

ANNUAL REPORT

2018



Big Sisters
of BC Lower Mainland

PHOTO BY DANNY YANG | @DLUMIEE

MENTORING MATTERS

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 2 MENTORING MATTERS
- 4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE
- 6 MENTORING IS THE SOLUTION
- 8 EVERY CONNECTION COUNTS
- 10 MAKING A DIFFERENCE
- 12 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE
- 14 INVESTING IN THE FUTURE
- 16 MATCH STORY
- 18 BY THE NUMBERS
- 20 BIG HEART AWARD
- 22 BIG SISTERS SUPPORTERS

IT'S ROUGH OUT THERE FOR KIDS.

Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland provides supportive mentoring relationships to young kids who may be facing challenges like bullying, isolation, poverty, abuse, social anxiety and low self-esteem.

Research shows that mentoring has a powerful impact on the lives of youths. We know that 96 percent of adults who had a mentor as a child say they are happy and 92 percent feel confident.

Mentoring helps create safer schools and communities. Children who have a positive mentor are less likely to engage in destructive behaviour such as bullying, fighting, binge drinking, or drug use.¹

OUR VISION

Every child in the BC Lower Mainland who needs a mentor has a mentor.

OUR MISSION

Big Sisters is committed to enhancing the confidence, self-esteem, and well-being of children through supportive relationships with female mentors.

COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVITY

At Big Sisters, we believe that every child and youth in the BC Lower Mainland who needs a mentor should have a mentor. Our programs are open to children, youth, and volunteers who identify as female, transgender or gender fluid. We are committed to providing safe, inclusive environments for all individuals.

¹ Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland Client Survey.



“If I hadn’t met my Big Sister,
my life would be emptier...”

- LITTLE SISTER, 19

A NOTE FROM OUR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

SINCE 1960, Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland has been changing the course of young lives by ensuring that every child who needs a mentor has a mentor. We've come a long way from that first year and are proud to report that, through the tireless efforts of our staff and volunteers, Big Sisters helped impact the lives of 767 kids in 2018 alone!

Yet, there is always more work to do. 2018 marked the conclusion of the second year of our 2017-2020 strategic plan and we continue to build momentum with particular focus on delivery of quality programming and achieving sustainable funding.

Children and youth face a multitude of varied and often complex challenges. From social pressures to educational disadvantages, there are times when life can seem overwhelming; in fact, 1 in 10 children in the Lower Mainland say they don't feel they have an adult in their life who cares about them.¹ A Big Sister can be the constant that makes all the difference in a young person's life.

The expert and passionate program staff at Big Sisters work diligently to support volunteers and ensure successful and fulfilling relationships for both Bigs and Littles.

Over the last year, we have been working to expand both the



PHOTO BY YOHAN KIM | [HTTP://YOHAN.PHOTOGRAPHY](http://YOHAN.PHOTOGRAPHY)

depth and breadth of programming. This includes offering more activities for matches, and growing relationships with local school boards to expand our Go Girls! program. As well, we are focusing on volunteer recruitment in key geographical areas of need in order to reduce the time a Little spends waiting to be matched with a mentor.

We know that youth who have consistent mentorship and support throughout post-secondary education achieve better outcomes. Thanks to several generous grants and a truly transformational \$1 million endowment to establish the Bright Futures Education Fund, we have the power to change lives. Our partners assist in removing financial obstacles to education, so mentorship can enable our kids to pursue their dreams with confidence.

None of this would have been possible without our incredible supporters. The 2018 Luminary Award Soirée honouring Andrea Thomas Hill was our most successful to date raising

¹ Children in grades 4 and 7 - United Way and UBC Study

an unprecedented \$650,000. We have also begun expanding our planned giving and monthly giving programs that provide sustainable revenue into the future.

With donors and partners like you, we are committed to the future: committed to ensuring that Big Sisters will be there to enhance the confidence, self-esteem and well-being of children and youth for the benefit of all.

Thank you for championing potential.

The image shows two handwritten signatures side-by-side. The signature on the left is "Hanne Madsen" and the signature on the right is "Amir Moghadasi".

HANNE MADSEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AMIR MOGHADASI
BOARD CHAIR

The Big Sister House, our home since 1987. The house is a historic building of Vancouver. It is also a place to build connections and lifelong friendships.



