endowment, and reserves; Complete \$8 million Capital Campaign.
- **Talent** - Employ the Best Board and Organizational Practices to attract and retain talent.

The leadership of BBBS of the Sun Coast is dedicated and passionate in their service to youth, many of the staff have served in their role for more than 16 years, the team is motivated by the impact of mentoring relationships. They are experienced, committed, enthusiastic and diverse, and their collective ability to support matches with first-quality training and guidance is a source of great pride. BBBS of the Sun Coast agency is regarded as a thought-leader within the national Big Brothers Big Sisters network, in 2022 Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast was awarded the Gold Standard and Quality Award.

The organization is governed by a 21-person committed board of directors drawn from a cross-section of Florida area business and civic leaders. In 2019, the BBBS of the Sun Coast board was honored as Board of the Year.



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As a promising future for youth living in under-resourced communities continues to be limited putting them at risk for under-achievement, the BBBS of the Sun Coast board of directors is excited by the opportunity for expanded impact. Local and national attention to educational inequality, economic mobility and the impact of stable relationships on a child’s future has never been greater, the next CEO of BBBS of the Sun Coast has a bold mandate, with significant resources to fulfill the organizational mission.

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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. Recruiting more volunteers and garnering more financial resources to advance the mission will only come as the next leader expands the relationships and resources needed to provide more children with the enriching experience of genuine and sustained connection with a Big Brother or Big Sister.

## The Mandate

The next CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast will inherit an agency built on innovation, programmatic excellence, and lasting impact. The energized board seeks a CEO who can leverage the organization’s evidence-based approach to creating positive youth outcomes by assessing talent, promoting professional development and leveraging technology to innovate and streamline processes.

## The next CEO will shape and lead the continued growth of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast.

The CEO will be a passionate, magnetic, strategic leader who appreciates that every child has incredible potential and mentoring is one of the most rewarding, enjoyable, and simple things a volunteer can do. The next leader thinks holistically about the future and brings people together to imagine, plan and implement in ways that inspire commitment and support. The CEO will be a frontline fundraiser, ambassador and relationship builder with experience in complex community-centered contexts. The CEO will have cross-sectoral experience and a record of relevant results.

In partnership with an engaged, mission-focused Board of Directors and staff, the CEO will:

- 1. Lead strategy, funding, and focus.** The CEO will guide a holistic, collaborative and inclusive process to plan the multi-year implementation of goals and funding. Having responsibility for 10 Counties, each essential to the overall impact of the agency, the next CEO will have the energy and ability to connect with multiple constituencies appreciating their distinct geographic needs to effectively serve Littles, recruit and engage Bigs, and fundraise.
- 2. Build relationships, collaboration and trust.** The CEO will have authentic depth, experience, courage and humility essential to advancing racial equity, inclusion and community work. The CEO will create collaborative, trusting relationships with youth, volunteers, donors, staff, partners and the Board.
- 3. Grow and diversify resources.** The CEO will be an experienced, enthusiastic effective fundraiser and builder of resources. The CEO will have proven success in government, foundation and corporate partnerships, capital campaigns, major and individual donor

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fundraising, and diverse types of funding events. The CEO will be strategic and proactive about cultivating, diversifying and increasing support and funding opportunities.

**4. Effectively advocate for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast mission and impact.**

The CEO will be a compelling listener and communicator who is active and visible in all counties served by BBBS of the Sun Coast. The CEO along with other team members will be regular participants at community gatherings, as listeners, communicators, resources and thought partners. The CEO will raise awareness of the value of mentoring relationships made through Big Brothers Big Sisters, and its value to the community to enhance the agency's influence and impact.

**5. Manage the staff, organization and mission.**

The CEO will be a strategic, engaged and innovative manager of the team and the business. The CEO will assess and develop talent, infrastructure and sustainability, and will foster a culture of teamwork, compassion and accountability. The CEO will have business and financial savvy, operational, delegation and strong cross-functional leadership skills.

The CEO's focus will be purpose led and performance driven, a leader who will enhance stability, implement strategy, embrace innovation, and leverage key stakeholder relationships.

