



**For Immediate Release**

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**Investors Bank Goes to School with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer Co.  
*Bank Grants \$10,000 for After-School Bi-Lingual Mentoring Program***

**SHORT HILLS, New Jersey** – Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of Mercer County is in a class by itself, thanks in part to two grants from Investors Bank, in partnership with the Roma Bank Community Foundation. The grants will help fund a pilot bi-lingual, after-school, one-on-one mentoring program for the 2015-2016 school-year.

The two grants, totaling \$10,000, will help bring students in the Spanish Club of Notre Dame Catholic High School in Lawrenceville to Woodrow Wilson Elementary School in Trenton to mentor 15 first-through third-graders classified as English Language Learners. These children all come from homes in which Spanish is the primary language, often making it hard for them to keep up with their English-speaking peers; the pilot program hopes to close the learning gap.

“We feel this is one of the most far-reaching programs we’ve started in a long time, and it’s something we’re committed to,” said Anita Hanft, Director of Community Outreach at BBBS of Mercer County. “Investors Bank was our first donor for this program and if it wasn’t for them, we wouldn’t be doing it. Investors has become synonymous with philanthropy in this area, and they’re very thoughtful about what’s going on in this community.”

BBBS of Mercer County applied for the grants from the Investors Foundation and Roma Bank Community Foundation; Roma Bank became part of Investors Bank in early December 2013. The foundation supports non-profit organizations that enrich the communities served by Investors Bank.

“A student’s education is the most important thing a community can give a child, and Investors Bank realizes how vital it is that every student is on the same playing field,” said Linda Martin, a Senior Market Manager for Investors Bank. “We are proud to be Big Brothers Big Sisters’ first donor in this exciting new pilot program for bi-lingual elementary students in the Mercer County area.”

The goal of the sessions is to provide guidance in ensuring that the elementary students are proficient language users, able to succeed in school, participate in society, find rewarding work, appreciate and contribute to American culture, and pursue their own interests and goals throughout their lives. In turn, the high school students will increase their Spanish language ability and become more intimately familiar with the local Latino culture through their relationships with the children.

**(More)**



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August 31, 2015

The one-hour a week after-school lessons will span eight months and be supervised by a BBBS bi-lingual case manager. Literacy-based activities will include: drawing favorite pictures of stories, using graphic organizers to summarize stories, making flash cards for vocabulary words, playing reading comprehension board and word games, using hand and finger puppets to retell stories, and writing creative stories. Funds are needed to provide transportation for the high-school students to travel to the elementary school, special bi-lingual curricular materials, the BBBS' case manager, and snacks for the students.

BBBS of Mercer County is still fundraising for the remaining monies necessary to run the program. Interested parties should contact Anita Hanft at 609-656-1000. In addition, a BBBS 5K Run/Walk & Healthy Living Fair on Saturday, September 26, will benefit the program. Visit [bbbsmercer.org](http://bbbsmercer.org) to register or for more details.

**Photo Caption:** Investors Bank Senior Market Manager Linda Martin signs a check for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County. She is cheered on by Cecilee M. Abney, left, Investors Bank Assistant Vice President, Branch Manager – South Trenton, and Anita Hanft, Director of Community Outreach at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Mercer County.

#### **About Investors Bank**

Investors Bank is a full-service community bank that has been serving customers since 1926. With over \$20.04 billion in assets and more than 130 retail branches in New Jersey, New York City and Long Island, Investors Bank delivers personalized services and products tailored to the needs of its customers. Investors' consumer banking services include complete deposit products, online banking, home equity loans and lines of credit and a full array of mortgage loans. Serving the business community, Investors provides deposit accounts, cash management services, business loans and lines of credit, and commercial real estate financing solutions to small and middle market companies, professional services firms, municipalities and other businesses. Investors Bank is a member of the FDIC and an Equal Housing Lender.

#### **About Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of Mercer County**

For more than 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated under the belief that inherent in every child is the ability to succeed and thrive in life. BBBS is the nation's largest donor and volunteer-supported mentoring network, making meaningful, monitored matches between adult volunteers ("bigs") and children ("littles"). The Mercer County office serves more than 600 children annually. To learn more, donate, volunteer, or provide your employees with the opportunity to volunteer, contact BBBS of Mercer County at 609-656-1000 or visit [www.bbsmercer.org](http://www.bbsmercer.org).

-30-