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Big Brothers Big Sisters
Mountain Region

Big Brothers Big Sisters Program in Santa Fe, NM

Little Brother Ivan thanks our men and women in blue for their service to our community.

August 3, 2016 – Santa Fe, NM – At 8:00 a.m. on August 3, 2016 Bigs, Littles, friends, and Staff convened at the Santa Fe Police Department to thank officers for protecting our community.

Ivan is a Little Brother in the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization. Along with his Big Brother Ron, they decided that it would be important to thank our local officers who put their well-being on the line to protect and serve our community. Ivan was concerned about all of the recent violence he had seen on TV and wanted to do something special... from his heart.

Along with Little Brother Jonah they created a small poster of thanks. Ivan and Ron also secured donations from two businesses that have been very supportive of Big Brothers Big Sisters Mountain Region. Let's Get Baked Bakery, owned by Annette Lujan, provided the time and ovens to bake cookies for all the officers and Starbucks on Cerrillos Road donated coffee for the morning crew. There were even enough goodies to share with the later shifts.

Ivan addressed the officers from a podium in their briefing room. He spoke eloquently about how important he thought their work was and how much he admired what they did. He told the officers that "I think it is important that when anyone is stopped by the police, to cooperate with them." Jonah also added that he was once in the Junior Officer Program and that it meant a lot to him and changed his perspective about the job of the police force. The program is a summer camp where local youth get to learn about what it takes to be a police officer and all about the work they do.

Police Officers were grateful for the gesture, "we usually don't get thanked," one officer told the group. "Normally we work with people who are not happy, so this means a lot to us." In return for the boys' show of gratitude, Santa Fe Police Officers gave the two boys a tour of the facility, a chance to run the siren and even a ride in the front seat of a police vehicle. Needless to say, Ivan and Jonah were thrilled!

Ivan's Big Brother Ron has always encouraged him to think outside of himself. Having a Big can make it easier for a young person to gain confidence and make positive decisions. When Ivan talked to Ron about his concerns, together they were able to put a plan into action. What seemed like a small gesture at the time will make a life-long change in how Ivan perceives the world and knows that he can be brave and make a difference in his community.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Mountain Region would like to thank all of our Bigs for believing in youth and helping them on a path to future success. We would also like to thank our partners in this event, **Annette Lujan of Let's Get Baked Bakery, Thomas Patton manager of Starbucks (Cerrillos Rd), and the Santa Fe Police Department.** Special thanks also to **KOAT Channel 7 News** for coming out to cover our event. Most of all we would like to thank Little Brother Ivan for taking a chance, and reminding all of us just how important it is to say "Thank You."

About Big Brothers Big Sisters Mountain Region

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) has been the leader in one-to-one youth service for over a century, with proven success in creating positive friendships that benefit children, volunteers, families, neighborhoods and communities. Research has shown positive relationships between adult mentors and at-risk children have a direct and measurable impact on children's lives. Youth in the program perform better in school, get along better with their families, and are less likely to use drugs or alcohol. BBBS Mountain Region currently serves nearly 1,100 local youngsters and their families in Doña Ana, Grant, Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Santa Fe, Taos, Colfax, McKinley, San Miguel, and Mora Counties.

CHANNEL 7 NEWS BROADCAST: <http://bit.ly/2autz83>

PHOTOS ATTACHED

MORE PHOTOS, INTERVIEWS AND FURTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST