



Spring 2008

## From Generation to Generation, a Big Brother Legacy Story

When he was a child, Mark Goldman constantly heard stories of his father's experiences as a Big Brother and hoped that he would one day become a Big Brother as well. Years later, Mark fulfilled that goal when he became a Big Brother to a shy 8 year-old boy named Andrew. Andrew is now a boisterous teen about to graduate high school and head off to UC Santa Cruz. He and Mark have become lifelong friends, and Andrew has his own goal of becoming a mentor one day as well.



In October, Mark will reach his 10-year anniversary as Andrew's Big Brother. While not every match at JBBBS goes that long, those that do are a true testament to the impact that an adult mentor can have on a child. Mark is proud of the young adult that Andrew has become since his first time meeting the "shy little hero coming out of his shell" and looks forward to Andrew's progress in college.

For the past 13 years, Mark, who lives in the South Bay, has served as an assistant district attorney. Even with his busy schedule, he made time to meet consistently with Andrew. "As a Big Brother, I wanted to be a strong, positive example for Andrew, presenting myself as an example," says Mark.

To Andrew, Mark was an important male role model and a good friend. "Sometimes, I had a hard time in school and hearing about Mark's experiences helped me to push through."

Over the past ten years, Mark taught Andrew to play golf, went to hundreds of movies, enjoyed JBBBS events such as Magic of the Match and spent time doing what Andrew treasures most – just hanging out. "It was nice just to have a friend, someone to talk to," continues Andrew.

Andrew's mother, Nina, describes Mark as an important constant in Andrew's life and a good complement to her relationship with her son. "Mark has been a person in Andrew's life that Andrew can count on. He has meant a lot to both of us."

Mark's father, Leonard, was Big Brother to the current JBBBS Chairman of the Board, Bill Ratner. Because of his relationship through JBBBS with Leonard, Bill has watched Mark grow to the successful man and mentor that he is today. "Mark embodies what the Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters program is meant to be, from generation to generation, and his legacy shows why we (JBBBS) have been around for 93 years."

Mark is now also a proud father to a 2 year-old son, and considers his time with Andrew as "good practice." As Andrew prepares to head off to UC-Santa Cruz, he has one more thing to look forward to from his match: JBBBS is awarding Andrew with the Leonard Goldman Memorial Scholarship, established a few years ago in honor of Mark's father, at the upcoming JBBBS Scholarship Dinner. The contribution recognizes Andrew's academic achievements and commitment to achieve his true potential.

According to Margy Feldman, president and CEO of JBBBS, "We are so proud of Andrew and grateful to Mark for their excellent time in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. Once Andrew has completed college and settled down a bit, we would love to see him and continue the legacy of Big Brothers to the next generation."

Founded in 1915, Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters (JBBBS) specializes in mentoring children to help them achieve their true potential. More than 2,500 children benefit from JBBBS' programs and services annually. JBBBS provides the one-to-one core matching program, school-based mentoring program and is also home to Camp Max Straus, a residential camp in Glendale where almost 1,000 underserved, inner-city children annually attend summer camp. JBBBS hosts several other programs at camp, including the Big Mountain outdoor environmental education program as well as the weekend Sports Buddies and Arts Buddies mentoring programs.

***For more information about becoming a Jewish Big Brother or Big Sister, call (323) 761-5675, x220 or go to [www.jbbbsla.org](http://www.jbbbsla.org).***