SKETCH OF THE BIG SISTER HOUSE, 2001

MENTORING IS THE SOLUTION

20% of BC girls¹

say they have
deliberately harmed themselves.



Mentored girls are 3 times less
likely to have social anxiety.

93% of girls who complete the
Go Girls! Program feel good
about the way they look.

82% of parents believe their children
feel better about themselves
and are more confident since
becoming involved with Big
Sisters.

1 in 10 youth² (Grade 4 - 7)

feel they don't have
an adult in their lives who cares about them.



92% of adults who had a mentor
feel more confident.

82% of Little Sisters feel better
about themselves since
having a Big Sister

Youth who do not

graduate³

from high school are at a serious
personal and economic disadvantage.



Students who meet regularly
with their mentors are 52% less likely
than their peers to skip school.

Adults who had a mentor as a child are
more likely to have a post-secondary
education and earn higher wages.

¹ Canadian Women's Foundation

² Children between grades 4 and 7 - United Way and UBC Study



PHOTO BY DANNY YANG | @DLUMIEE

EVERY CONNECTION COUNTS

SINCE 1960, Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland has been changing the course of young lives by ensuring that every child who needs a mentor has a mentor. We are committed to enhancing the confidence, self-esteem and well-being of children and youth, knowing that the benefits to both the individual and our community are immense.

Our experienced caseworkers carefully match Littles with adult female mentors who help them reach their full potential.

