

BBBSAK Co-Op Market Deli & Grocery Lend a Hand: 2022 Application

1. Please provide your mission statement and a brief summary of your organization's work.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska (BBBSAK)'s mission is to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. BBBSAK serves an average of 400 children and youth per year in communities throughout Alaska, including Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Sitka, Homer, Hoonah, Haines, and the Mat-Su Valley. Our work pairs Alaskan youth with trusted mentors that provide stability, positive relationships, and social skills which equip them to meet and beat obstacles in every part of life.

BBBSAK's vision is for all children to achieve their full potential. Our services decrease the likelihood vulnerable children will experience justice system involvement, substance abuse, and school failure, while increasing their access to resources that help them succeed. BBBSAK matches children and youth, or "Littles," with trained, screened, and professionally supported adult volunteers, or "Bigs." Our Bigs provide structured, friendship-based mentoring relationships with their Littles that focus on meeting their social-emotional needs. BBBSAK partners with parents and guardians, volunteers, and community members so that kids experience high aspirations, greater confidence, and better relationships; avoidance of risky behavior; and educational success.

2. How does your work align with Co-op Market's mission and values?

BBBSAK shares the Co-Op Market's passion for service, health, and social responsibility, which are embedded in every aspect of our mentoring services. Our programming meets a need for healthy, stable mentoring relationships with adults as a means to prevent truancy, drug and alcohol abuse, violence, behavioral problems, and other risky behaviors. According to youth who responded to BBBSAK's 2021 outcome survey, after they join the program, 88% maintained or improved their academic performance, 86% felt they had improved relationships with their peers, and 100% felt they had an important adult in their life.

Like the Co-Op, BBBSAK's staff and volunteers are "committed to the joy of true service, putting the needs of others first in a way that touches lives and hearts." Our mentoring relationships "contribute towards a healthy community" by building "equitable economic relationships, positive environmental impacts, and inclusive practices." The struggles our kids face can have lifelong negative effects if they are left to battle obstacles alone. Mentoring instills a feeling in youth that they matter and are loved and accepted by those around them.

3. How will the Lend a Hand funds be used?

Funds from Lend a Hand will be used for BBBSAK mentoring activities to support youth in Fairbanks. Our Fairbanks staff will establish and carry out social media marketing strategies, build and maintain partnerships with social services and schools who refer Littles to us, and hold presentations with community partners including local businesses and community service organizations to recruit Bigs.

Our services succeed because we envelop the entire community in our mentoring services. BBBSAK partners with parents and guardians, volunteers, and community members so that kids experience:

high aspirations, greater confidence, and better relationships; avoidance of risky behavior; and educational success. BBBSAK's approach to mentoring is grounded in decades of research and aligns with best practices. We carefully tailor every match based on participants' interests, strengths, and needs. Our Match Support Specialists (MSS) come alongside Bigs, Littles, and Parents/Guardians to: (1) ensure child safety; (2) help Bigs and Littles develop satisfying relationships; and (3) promote positive life outcomes for Littles. MSSs help create the context in which mentoring works best. MSSs connect regularly with Bigs, Littles, and Families to carry out training, coaching, and interventions so everyone in a match has a successful experience. On a case-by-case basis, MSSs provide Littles and their families with referrals to academic support, food and housing help, mental health care, or any resources the family needs for the child to thrive. We have recruited 63 Bigs and 38 Littles in Fairbanks so far in 2022, and with your help we will be able to support even more youth in 2023!

4. If your organization has received funding from Co-op Market in the past, please describe how this funding supported your organization and mission.

We received funds in February of 2020 from Co-Op Market and are excited at this chance to partner again to support our local youth!

5. What is your elevator pitch? Cashiers usually have about 10 seconds to describe our monthly recipient to a shopper. Please describe your organization and how the funds will be used in 100 words or less.

Co-Op Lend a Hand is proud to sponsor Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska's team-based annual fundraiser, Connect for Kids' Sake: a fun and easy way for businesses, friends, and families to support BBBSAK and experience the power of connection that our matches experience daily! *All proceeds will be used to support BBBSAK's mentoring services in Fairbanks, which directly promote healthy youth development by instilling a feeling in youth that they matter and are loved and accepted by those around them, including mentors, families, and peers.*