

## Big Brothers Big Sisters Celebrates 100th Anniversary With Grand Reunion of Big and Little Brothers and Sisters

-- Singer and "Newlyweds: Nick & Jessica" Star Nick Lachey And Other Celebrities  
Scoop Free Ice Cream at New York City's Bryant Park --

-- Centennial Book Released --

**NEW YORK, June 16, 2004** - Hundreds of Big and Little Brothers and Sisters from all over the country reunited, some for the first time in decades, at a Big Brothers Big Sisters 100th anniversary celebration today. The "Grand Reunion Centennial Scoop" event, at New York City's Bryant Park, was the largest reunion of Bigs and Littles in the organization's history and featured Nick Lachey, accomplished singer and star of "Newlyweds: Nick & Jessica." Other celebrities, including Lynn Swann, Bill Russell, Deborah Cox and Jill Whelan, scooped free ice cream for guests and passersby.

"Opening up life's possibilities for a child by spending time with him or her every week is such a simple, yet powerful concept," Lachey said. "The fact that Big Brothers Big Sisters has been able to take this concept and show documented, positive results for thousands of children nationwide is staggering."

Judy Vredenburgh, president and chief executive officer of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, and author and Big Sister Beth Barrett unveiled a commemorative book, "Little Moments, Big Magic: Inspirational Stories of Big Brothers and Big Sisters and the Magic They Create." The book is a collection of 100 stories, some of which chronicle relationships dating back to the 1930s, written by Big and Little Brothers and Sisters.

"Today with our reunion we honor all Big and Little Brothers and Sisters, past and present, and we're proud and humbled to do so," Vredenburgh said. "Our Big and Little Brothers and Sisters are the heart and soul - the very legacy of our organization."

"This celebration marks a truly momentous occasion in Big Brothers Big Sisters' history," she continued. "I can't think of a better place to celebrate than in New York City, the place where Big Brothers Big Sisters was founded in 1904. We're thrilled to acknowledge this milestone here in New York with our staff, board and volunteers from all over the country, and to honor 100 years of positive change and the people who helped make that happen."

"There are over 14 million at-risk children in the U.S. and 10 million of them are within the ages served by Big Brothers Big Sisters," she added. "The need is great and we have an ambitious goal of making one million matches by the year 2010."

### **Grand Reunion Centennial Scoop**

The "Grand Reunion Centennial Scoop" included former Bigs and Littles from all over the country, including Alaska and Hawaii. The event gave the special guests an opportunity to reunite and celebrate. For some, it was the first reunion in years. The honored guests represented the hundreds of thousands of "alumni" Bigs and Littles, including:

- **Jim Kelly and Pat Rickert.** Matched in 1945 and still going strong as "Brothers." Pat, the little brother, now 68, visits Jim, now 84, weekly at the nursing home where he lives.
- **Debbi Vance and Jennie Mustafa Julock.** Big Sister Debbi helped Jennie find a world of possibilities. Debbi's constant encouragement, and an outing to a Maya Angelou poetry reading, gave Jennie the push she needed to make her own dreams come true. Today Jennie has a master's degree from American University and is the first in her family to attend college.
- **Dave Wright and Tom Boyle.** In 2003, Wright set out on a quest to find Boyle, fearing that he had never properly thanked him for his role as a Big Brother. The two reunited in January 2004 after 40 years.
- **Ed Rappaport, Michael Blumenthal, Ken Soule and Matthew Block.** Rappaport became a Big Brother to nine-year-old Blumenthal in 1952 and the two created a chain of "Brothers" that spans four generations and numerous states.
- **Dennis Brown and Henry Sumida.** Henry was the very first Little Brother in Hawaii and is today the president and chief executive officer of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Honolulu.

These stories and more are featured in the centennial book, "Little Moments, Big Magic." Barrett, author and Big Sister, signed first copies of the book for reunion guests. "Little Moments Big Magic" is available nationwide at [www.littlemoments.org](http://www.littlemoments.org), [www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org](http://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org) or by calling toll-free 877-778-5958. Forty percent of the proceeds go to Big Brothers Big Sisters.

The Grand Reunion Centennial Scoop ice cream theme speaks to the fact that the little things that Bigs and Littles do together, like going out for ice cream, are what really make a difference in a child's life. The reunion of Bigs and Littles and release of "Little Moments, Big

Magic" were part of an event-filled New York City week for the organization.

Vredenburg had kind words to say of the organization's key centennial sponsors, Arby's and Yahoo!. "I'd like to thank our generous sponsors, Yahoo!, for the significant role they played in helping us reconnect with our alumni Bigs and Littles, and Arby's, for their tireless fundraising efforts and invaluable support," Vredenburg said. "The assistance of these organizations has allowed us to continue matching children with mentors and to make this amazing celebration possible."

She also thanked Verizon, special sponsor of the Grand Reunion Centennial Scoop.

### **The Search Continues**

Visit [www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org](http://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.org) or <http://bigsandlittles.yahoo.com> to register and reconnect with Big Brothers Big Sisters, to get more information, to make a donation to support a Big and Little match or to become a volunteer.

Big Brothers Big Sisters has proven success in creating nurturing one-to-one relationships between adults and children. The organization works closely with parents to match every child with the appropriate Big Brother or Big Sister. Each potential volunteer is screened, trained and supervised to help ensure that the mentor-child relationship will be a safe and rewarding experience.

No special skills are required to become a mentor. Any caring adult who is willing to devote an average of one hour each week of his or her time to show a child the joys of everyday life can be a mentor. Many Littles return to the organization to become Bigs and pass on the magical moments they shared to other children who need or want a big.

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