

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends,

As young people across all five boroughs commence the school year, I want to take a moment to thank all the adults in their lives that are committed to their academic success, most especially our volunteer Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

This year, we are working harder than ever to motivate our Littles to strive for academic excellence and aspire for higher education. With the help of some critical community partners, we are able to expand our mission and provide a holistic approach to their education – an approach that includes parents, families, support staff, Bigs, and the schools. By doing so, we strive to improve our Littles' academic achievement and performance, increase families' and volunteers' involvement in their Littles' education, and develop education-focused partnership – all to help elementary, middle, and high school Littles develop grade appropriate skills.

That's because we know from statistics that while 95% of all NYC high school students have college aspirations, the four-year college readiness rate for NYC is only about 31%. We want to bridge that gap by providing more youth with the tools necessary to better equip them for their futures. Our plan includes helping elementary school Littles regain their summer learning loss and begin to develop a lifelong love of reading by hosting read-out-loud groups; increase awareness of the high school application process and help ensure that our middle school Littles are prepared for the challenges of high school; and increase college awareness and readiness, participation in test prep programs, and improve our SAT and ACT test scores, therefore increasing college enrollment rates.

And you can help us.

If you believe that all kids should have enriched mentoring experiences that encompasses college readiness, no matter their background, consider getting involved today. After all, there is no greater gift that you can give to a child than a chance at a successful future.

Regards,



Hector Batista  
*Chief Executive Officer*