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March 18, 2020

**Executive Director**  
Nicole Burdick

Good afternoon, friends,

**Officers**

Dory Batka  
Chair  
Brian Mueller  
Vice Chair  
Katie Hammer  
Treasurer  
Shaina Hargens  
Secretary  
Leisa Nash  
Past President

This week has brought challenges for all of us across the country and right here in South Dakota. Yet, as I learn more than I ever imagined about pandemic protocols and terms like social distancing, **I have never been more proud to be part of the talented team at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Black Hills (BBBSBH), and part of this supportive community.**

**Board Members**

Dory Batka  
Katherine Hammer  
Shaina Hargens  
Randy Horsley  
John Kearns  
Brian Mueller  
Mitch Nachtigall  
Leisa Nash  
Daniel Tribby  
Jill Tice

Over the next few months, this agency—much like many nonprofits here and across the country—will be faced with tough decisions. But, with unique problems, we have the opportunity to craft unique approaches, to innovate, become more efficient, determine the critical needs of our families, and reassess the best use of our resources.

This week, BBBSBH is encouraging phone or video call communication between the Bigs and Littles as a way of staying connected. BBBSBH staff will continue to be available at the office during regular business hours for any support, questions or concerns you may have during this time. **But, most importantly, our Match Support Specialists will continue to serve as a hub for hundreds of families—providing resources for those who may be affected by the loss of income, food insecurity, lack of healthcare, and anxiety due to the uncertainties related to COVID-19.**

Now, perhaps more than ever, **the mission and the impact of Big Brothers Big Sisters are evident and urgent.** And as we continue to navigate the myriad of challenges we anticipate (*and many we haven't yet anticipated*) in the coming months, I want to reassure you that a purpose and a plan will guide BBBSBH:

- *If you're a donor*, know that your funds will be responsibly used as we continue to serve hundreds of youth and their families during this time of need.
- *If you're an event participant*, we'll prioritize your safety, and we will keep you up to speed on the latest developments on Bowl for Kids' Sake and other events at [www.bigmentors.com](http://www.bigmentors.com), our Facebook page @BBBSBH or Instagram @BBBSBH.
- *If you're a mentor*, we will continue to provide resources for your Little and his/her/their family, as well as information to help you stay connected during this time of limited social interactions.
- And, *if you're in the process of becoming a mentor*—though we've put a temporary halt on Match meetings, we'll continue providing orientations, processing applications, and conducting background checks.
- *If you're a parent*, our staff will continue regular contact with you and your family. If you have any questions, concerns, or need for resources, please contact our agency at 605-343-1488 during office hours or email your Match Support Specialist.

Finally, **thank you**. Thank you for believing in us. Thank you for believing in the kids we serve. And thank you for standing beside us for the last fifty-nine years, and now - as we face the challenges ahead.

With gratitude,



Nicole L. Burdick

P.S. Our leadership team will evaluate the COVID-19 situation daily. We'll also continue to keep you up to date through email and our social media channels—[Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).