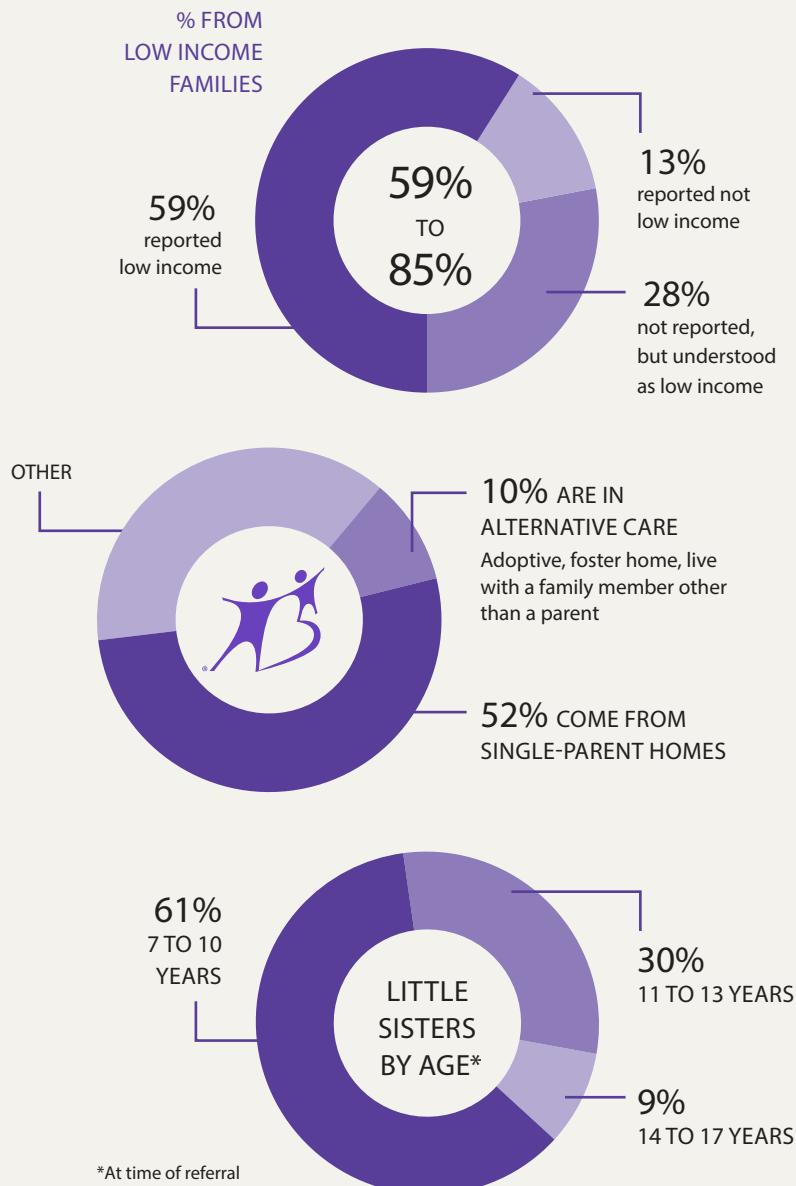
767

YOUTH SERVED
ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS

185

NEW MENTORING MATCHES MADE

LITTLE SISTERS in our programs come from diverse backgrounds, and many struggle with societal barriers or face adversities like family violence, risk factors for mental health, school issues, bullying and identity challenges.



The Big Sisters program is a one-to-one mentorship that has a profound impact on Little Sisters (7 - 17). Through regular outings, a relationship is developed between the mentor and the Little Sister that is built on trust and common interests and supported by our experienced caseworkers. The result is a life-changing experience for both the volunteer mentor and Little Sister.



The Study Buddy program is a weekly one-to-one mentoring relationship that focuses on school work. Little Sisters in this program not only improve their academics but also report higher levels of self-esteem.



Go Girls! is a group mentoring program for children aged 10 to 14 that promotes the benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle. With social pressure to be perfect at an all-time high, youth in this program build tools for confidence and self-awareness during their formative years.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE FROM THE
NORTH SHORE
TO
SOUTH SURREY

We could not do our work without our passionate and dedicated volunteers. It is their commitment that drives our success. Our volunteers **influence, inspire and connect** when it matters most. On average a Big Sister match lasts almost 3.4 years, but many become **lifelong friendships...**

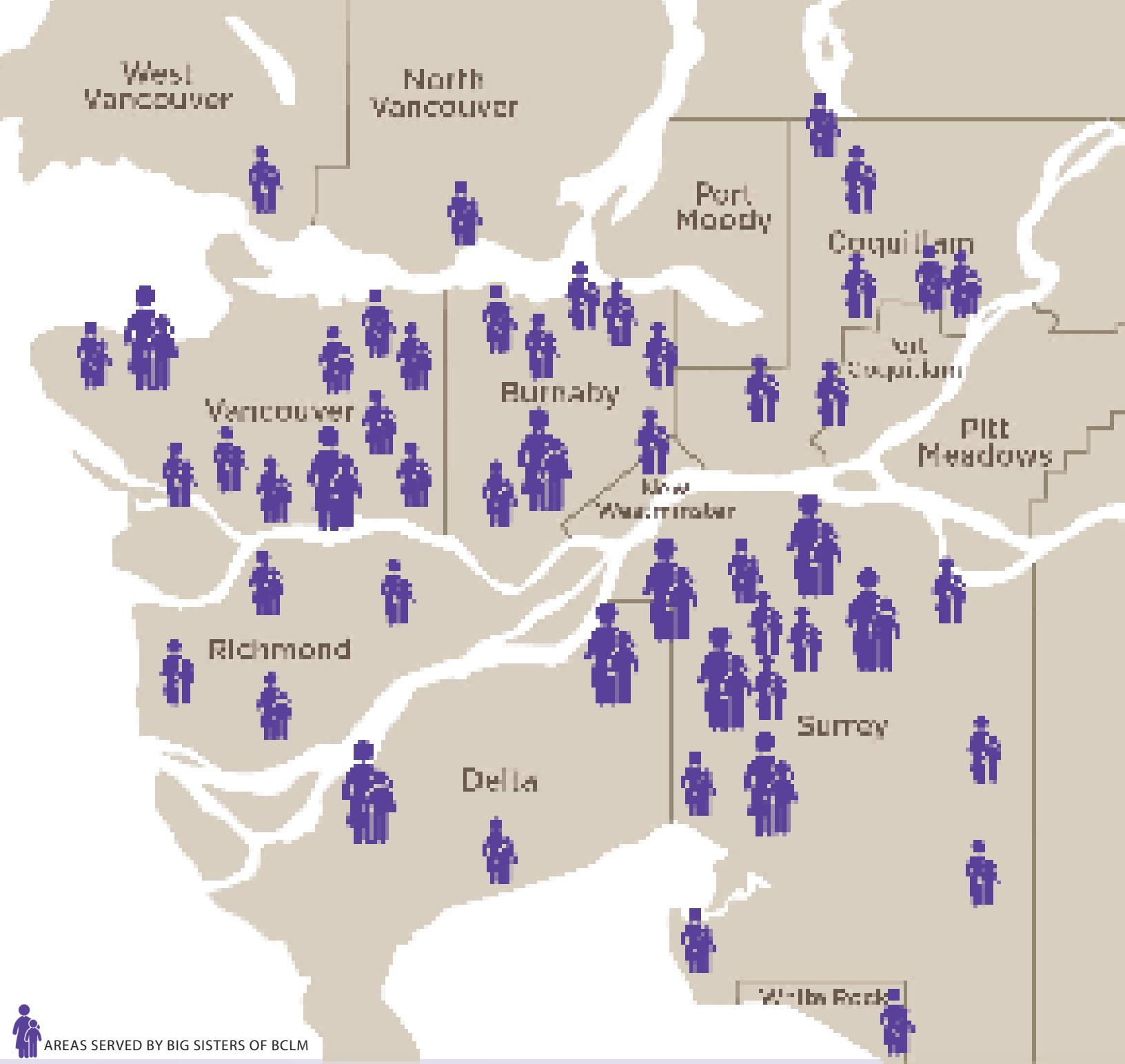
**IN 2018, OVER 700
VOLUNTEERS GAVE...**

50,000+ =

Total Volunteer Hours

\$1.35M
Equivalent Paid Hours¹

¹ Based on hourly wage used by The Conference Board of Canada to calculate the value of volunteering.



2017 TO 2020

STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR 2018 RESULTS



PILLAR 1

ATTAIN SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

GOAL

Grow and diversify donor base with a focus on sustainable funding.

RESULTS

- Most successful Soirée to date raising over \$650,000
- 24 new corporate and foundation donors and event sponsors
- Successfully secured multi-year event sponsorships
- Beneficiary of \$1 M endowment that will support the Bright Futures Education Fund Bursary Program.
- Doubled the number of committed planned gifts



PILLAR 2

DELIVER QUALITY PROGRAMMING

GOAL

Maintain high-quality programming while reducing waitlist and evaluating effectiveness.

RESULTS

- Supported 767 matches, including making 158 new Big Sister and Study Buddy matches
- Over 48,000 volunteer hours of direct mentoring
- Increased number of school districts that offer the Go Girls! program
- Organized 28 activities and programs for matches to participate in
- Expanded Career Camp to 2 days and hosted 29 Bigs and Littles
- Average length of a Big Sisters match is 3.4 years
- Annual survey results showed Littles reported increased confidence and ability to set and accomplish goals



PILLAR 3

OPTIMIZE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL

Engage with key stakeholders and potential partners to leverage complimentary services, increase fundraising and support advancement of activities at all levels of government.

RESULTS

- Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland initiated a partnership with the 12 Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies of BC to share best practices, metrics and explore joint fundraising opportunities
- Corporate and community partners provided over 3,000 hours of non-mentoring volunteer time in support of events and match activities
- Established new relationships with MLAs, MPs and other social service and civic partners in pursuit of collaborative opportunities



PILLAR 4

ENTRENCH HEALTHY CULTURE

GOAL

Create healthy and effective team with shared purpose, goals, values and agreed upon plan of action.

RESULTS

- Supported staff with professional development opportunities
- Annual staff retreat provided opportunities for cross-team collaboration and learning



PILLAR 5

AMPLIFY BRAND

GOAL

Increase understanding of the impact, value and importance of Big Sisters.

RESULTS

- Leveraged strategic partnerships with key media organizations to secure over \$100,000 in pro bono media and advertising
- Partnered with other BC Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies to promote planned giving options

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

AT BIG SISTERS, we recognize that the benefit of pursuing education both for the individuals involved and for society as a whole can be immense, 60% of the income of young women with less than a high school diploma comes from government transfers. *Earnings of women with a bachelor's degree are 58% higher than the earnings of women with a high school diploma.*¹

Imagine being a child, eager to learn, but aware that significant barriers exist. *Imagine not having someone to help you with your homework*, not being able to explore different career possibilities or being told that continued education is financially out of reach?



