



## Giving Mentoring a Shot

*This post was written as part of the #Mentor series, which is tied to LinkedIn's student editorial calendar.*

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Student at Boston University**

Living in Harlem and going to high school in the Bronx, most high school teenagers don't really look into programs outside of school to get involved in unless they are sports related. So when my mom first told me about Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC (BBBS of NYC), I wasn't too enthusiastic about it at first. But I told her that I will give it a shot. Little did I know that this program would provide me with many resources and opportunities that helped me get to the point that I am today.

My mentor – or Big as BBBS of NYC calls him – Andrew Flakelar and I were matched in the spring of 2012. I was kind of anxious the day we were supposed to meet Andy for the first time. My mom met him first and when

she came out of the room, she had this look on her face like I wasn't going to like my new Big. When I came into the room to meet Andy, he was this tall Australian guy with a biker look. He had spiked hair, ripped jeans, and a leather jacket, and I could see his helmet on the table. At first I was thrown off by his Australian accent and biker look, but as I got to know him, he was a great guy.

Andy and I have been matched for three years now and we still keep in touch till this day. Andy is the best. He's been supportive of me all throughout high school and even in college. He's put in a lot of effort to be the best Big ever. When we were first matched, we went to the movies often. We've gone down to the South Street Seaport Museum. Since he's a freelance producer/ director, he's brought me to his job to show me a project he was working on. He came to my baseball games, went with me on a college visit, and has attended the Big Brothers Big Sisters Academic Recognition Ceremony with me twice in 2014 and this year in 2015.

Most importantly, Andy was able to share his background and experiences with me. Being matched with Andy prepared me for college because I was able to meet someone who was from another continent. In college, I knew that I would meet people from all over the world and will learn so much from them which will allow me to grow as a person. Andy was very supportive throughout my college application process and has even helped me with my personal statement. I learned from Andy, my big, that nothing in life comes easy and you have to have patience and the will to do better to overcome obstacles in life. And I'm thankful for having him as my big.

***Rayvon Dorsett is an alumni Little Brother at Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City. To become a volunteer mentor or to learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC, log onto [www.bigsnyc.org](http://www.bigsnyc.org) or call 212-686-2042.***