

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Louisiana Uses Transformative MacKenzie Scott Donation to Launch Big Defender Fund

Endowment to future-proof organization following four federally declared natural disasters in less than a year that threatened crucial youth mentoring programs

LAKE CHARLES, LA, USA, October 17, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Louisiana](#), the region's largest donor and volunteer supported 1-to-1 mentoring network, has launched the [Big Defender Fund](#). The endowment fund was seeded using an unprecedented \$1.1 million individual donation from billionaire philanthropist MacKenzie Scott and is a means to future-proof the organization following the pandemic and years of challenging weather events that disrupted critical services to at-risk youth.



Erin Davison - CEO, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Louisiana

The Big Defender Fund, a designated beneficiary fund created in partnership with the Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana, will provide BBBS of SWLA with a steady income stream to continually support their mission of creating and supporting impactful mentoring

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CEO Erin Davison, Big Brothers Big Sisters of SWLA

relationships that protect and nurture the potential of youth. The fund will also be used to expand youth safety practices and quality of match relationships, offer support services for parents and guardians, and provide innovative new mentoring programs that reach older youth and young adults.

“The uncertainty of the last few years, dealing with four natural disasters and a pandemic, highlighted the need to diversify our funding and create sustainability,” said Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Louisiana CEO [Erin Davison](#). She adds, “The Big Defender Fund provides that

mechanism. There are so many ways we could have spent MacKenzie Scott's generous 2022

donation, but using the funds to future-proof our organization from disruptive natural disasters and other prospective threats to our youth mentoring programs was at the top of my priority list from day one.”

The Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana will provide oversight and expertise to help grow the Big Defender Fund over time through sound investment strategies.

“We are honored to partner with BBBS of SWLA to provide this long-term investment for the sustainability of their youth mentoring programs,” said Sara Judson, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana. She adds, “The Community Foundation connects people who care with causes that matter. The Big Defender Fund will allow donors to contribute to a cause they are passionate about, receive an immediate tax benefit, and know they are investing in our community by supporting youth mentoring programs for years to come through a one-time or recurring donation or as part of planned estate giving.”



CEO Erin Davison and her team celebrate the reopening of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of SWLA headquarters following four natural disasters. (November 2021)



BBBS of SWLA Logo

BBBS of SWLA facilitates life-changing mentoring relationships for youth ages 6 to 18 in Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jeff Davis and Vernon parishes. Their programs focus on empowering marginalized youth and promoting justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

“We created this fund because the benefits of mentoring are indisputable and must be protected in our community,” said Davison. She adds, “Youth who participate in mentoring programs achieve proven positive outcomes including better grades, higher graduation rates, and an increased belief that they can say no to drugs, violence, and skipping school. By partnering with the Community Foundation of SWLA, we’ve made donating to the Big Defender Fund as easy as possible and are taking strategic steps to transform mentorship in the communities we serve.”

Donors can learn more and contribute to the Big Defender Fund by visiting the Community Foundation of SWLA website at foundationswla.org/big-brothers-big-sisters-swla-big-defender-fund .

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About Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Louisiana

As the region's largest donor and volunteer supported mentoring network, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Louisiana (BBBS SWLA) facilitates meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers and children ages 6-18 in Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jeff Davis, and Vernon parishes. Since 1979, the agency has been defending the potential of marginalized youth by creating and growing innovative mentoring programs with a focus on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI).

BBBS of SWLA believes that one-to-one mentoring relationships will ignite the power and promise of youth so they can achieve their full potential.

For more information visit www.bbbsswla.org .

About Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana

The Community Foundation of Southwest Louisiana connects people who care with causes that matter. Our donors provide fuel for philanthropy granting over \$22 million since our creation in 2008. Since the hurricanes of 2020, our Foundation received over \$7 million in generous donations from over 4,000 donors from every state and 10 countries which were quickly deployed for relief efforts, then recovery and rebuilding of SWLA. The Foundation is facilitating the region's Just Imagine SWLA 50-Year Resilience Master Plan to create a more resilient and thriving community. To learn more about the Community Foundation visit our website foundationswla.org and the master plan at justimagineswla.org.

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