Big Sisters is determined to remove as many of these barriers as possible. We have created a continuum of services designed to champion the potential of our girls at every step of their academic journey.

We know that *girls with a mentor are 2.5 times more likely to be confident in their ability to be successful at school*. Since its founding 17 years ago, the Study Buddy program has served over 1000 girls. Open to those who need academic support and cannot access other one-to-one tutoring services due to financial constraints, mentorship in this program offers both academic and emotional support. Study Buddies have conversations about school, work, responsible alcohol and drug use, healthy relationships, and everything else youth are faced with these days.

In August 2017, we launched Career Camp with the goal of providing youth with the chance to better understand the huge world of career and educational opportunities that lie ahead. Last year, 29 Littles and Bigs gathered at Simon Fraser University for two inspiring days of activities and workshops. These included Resume Writing, Financial Literacy and Coding, along with panels on Women in Trades, Women Entrepreneurs and Women in STEM.

We are always happy to consider partnerships that provide financial assistance for our Littles to pursue post-secondary education.

Patricia Shields, Nancy Bradshaw, Isabel Grant and Carol Wilkie
Members of our Educational Advisory Committee reflected on the impact of the Study Buddy program with staff.

Big Sisters continues to support Big and Little matches knowing that continuity and stability are essential to their success. Since 2000 we have paired 49 girls with education grants.

"I never would've thought I could be the kind of person who could go to college and accomplish it, but I can."

— Little Study Buddy, Olimpia



PHOTOS BY YOHAN KIM | [HTTP://YOHAN.PHOTOGRAPHY](http://YOHAN.PHOTOGRAPHY)



"I never really saw myself as a mentor, I just sort of became part of Patricia's life."

— Big Sister Tina



PHOTO BY DANNY YANG | @DLUMIEE

Big Sister, **TINA**, and Little Sister, **PATRICIA**, are inseparable. Their 10-year-long Study Buddy mentorship ignited a lifelong friendship.

Ten years ago, college ESL teacher, Tina, discovered that she had extra time on her hands and a desire to give back. And so, she decided to help a youth in need by becoming a Study Buddy. "The Study Buddy program sounded appealing to me because I didn't have kids, was single and a teacher. I thought those things could come in handy to a little girl." Shortly after, Tina met her Little Sister, Patricia — an ESL student who needed help with English. "She was very shy, but we quickly got along."

As the two became closer, Patricia started seeing in her Study Buddy mentor a close friend — someone she could trust and seek advice from outside her home. At the same time, Tina's initial six-month commitment rapidly evolved into a long-term sense of care for her Little. When Patricia entered grade nine, Tina took her mother aside and promised her that she was going to make sure Patricia would graduate from high school. "I want to see your daughter graduate and I will make it happen," she told her.

Four years later, Patricia became the first of her family to obtain her high school diploma. She is immensely grateful for her Study Buddy experience, attributing her success to the support of Tina. The connection she made with Tina helped her to develop her confidence, and to see life and school in a different way. "When I was younger she helped me with school. Each week I knew that she was there to motivate me, and it worked. I started having a

