

# Big Brothers Big Sisters Of NW Washington Closes

BELLINGHAM, WA, USA, September 6, 2013

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington (BBBS-NW) has been struggling financially for a number of months. Unfortunately, our recent efforts - an appeal to the community, aggressively applying for grants and an added event - have not been enough. It is with deep regret and sadness that we report Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington is closing as of September 30, 2013.



Since 1976, BBBS-NW has fulfilled its mission by matching approximately 6000 children with a mentor. Whether bell bottoms or skinny jeans were in fashion, the boys and girls we served saw the world in a new way because of their mentor and, indeed, saw new possibilities for their futures. We have supported children to stay in school, graduate from high school, make positive choices, and strengthen relationships with their families.

BBBS-NW has had a long and varied history. We have served, at different times, just Whatcom County and both Whatcom and Skagit counties. We had many profitable years with Bingo which allowed us to financially support and fund other local non-profits. We have earned numerous awards over the years, most recently as the Whatcom Chamber of Commerce's Non-Profit of the Year in 2011.

And there have been challenges, especially after the closing of Bingo in 2002. Since then we have struggled to find a consistent, reliable funding stream. Some Federal grants have seen us through some lean times but, since the economic downturn, those funds have dried up as well.

For the past six months we have been pursuing a merge with another local non-profit because we cannot meet the increasing budgetary requirements of our national organization Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. But, sadly, even with a merger, we can say with assurance that our funding model cannot sustain us.

"For nearly forty years, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington has been supporting children in our community to become better versions of themselves. These children have grown up to be contributing, meaningful members of Whatcom County," said Colleen Haggerty,

Executive Director. "We are saddened the next generation of Whatcom County children will not have the opportunity to have a mentor through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington."

In the spirit of mentoring and community support, if there are any remaining monies after our closing costs have been covered, they will be donated to a local non-profit who shares a similar mission to BBBS-NW.

We want to deeply thank our myriad supporters over the years. You have stood by us through thick and thin and have made one-to-one mentoring possible in our community. We also want to thank all the parents who allowed us to find mentors for their children, the thousands of volunteers who stepped up and said, "Yes, I will make a difference in the life of a child," and the thousands of children who willingly and eagerly accepted a mentor into their lives. It has been an honor to serve.

#### ABOUT BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington was the largest one-to-one mentoring organization in Northwest Washington. The vision of BBBS-NW was to provide children who face adversity with thriving one-to-one mentoring relationships, building stronger communities for generations to come.

Website: [www.bbbs-nw.org](http://www.bbbs-nw.org)

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