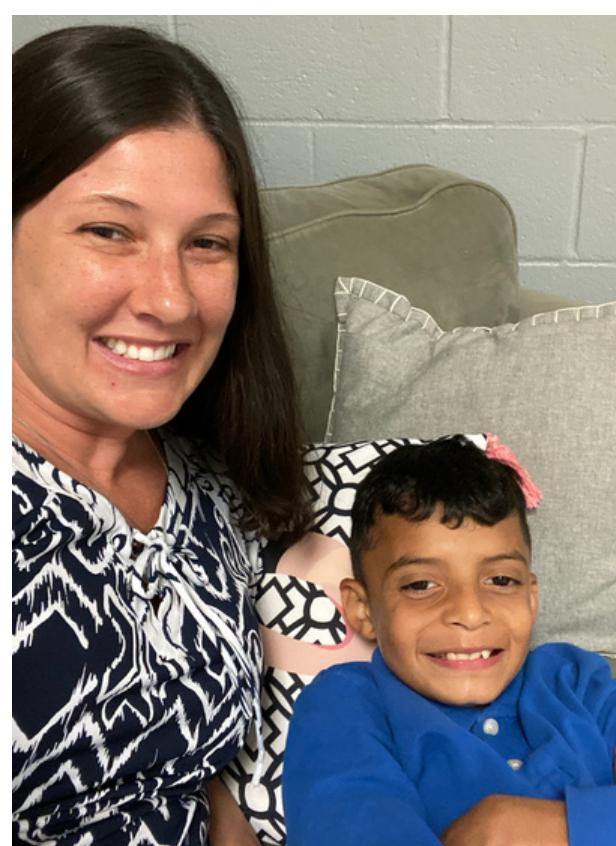


CORPORATE BIG HIGHLIGHT: ROBERTS BROTHERS REALTY - MARIE MILLER



Frequently, I review ways I could possibly be more involved and give back within our local community. I considered that being a part of the local chambers or Baldwin County Association of Realtors membership as part of my giving back. Both of which offer annual opportunities to volunteer. Heart walks, shoes for kids, contributing to Feeding the Gulf Coast with food drives, and many other events was all the involvement that I needed to do. However, Roberts Brothers had

a company sales meeting via Zoom where Aimee Risser, the CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Central Gulf Coast, was the guest speaker.

She spoke of her time and involvement with Big Brothers Big Sisters, explaining how the children are chosen for the program. Children that are currently being raised by either a single parent or other family members. As I listened to firsthand accounts of Bigs and their experiences with the program, I witnessed how much joy it brought them as they told their stories; I had to learn more.

I reached out to Big Brothers Big Sisters immediately. I went through multiple interviews and answered several in-depth questionnaires. It was all worth it to get my perfect little. I felt like a personal part of a new family. It was so exciting telling everyone and anyone who would listen that I was going to get a little girl. We are going to have the best of times; she will show me how to be a true princess. Well, little did I know there was a little boy out there asking for a Big and he needed a Big Sister, he said, his Big "had to be a girl and she had to be like 35 years old". Well, my match specialist Gale Croft did a phenomenal job at matching me and my Little, Jaxon, together.

Jaxon spoke with high demands and Gale delivered with great expectations. Gale is truly the best at what she does. She is a great mentor and friend. She has given me the best gift anyone could ever ask for, and she didn't even know it. I can't tell people enough about my Little and the program - how simple it is to visit with a child and just be there for them and the huge impact it makes, not only for the child but also for the volunteer.

Jaxon and I celebrated our one-year anniversary on October 4. No matter what is going on in life, I have a scheduled appointment with my Little, and I never miss a visit. If school is out on our visitation day, I email the teacher, and I schedule for another day the same week to see Jaxon. So, no matter what, we still have our weekly visits.

Who knew this would be the one thing I've been missing in life and didn't know it till that one company meeting. I could have never imagined that being a Big Sister would be so fulfilling, even on a personal level. I look forward to Jaxon and I discovering new methods to conquer daily challenges together. To see my Little grow and become a mature boy with every visit is more than I could ask for.

Jaxon has been through a lot in his short nine years of life, and I just want him to know that no matter what, I am here for him. The more we visit, the more his view of his future expands into endless possibilities. He wants to be a police officer when he grows up. So, I encourage him to be a good example and lead others. Jaxon's grades have improved over time. His confidence in reading is getting better with every book he reads. His behavior has become more positive as he looks forward to helping others now and volunteers as much as he can to assist his teacher.

Who knew that one hour a week would make such a difference in both of our lives? Jaxon has been so straight forward and matter of fact, and in doing so, he has thought me how to be more understanding, patient, and how to truly listen to the needs of others. I hope to continue supporting Jaxon and want to encourage him to express his true feelings and opinions. I have to say Jaxon is a gift to me, and he will not truly understand in his young years the impact he has made on my life. To learn more about our elite Corporate Big Program that Roberts Brothers is a proud member of, please visit www.bbbssa.org.

DO YOU THINK YOUR COMPANY WOULD BE A GOOD FIT? The Corporate Big Program is a flexible School-based mentoring opportunity that measurably impacts the lives of the children we serve but also your company culture and the lives of our mentors, your employees. We pair each company with their own school in close proximity and the company allows those who want to participate and who qualify to leave work one hour a week for the duration of the school year to meet with their mentee at school, during school hours. Research shows employees-even those that don't volunteer-feel greater pride and loyalty toward an employer that supports a respected cause like Big Brothers Big Sisters and encourages employees to get involved. If you think this flexible volunteer opportunity that has a measurable impact would be a great fit for your company, visit our website to see a list of our current outstanding Corporate Big partners and call or email Aimee at 251-454-2233 or aimee@bbbssa.org for more information.