



CHANGE A LIFE LUNCHEON HONORS ANGELITOS DE ORO FOR ITS \$5M IN GIVING TO BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF ORANGE COUNTY'S HIGH SCHOOL BIGS PROGRAM

1st Annual Luncheon Raises \$55,000 for the Nonprofit's Programs to Change Lives of At-Risk Youth

SANTA ANA, Calif. (September 12, 2014) – More than 160 female business, community and philanthropic leaders attended Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County's 1st annual Change a Life Luncheon on Monday, September 8, 2014 at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana, which highlighted the deep need and importance of mentorships in Orange County and raised \$55,000 for the nonprofit's programs which change lives of at-risk youth for the better, forever. During the event, a "Big" and "Little" spoke about their match and how it has immensely benefited both their lives. Though, the organization is in dire need of more volunteer "Bigs" to get involved.

Having demonstrated outstanding giving for more than 50 years, the IMPACT Award was presented to Angelitos de Oro for having donated more than \$5M to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County since its inception in 1961. For future Change a Life luncheons, this award will be renamed as the Angelitos de Oro Award. This Newport Beach-based women's auxiliary has the sole purpose to raise funds for the nonprofit's "High School Bigs" mentoring program, which matches qualified, volunteer high school students ("Bigs") with elementary and middle school students ("Littles") to meet once a week and mentor young students facing adversity. The program served 590 elementary and middle school students in 2013, and is celebrating its 10-year anniversary this year. An annual fundraiser for the group, the Angelitos partner with South Coast Plaza for the "Angelitos Card" fundraiser where more than 110 boutiques and restaurants will offer a 20% savings when the Angelitos Card is presented for one week in October. All proceeds benefit the nonprofit and this year's event is October 8 to October 14.

"Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County is pleased to honor Angelitos de Oro and its deeply generous contribution to our "High School Bigs" program," says Melissa Beck, CEO of Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County. "The benefits of our mentorship programs have proven to be life-changing and impact that child for the better, forever. High Schools Bigs is unique because high school students meet with their elementary aged "Littles" in their school environment and we've found a significant decrease in truancy as well as increased academic performance as a result of the program."

Leaving guests inspired, local Newport Beach author, advocate and national speaker for children, Rhonda Sciortino, presented the keynote address during the luncheon, on overcoming adversity to succeed as well as the importance mentorship plays in a youth's life. The author of *Succeed Because of What You've Been Through* shared her amazing story, motivated attendees on how to help local at-risk youth to become successful and happy, a goal of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County through its one-to-one mentorship relationships, and also signed copies of her book.

Said Sciortino, "There is nothing more significant and important one can do than to invest in the life of a child."

The event also featured a champagne reception with a champagne opportunity drawing hosted by presenting sponsor Black, Starr & Frost, with a \$5,000 prize of diamond earrings. A silent auction was also held, and a lunch of watermelon gazpacho soup with balsamic reduction and cotija Cheese as well as free

range chicken baby arugula salad with manchego cheese, fuji apples and toasted almonds, apricot and dates was served.

A Tustin-based nonprofit organization that helps youth to realize their potential and build their futures, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County provides over 2,000 children facing adversity with professionally supported one-to-one mentoring relationships to change their lives for the better. Youth (“Littles”) are matched with volunteer mentors (“Bigs”) to develop positive relationships that have a direct and lasting effect on their lives.

Cost to attend the event was \$150 per individual ticket, and all event proceeds benefited Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County

For more than 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated under the belief that inherent in every child is the ability to succeed and thrive in life. Most children served by Big Brothers Big Sisters live in single-parent and low-income families, or households where a parent is incarcerated. As the nation’s largest donor and volunteer supported mentoring network, Big Brothers Big Sisters makes meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers (“Bigs”) and children (“Littles”). Providing a system of ongoing evaluation and support, Big Brothers Big Sisters is proven by independent studies to help families by improving the odds that “Littles” will perform better in school and avoid violence and illegal activities, and have stronger relationships with their parents and others. Headquartered in Philadelphia with a network of nearly 400 agencies across the country, Big Brothers Big Sisters serves a quarter million children annually. In 2013, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County served over 2,200 children. For more information, visit www.bigbrooc.org.

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