



**MENTORING YOUTH.
CHANGING FUTURES.**

Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Disneyland Resort Join to Mentor High School Students in Anaheim

The program matches Disney cast members with local high school students to support academic achievement and teach career readiness.

SANTA ANA, Calif. (September 25, 2017) – Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire welcomes the Disneyland Resort as its newest corporate site in the Workplace Mentoring program. Resort cast members will volunteer as one-to-one mentors to more than 20 sophomores from Savanna High School in Anaheim. Beginning this October, matches will meet once a month to complete a curriculum that helps students create long-term goals, prepare for higher education and future careers, and develop their self-confidence.

“We are thrilled to collaborate with the Disneyland Resort and match our Littles to VoluntEARs,” said Melissa Beck, CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire. “For many of these students, this will be their only exposure to a real-world professional environment, so the Resort’s mentors will open their eyes to a world of future career options.”

Since its launch in 2013, the Big Brothers Big Sisters Workplace Mentoring program, formerly known as Beyond School Walls, has grown to serve more than 200 youth annually with 10 corporate partners. Foundational to the program is the nonprofit’s signature one-to-one mentoring principal that allows youth facing adversity to grow up with the consistent support of a positive role model.

The results speak to the efficacy of the Workplace Mentoring program, as 55 percent of students report academic improvement, 58 percent report more social acceptance in school and 100 percent avoid juvenile justice system involvement.

This year, Big Brothers Big Sisters will launch newly strengthened curriculum built upon three pillars of excellence: *character, intellect and physical wellness*. Facilitated sessions led by the nonprofit will focus on relationship-building elements, as well as personal development, goal-setting, STEM activities and college prep for a well-rounded experience.

Sessions will be held monthly at the Resort’s headquarters and mentors represent a variety of occupations, including hospitality, marketing, public affairs and finance—allowing the students to experience a range of opportunities and be fully immersed in the workplace experience.

“Education is the key to a bright future for these kids and our community,” said Jill Bolton, director of corporate citizenship at the Disneyland Resort. “We are committed to strengthening opportunities for Anaheim’s youth and thrilled to be involved with this incredible workforce development program. Our cast members are excited to share their expertise to help these students achieve academic and employment success.”

A kickoff event will be held Sept. 27, 2 to 4 p.m. at Savanna High School, where matches will meet for the first time. The program’s first on-site session is Thursday, Oct. 5.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire

Big Brothers Big Sisters believes that with the support of a caring mentor, every child has the ability to achieve his or her full potential. It is the nation's largest donor- and volunteer-supported mentoring organization, serving a quarter-million children annually. Based in Santa Ana, Calif., the Orange County agency was incorporated in 1958 and works as a local extension of the national effort to make professionally supported, one-to-one matches between mentors ("Bigs") and children ("Littles") facing adversity. Together with the Inland Empire agency, which opened its doors in 2013, the local organization annually serves more than 3,300 children through programs that improve the odds of youth performing better in school and avoiding violence and illegal activities. For more information visit ocbigs.org or follow Big Brothers Big Sisters on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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