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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF ST. LUCIE, INDIAN RIVER AND OKEECHOBEE COUNTIES HONORED WITH NATIONAL PLATINUM AWARD FOR PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

FORT PIERCE - Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor.

BBBS agencies are recognized annually by the BBBSA Nationwide Leadership Council, comprised of local BBBS agency leaders and board members, for excellence in the organization's signature one-to-one youth mentoring program. The national award recognizes top agencies that have consistently retained the number of Bigs (mentors) and Littles (youth) matched through the mentoring program, exhibiting exceptional growth in their local programs.

"Being recognized with the national Platinum Award is a highly significant achievement for our agency, especially as we celebrate our fortieth anniversary," said Debbie Hawley, BBBS chief executive officer.

BBBS served 837 local children in 20,302 one-to-one mentoring sessions, equaling over 500 days of mentoring in the three-county area in 2023.

"BBBS' commitment to creating and fostering positive mentoring relationships is a testament to the individuals within their organization. Through a shared dedication to meeting the needs of youth in their communities, BBBS continues to empower young people to reach their full potential," said Artis Stevens, BBBSA president and chief executive officer. "We are proud to recognize this agency for its excellence in building brighter futures and championing new possibilities."

BBBS received the 2022 Gold Standard Award before receiving the 2023 Platinum Award - both firsts for the agency.

"We strive every day to support local youth through mentorship. It is truly a testament to the hard work done by our dedicated program staff and volunteers," Hawley said.

For more information about BBBS of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties, visit bbbsbigs.org or call 772-466-8535. "Like" BBBS on Facebook at facebook.com/bbbsbigs and follow the nonprofit on Instagram @bbbsbigs.

About Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties

Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties strives to create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. BBBS programs are free for all members. Debbie Hawley is the Chief Executive Officer. For more information about Big Brothers Big Sisters, please visit bbbsbigs.org or call 772- 466-8535. "Like" BBBS on Facebook at facebook.com/bbbsbigs and follow the nonprofit on Instagram @bbbsbigs.

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Photo Caption Suggestions:

Photo credit: Jayne Platts

BBBS Lacey and Skylar.jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Sister Lacey and Little Sister Skylar

BBBS Phillip (Big) and kindergartener Talan (Little).jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Brother Phillip and Little Brother Talan

BBBS Eddy (Big) and Kyson (Little).jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Brother Eddy and Little Brother Kyson

Maria (Big) and Cal (Little).jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Sister Maria and Little Brother Cal

Elizabeth and A'sanah.jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is

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David and Keegan.jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Brother David and Little Brother Keegan

Deanna (Big) and Paisley (Little).jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Sister Deanna Phillip and Little Sister Paisley

Donna and Miracle.jpg: Big Brothers Big Sisters of St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties (BBBS) was named a Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) Platinum Award winner for program excellence in 2023. Out of more than 230 agencies across America, BBBS is one of 51 organizations to receive the prestigious honor. Pictured: Big Sister Donna and Little Sister Miracle