



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters  
of Miami  
Scholarships.  
Taking  
Mentoring  
Forward**

They are children  
of adversity  
– low income,  
poor neighborhoods,  
struggling  
single parents.



They are also smart, determined, disciplined and dedicated. And thanks to the **Big Brothers Big Sisters Continuing Education & Scholarship Program**, they are going to college.

For more than 50 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Miami has been helping kids at risk overcome enormous odds through our mentoring program.

A nationwide scientific study\* found that compared to their peers, children and teens matched to a Big Brother or Big Sister are less likely to engage in negative behaviors and more likely to maintain or improve their academic performance. For most of these children, college was never an option. But for those who are part of a mentoring program, expectations – and accomplishments – increase.

Sixty-seven percent of former Littles surveyed agree that their Big played a role in their decision to attend college. Eighty-seven percent believe they will go on to and graduate from college.

Since 2008, BBBS with its partners has been providing scholarship aid to help these young people achieve their potential.

We need your support to continue – and expand – this meaningful program. We hope that when you read about a few of our recipients, you will be inspired by their perseverance, optimism and drive. They didn't give up. Please give them a hand.

\*Public/Private Ventures:  
Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters, 1995



### **About the Scholarship Program**

In 2008, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Miami together with the Five Millers Foundation established the Continuing Education and Scholarship Program. The scholarship program provides financial assistance through scholarships, trainings, workshops, test prep classes and coaching sessions to our youth and their families. These services help to prepare for life after high school. Scholarships are awarded to those students who successfully complete the program and commit to continuing their education.

All students enrolled in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program are eligible to apply for the Scholarship program. Scholarships are awarded to those who have been accepted in vocational or technical programs, two-year colleges and four-year universities. Scholarship winners are selected by the Advisory Council comprised of community business leaders, supporters of Big Brothers Big Sisters and Women's Committee members.

### **Continuing Education & Scholarship Program donors:**

Battier Take Charge Foundation

DOS Health Management, Inc.

Five Millers Family Foundation

Irie Foundation

Women's Committee Lori Brenner Scholarship Fund

And all of you who choose to make a difference

in a child's future.

**Tiffany Kerr**  
**Norland Senior High**  
**University of Miami**



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters  
of Miami  
Five Millers  
Continuing  
Education  
Program**

## *I AM VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE LORI BRENER SCHOLARSHIP*

*Cathy, Tiffany's Big Sister*

### **Women's Committee Lori Brener Scholarship**

"Because of Big Brothers Big Sisters, I am now a freshman at the University of Miami majoring in Business. I am very thankful for the Lori Brenner and Women's Committee Scholarship."

Making the transition from middle school to high school was not easy for Tiffany. The only child of a working mother, she had no friends and was constantly bullied. As she remembers, "I felt very alone in the world. I didn't care about my future or going to school and considered dropping out because I didn't want to go to a place that made me cry every day." Tiffany also remembers not talking to her mother about the challenges she was facing because she didn't want to worry her.

The turning point came when Tiffany signed up for Big Brothers Big Sisters, imagining how nice it would be to have someone to talk to about her problems. Suddenly the world didn't seem so cold to Tiffany. Her Big Sister Cathy told her. "You are no longer alone because you have me...I will be there for you." Hearing that, Tiffany said she cried. "I thought moments like that only happened in movies."

The young woman who had thought about dropping out of school ended up graduating with honors. Thanks to the Women's Committee Lori Brener Scholarship, Tiffany is enrolled in the University of Miami. Tiffany says. "The compassion and confidence I've received from Big Brothers Big Sisters has changed my life. On behalf of thousands of Miami's children who are just like me, thank you."



**Big Brothers  
Big Sisters  
of Miami  
Five Millers  
Continuing  
Education  
Program**

**Ashley Jeanty  
Booker T. Washington High  
Florida State University**

**EXTREMELY INTELLIGENT,  
DYNAMIC AND  
FOCUSED.**

*Karin Dryer, Ashley's Big Sister*

#### **Irie Impact Scholarship**

That's the kind of drive, determination and grit that propelled Ashley from the streets of an inner-city neighborhood to the campus of Florida State University. For the child of a single working mother burdened with medical bills, a college education seemed out of reach. But in Ashley's own words, "the cost of a college education will not be taken from me before I have the opportunity to set foot on the Florida State campus..."

According to one of her teachers, Ashley possesses the ultimate "can-do" attitude. Her academic achievements and her involvement in a variety of extracurricular activities and community projects are tangible evidence of her will to succeed. Ashley sums it up nicely. "I have chosen to maintain an optimistic mindset and to press forward all day, every day."

"When I envision my future, I see my dreams having been fulfilled...it is the year 2018: I have just graduated from college and am setting my sights towards a Doctorate in Psychology. I have the credentials and am now qualified to be a counselor at an inner city high school. I want to be the person that teenagers open up to, who they can talk to about troubles they try to overcome every day."