CHAMPIONING POTENTIAL ONE MATCH AT A TIME

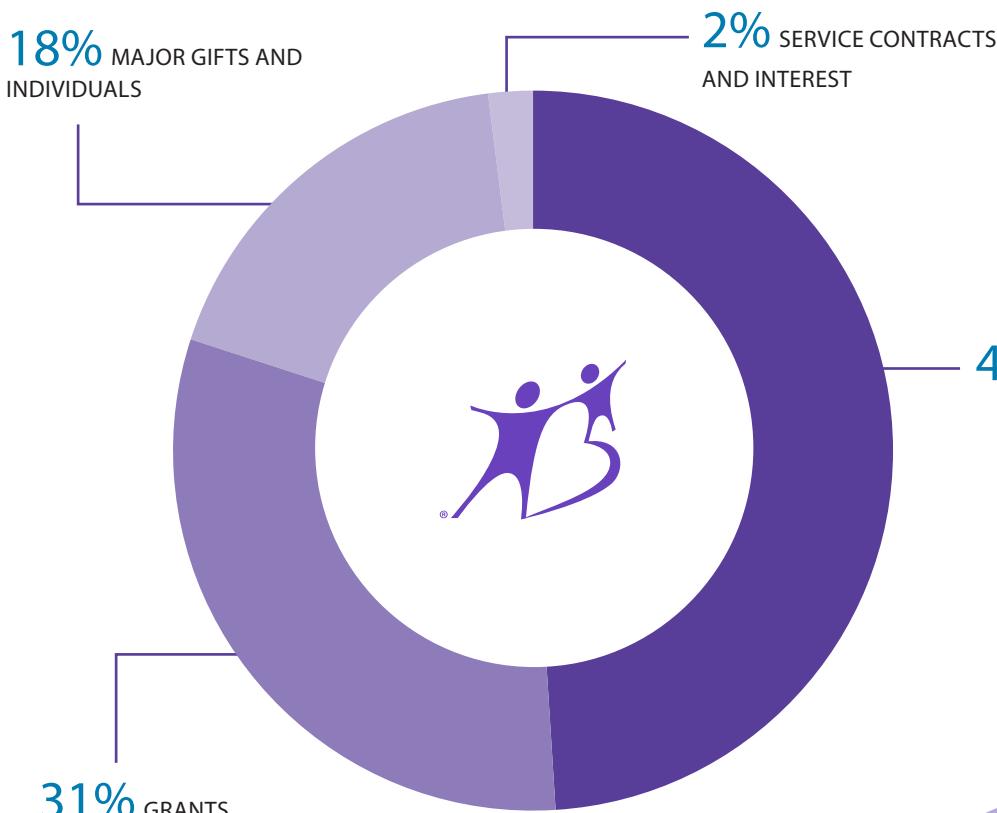
better academic routine and studying became easier."

Recently, Patricia was awarded the Big Sister's Cottonwood Scholarship for her academic efforts, which has helped her pursue a history major in college. She is also exploring a growing passion for social justice.

In ten years, Tina's and Patricia's unique families have become like one. Mother's Days are spent together with Patricia's mom, and birthdays are celebrated at each other's homes. Patricia has even taken on the role of Big Sister to Tina's daughter. Although Study Buddy matches focus on providing academic support to Littles in need, they often turn into lifelong friendships. As Tina said, "I never really saw myself as a mentor, I just sort of became part of Patricia's life."

"Tina helped me become more confident in myself. She inspires me every day"