**1. Stability.** Leadership transitions are stressful for any organization but especially for one served by a long-tenured iconic leader. With the impending opening of a new corporate headquarters, the team now has space to connect and collaborate to enhance organizational effectiveness, building stronger internal relationships. Serving a seasonal community, the next leader must leverage existing relationships owned by the previous CEO, institutionalize them to the agency and

build on shared interests to serve greater demand and move Littles from wait-listed to matched.

- 2. Strategy.** The board has adopted a top-line strategy that is modest relative to the need but attainable based on the agency's long-tenured growth trajectory. The next CEO will lead the charge to grow the number of matches over the next several years and strengthen measurably the readiness of BBBS of the Sun Coast youth for a life of independence through college or career and life skills development.
- 3. Innovation.** As with many social service agencies, BBBS of the Sun Coast continues to explore ways to engage all constituencies using technology to attract new volunteers, track volunteer matches, and measure programmatic impact. The new Family Lounge at the corporate headquarters will provide a more living room-like space to facilitate the establishment of familial bonds early in the Big Little match process.
- 4. Stakeholder relationships.** Success at BBBS of the Sun Coast depends on a strong staff supported by a broad range of stakeholders. Developing new partners and new ways to engage with stakeholders 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 constituents for stronger engagement, more visible messaging and more interactive collaboration. Leadership for such initiatives must come from the CEO.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast is a valued community asset with an exceptionally bright future. Few organizations can match the power of the transformational matches BBBS of the Sun Coast has spent five decades perfecting.

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# The Relationships



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<p><b>The CEO reports to:</b></p>	<p>The Board of Directors</p>
<p><b>And currently manages a staff of ~56:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VP, Finance &amp; Operations</li> <li>• VP, Programs and Volunteer Experience</li> <li>• VP, Marketing &amp; Communications</li> <li>• Regional Director - Lee/Hendry and Collier Counties</li> <li>• Comptroller</li> <li>• HR Manager</li> </ul>
<p><b>While stewarding other important relationships, such as:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School and community leaders across BBBS Sun Coast’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> <li>• State of Florida Legislative Agencies</li> </ul>

# The Location

BBBS of the Sun Coast is in Sarasota, Florida. Sarasota is on Florida's Southwest Coast, offering the best of both worlds, with a combination of city living and close access to pristine beaches and beautiful islands. BBBS of the Sun Coast serves a seasonal community of volunteers from across the United States.

# The Candidate

The Board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast seeks an inspiring CEO whose strengths in strategy, operations and relationship-building can coalesce to expand and sustain the organization's impact on under-resourced youth, their families and their communities, all while ensuring the quality of mentoring for which the organization is celebrated and well known.

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

- A proven business or nonprofit leader with a demonstrated commitment to youth and their brightest future.
- A passionate advocate for the power of one-to-one mentoring relationships
- A leader with proven business acumen who can manage organizational resources and run the enterprise while minimizing risk.
- A proven leader who has managed a multi-layered agency within a Federated model.
- 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.
- An effective external CEO who can inspire and champion Big Brother Big Sisters of the Sun Coast across all media platforms.



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The ideal candidate will be a builder of teams who combines high expectations with a nurturing management style.

- A community-facing leader ambitious for the mission, respectful of staff, nurturing of donors and volunteers and fundamentally committed to serving youth.
- 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 with the demonstrated ability to leverage technology in all systems.
- 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 leader who drives programmatic excellence and maximum program impact by measuring and evaluating operational KPIs.

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

- An infectious champion for BBBS of the Sun Coast, for 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.
- A mission before me leader.
- A leader who remains calm under pressure.
- An accessible leader who is able to connect with Littles, volunteers, Bigs, donors, staff, and the Board.

- 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.
- 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 expand and grow a solid brand, a leader who will take personal and professional pride in growing the collective impact of a generation of under-resourced youth imbued with new confidence, new skills and new expectations for their own futures.

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For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email relevant materials to

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

or call **Cynthia Moreland, Sam Pettway** or

**Lysondra Somerville** at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).

For the current status of this and other searches, please visit **[www.BoardWalkConsulting.com](http://www.BoardWalkConsulting.com)**

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