**Cindy Oliver**  
**Miami Edison High**  
**University of Florida**

### **Five Millers Family Foundation Scholarship**

"In five years, I see myself already graduated from the University of Florida's nursing program and working at a children's hospital. I will also be planning my dream of travelling to many countries to help those children who are sick and cannot afford to get the medical treatment they need..."

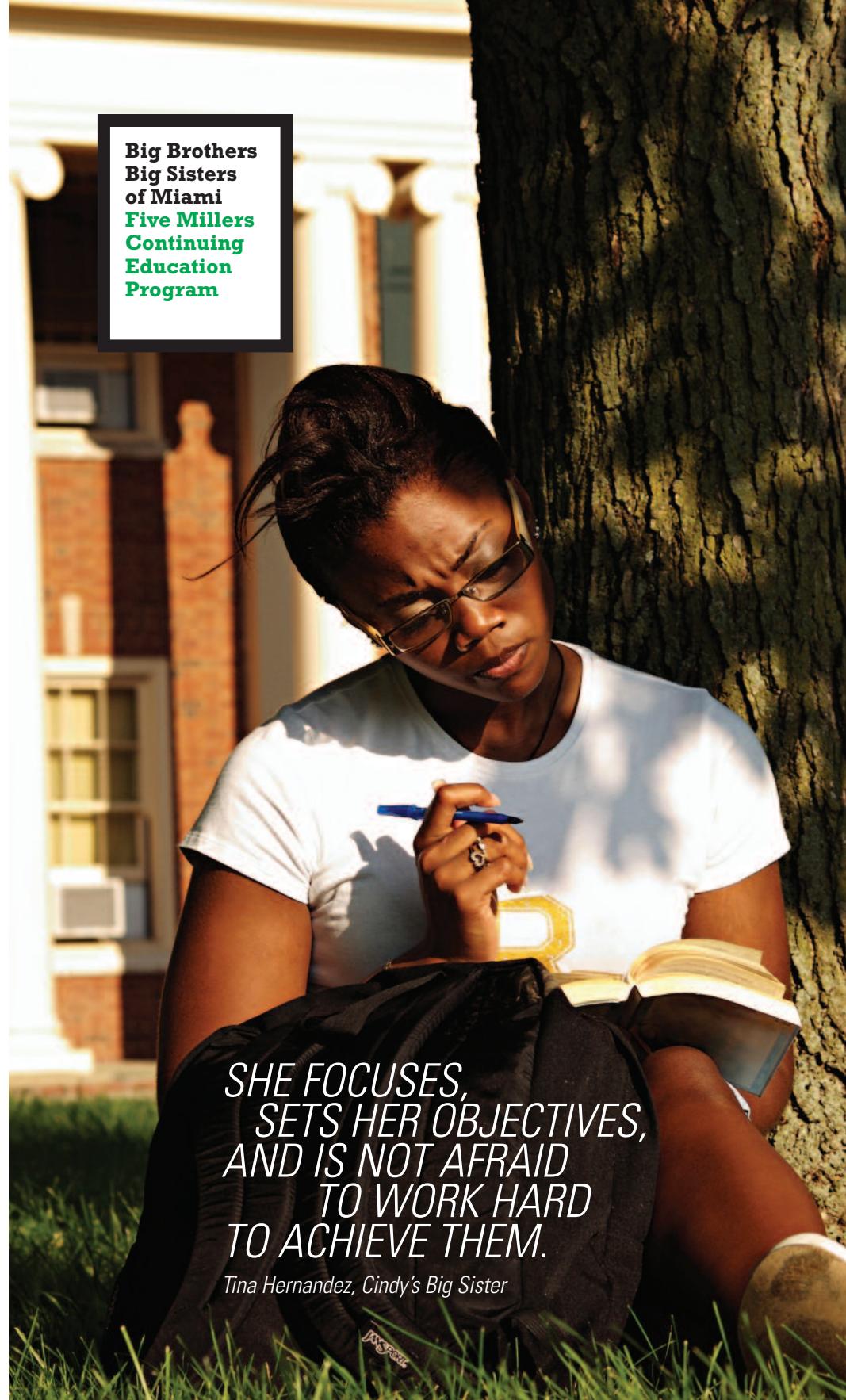
Growing up, Cindy had to deal with the constant quarrelling of her parents, and the feeling that she had to choose a side. Consequently, she was shy and withdrawn, unable to talk about the issues she was having at home. After her parents "got tired of the arguing and split up," she suffered the financial difficulties of a family supported by a single, working mother.

The turning point came when Cindy realized that "C's were not acceptable if I wanted to become a pediatric nurse," and her participation in BBBS School-to-Work Mentoring Program. She credits her Big Sister with helping her overcome her shyness and fear of public speaking, as well as supporting her academic and extra-curricular activities. "She has been my motivator every step of the way," Cindy says about Tina.

That motivation has resulted in an outstanding list of accomplishments: President of the student government, President of the National Honor Society, President of the HOSA Club and Captain of the Color Guard. Recently, Cindy passed the test to become a Certified Electrocardiograph Technician and was accepted into the University of Florida. But Cindy is just getting started. "My journey has just begun, because in my eyes, I still have more to do."