— Little Sister Patricia



2018 TOTAL REVENUE

\$1.75 M

31% GRANTS

2018 INVESTMENT IN MISSION

\$1.56 M

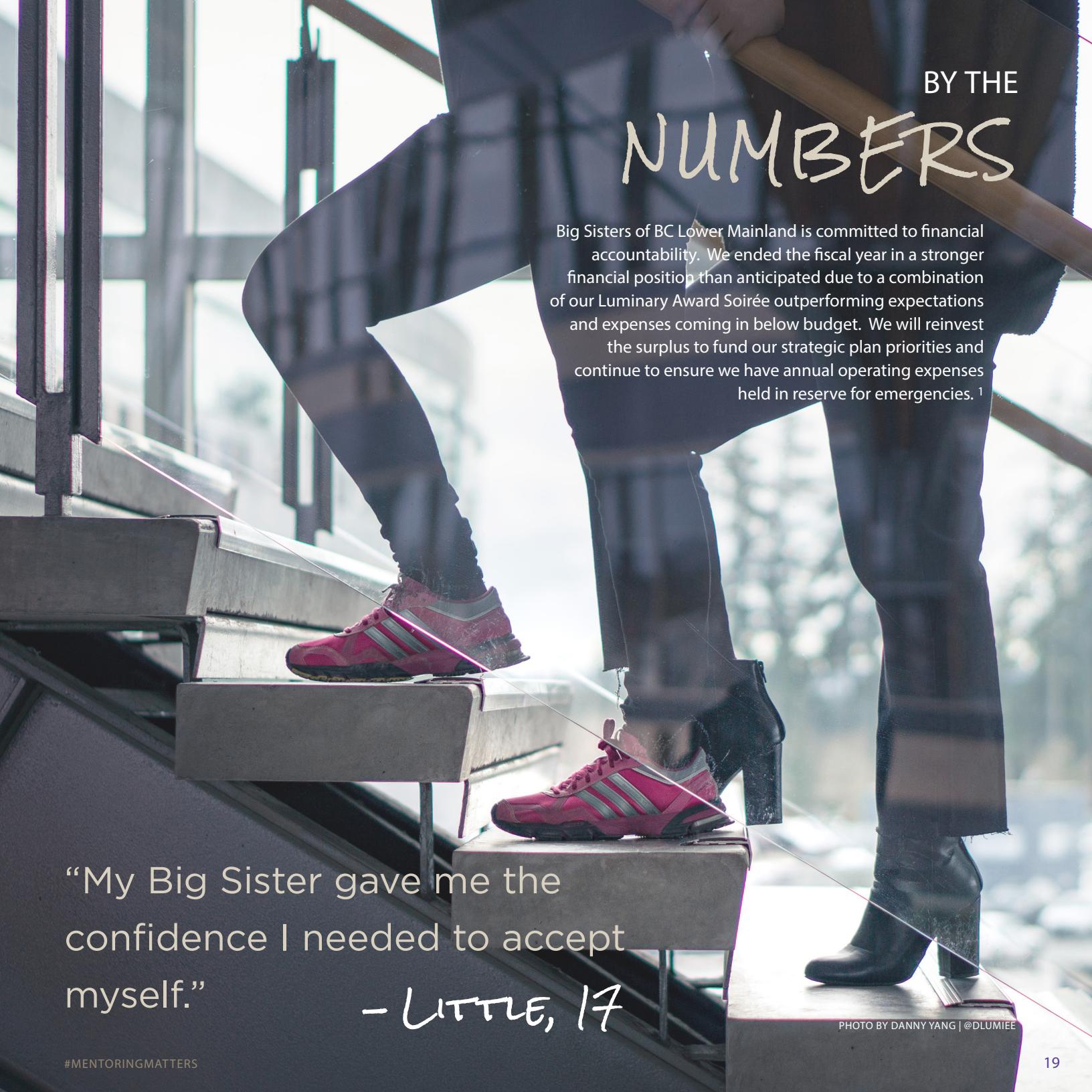
7% PROGRAM SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

33% FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATIONS

60% DIRECT PROGRAM SERVICES



¹ For a complete copy of our financial statements visit, www.bigsistersbc.ca

A photograph showing a person's legs and feet as they climb a set of concrete stairs. The person is wearing dark leggings and bright pink Adidas sneakers with three stripes. The background is a blurred indoor setting with large windows.

BY THE NUMBERS

Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland is committed to financial accountability. We ended the fiscal year in a stronger financial position than anticipated due to a combination of our Luminary Award Soirée outperforming expectations and expenses coming in below budget. We will reinvest the surplus to fund our strategic plan priorities and continue to ensure we have annual operating expenses held in reserve for emergencies. 1

“My Big Sister gave me the confidence I needed to accept myself.”
- LITTLE, 17

PHOTO BY DANNY YANG | @DLUMIEE

THE BIGGEST HEARTS AROUND

Each year, we recognize outstanding volunteers and supporters who go above and beyond to champion mentoring. They show up when it counts, go the extra mile, and inspire others to do the same. We were honoured to present the Big Heart Awards to:



Leah Campbell



Sharon Makina



Martina Lee



A BIG

THANK YOU

TO

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AMIR MOGHADASI (CHAIR)

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THANK YOU FOR CHAMPIONING POTENTIAL

VISIONARY \$50,000+

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WHEATON PRECIOUS METALS

We trust that we have listed all donors appropriately, but we sincerely apologize if there are any errors. For a complete list of donors visit, www.bigsisters.bc.ca.

MATCH MAKER \$5,000 – \$9,999

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HEAD OFFICE

34 EAST 12TH AVENUE
VANCOUVER, BC V5T 2G5

P: 604-873-4525
F: 604-873-2122

INFO@BIGSISTERS.BC.CA

SURREY OFFICE

12-15355 102A AVENUE
SURREY, BC V3R 7K1

CHARITABLE REGISTRATION NUMBER
11880 9409 RR 0001



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