



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Massachusetts Bay

Big Night 2016



SITUATION ANALYSIS

Since the first **Big Night** in 1998, **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay** (BBBSMB) has raised more than \$30 million, helping to foster more than 10,000 one-on-one friendships between young people and adult mentors in Massachusetts. As a nearly 100 percent donor supported organization, the money generated from this event helps BBBSMB carry out its mission and continue to change the lives of children, making healthier families, better schools and stronger communities for all.

Knowing the event's importance to the overall success of BBBSMB, Version 2.0 was tasked with generating coverage of not only the event, but also the mission of the non-profit as a whole. Focused on sustaining the event's status as a "Party of the Year" in lifestyle and events columns, the team also saw an opportunity to highlight the truly extraordinary work the organization does in changing the lives of at-risk children. With that in mind, Version 2.0 established a targeted PR plan to generate buzz for the event, position it as a must-attend night and gain coverage before and after the event to highlight the longstanding benefits of the evening and the BBBSMB organization.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND STRATEGY

While the annual Big Night fundraiser always generates coverage in the style and events sections of the local Boston newspapers and lifestyle magazines, the organization desired more detailed coverage focused on its mission and impact on the community. To that end, the Version 2.0 team developed a PR plan and strategy to underscore the organization's proven impact and success stories.

In advance of the event, the Version 2.0 team held several input calls with the BBBSMB events team and a detailed PR plan was established. The campaign strategy outlined actions for each week

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The Boston Globe
boston.com

BNN
Boston
Neighborhood
Network

BOSTON
Herald

BOSTON COMMON
MAGAZINE

IMPROPER BOSTONIAN

Boston
magazine

examiner.com



leading up to the event, with two media alerts – one pre-event and one post-event – and numerous pitch campaigns. Based on research surrounding coverage of local galas, the account team developed an extensive press list to generate awareness of the event and identify potential press attendees. Broken down into VIP and general guests, a specialized pitch was developed for each group of targets, and several weeks of outreach were conducted to secure attendees and generate excitement ahead of the event.

Through dedicated and consistent pitching, the team secured attendance from 10 media targets from a variety of print, online and broadcast outlets, which resulted in both pre and post-event coverage. Additionally, the team was able to facilitate several interviews with BBBSMB's CEO and the musical guests before, during and after the event. Prior to the event, **Matt Juul** of **Boston Magazine** interviewed **Wendy Foster, president and CEO of BBBSMB**, to discuss the organization's mission and how it planned to use donations to serve local children. At the event, the team helped to coordinate Matt's exclusive interview with the event's musical headliner, **Flo Rida**. The coordination of these two interviews resulted in a lengthy piece of coverage for the event, detailing the impact of the organization and how the donations raised through the fundraiser enable it to match hundreds of additional children with adult mentors. The story was posted online in the days following the event and in the print copy of the Boston Magazine's March issue.

In addition to facilitating the interviews with Boston Magazine, the team was also able to secure an in-person interview for Wendy with **Christopher Lovett** of **Boston Neighborhood News Network** the Monday after the event. The interview, which aired on Comcast Channel 7 that evening and was also posted online, featured the impressive outcomes of the event and highlighted the overall mission of the organization. In addition to the in-depth features, the Version 2.0 team was also able to successfully secure 11 instances of coverage in the style and events sections of the local Boston newspapers and lifestyle magazines.

RESULTS

On February 6, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay held its 17th annual Big Night cocktail party, concert and fundraiser which drew a crowd of more than **1,000** of Boston's top dignitaries and philanthropists. The amplified buzz for this year's event helped raise more than **\$2 million** for the organization, a nine percent increase from the year prior. These funds will help expand its programming to reach the more than 800 children on its waiting list, creating new one-on-one matches between young people and adult mentors in Massachusetts.

As Version 2.0's first time managing PR efforts for Big Night, the evening was a huge success, resulting in 16 pieces of coverage. Coverage was achieved in major local publications – online, print and broadcast – including [The Boston Globe](#), [Boston Magazine](#), [Boston Common Magazine](#), Boston Herald, [Improper Bostonian](#), [Boston.com](#), [Boston Neighborhood Network News](#) and the [Examiner](#).

Following the event and its trail coverage, BBBSMB received more than 100 inquiries from adults looking to volunteer as a Big.