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# DRIVEN TO SUCCEED.

Doug Eney, Damas' Big Brother



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## Five Millers Family Foundation Scholarship

"Five years from now, I picture myself having earned my bachelor's degree in business. I want to begin full time work in my career. I also see myself continuing my education to stay competitive and make it to the top of the business world. I see myself giving back to others."

For Damas Petit, his drive to succeed includes overcoming obstacles. He failed the FCAT on his first attempt, but through tenacity and diligence he became the first in his family to graduate from high school in this country. Growing up with 11 family members in a small home, Damas helped care for his siblings, nephews and grandmother. All this while playing three team sports, holding down a job in the school cafeteria and maintaining a weighted 4.3 GPA.

Damas credits his mentor with helping him focus on next steps, having a back-up plan and changing his views on the importance of his studies. After thinking about some of their discussions, Damas says "I went to school the next day with a different demeanor. I was more focused on getting improved grades and the importance of completing every assignment."

His teachers at Booker T. Washington describe him as a role model and a leader who will become an engaged citizen and a career-focused employee. In one of his essays, Demas stated "I want to make a difference in my community in any way that I can and in five years I see myself doing just that."

**Damas Petit**  
**Booker T. Washington High**  
**Miami Dade College**



**WHEN A BIRD CAN'T  
WALK,  
IT FLIES.**

*Jennifer Suhrland, Elianys' Big Sister*

**Elianys Camejo Gonzalez**  
**Coral Gables Senior High**  
**College of Mount Saint Vincent, NY**

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**Battier Take Change Foundation Scholarship**

"In five years, I see myself attending graduate nursing school, handling an organization while making a difference in the lives of people who need it, and participating in groups that aim at helping kids with special needs. Wherever I'll be, I'll be fostering innovation."

This from a young woman who grew up "living in the hole of constant homelessness and a violent household." Elianys Gonzalez knows what it's like to sleep in the back seat of her mother's car and rely on the free school breakfast and lunch as her only meals. It was her introduction to BBBs and her relationship with her mentor that made the difference. "I have learned to take all obstacles and hard roads that come my way in a positive light. I had someone who believed in the person who I wanted to become," Elianys adds.

Elianys had already earned 18 credit hours in Dual Enrollment College Credits through FIU by the time she graduated from high school "to get a head start on my career of choice." An accomplished pianist, a community volunteer and an honors student, Elianys is described by one of her teachers as "never content to simply fulfill the assignment; she goes above and beyond what is asked."

The first person in her family to attend college, Elianys wrote in one of her essays, "Behind all dreams, there is a believer. And I believe."



The Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program and its resources traditionally conclude when the “Littles” reach the age of eighteen years old. BBBS established a scholarship fund to raise money that would be awarded to high achieving “Littles” to continue their educations. Our vision was – and is – that the continuation of higher education will expand the recipients’ potential and lead to a lifetime of learning. The following are some current scholarship members.

#### **The Battier Take Charge Foundation**

As a leader on and off the court, Shane Battier firmly believes that the future of our youth rests in higher education. The Battier Take Charge Foundation is dedicated to providing resources for the development and education of underserved youth and teens and to encourage and inspire a new generation of potential leaders through educational opportunities and the cultivation of effective leadership skills.



#### **The Lori Brener Scholarship Fund**

In 2009, the Women’s Committee Scholarship Fund was renamed the Lori Brener Scholarship Fund in loving memory of Miriam Salazar’s daughter. Lori was an accomplished commercial, video and film producer who contributed greatly to Big Brothers Big Sisters. Her legacy will live on through the students able to further their educations through this fund.

#### **DOS Health Management, Inc.**

DOS Health Management, Inc. provides services to the senior community while maintaining a living environment suited to serve its residents with quality of care. Additionally, DOS Health Management, Inc. promotes education by providing financial assistance to the Big Brothers Big Sisters Scholarship Program.

#### **Five Millers Family Foundation**

The Five Millers Family Foundation scholarship program provides financial assistance through scholarships, trainings, workshops, test prep classes and coaching sessions to youth and their families.

#### **Irie Foundation**

Irie Foundation seeks to empower South Florida’s at-risk youth to lead productive lives through mentorship programs, cultural experiences and scholarship opportunities. By following the young people it serves from middle school through high school, the Foundation’s ultimate goal is to inspire and encourage its students to graduate high school, pursue higher education and develop into successful adults.

Creating  
positive  
outcomes.  
Can you help?

We have seen kids with failing grades turn into high school valedictorians, gang members become university students, and potential dropouts develop into community leaders. We have seen how our mentoring program opens up new possibilities for children who have no sense of the opportunities beyond their narrow horizons.

Your contribution to the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Miami Continuing Education and Scholarship Program can make an enormous difference in the life of a “Little” by making an investment in the future.

**Won’t you help them take the next steps on their road to success?**



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