“JBBBSLA gives children a sense of hope. For some children, their BIG or camp counselor may be the first caring adult role model they encounter. It changes what they know, who they are, and what they become. These programs change and save lives.”

– Brian Appel, Big Brother, Board Chair

Mission Statement:
The mission of JBBBSLA is to help children achieve their full potential by participating in innovative, effective programs that facilitate lasting mentor relationships and support positive youth development.
Today, children in Los Angeles face different, more serious challenges than those of a century ago. Challenges such as absent parents and changing family structures, homelessness and food insecurity, failing schools, cyber bullying, gangs and drugs are pervasive. With mentors and role models to guide them past these obstacles, children today gain faith in themselves and hope for a better future.

Now, more than ever, our children need positive role models in their lives. They need people who believe in them, who open their eyes to possibilities, who teach them how to beat the odds, and who show them the people they can become. They need people who give them hope.

In this, our 100th year, we celebrate our agency’s many improvements and we reflect on how many of our children have grown up to become pillars of the community through their business, volunteer, and philanthropic efforts. In honor of one such individual, we recently amended the name of our camp to Camp Bob Waldorf on the Max Straus Campus to reflect the generosity and lifetime commitment of Bob Waldorf. As a former camper, mentee, mentor, and board chair, Bob is a living reminder of what each and every one of our children and teens can aspire to be.

We launched our $7M Centennial Campaign to dramatically expand our mentoring program, make capital improvements to the Camp, introduce innovative teen programming, and ensure more children are prepared and have the resources to reach for and realize their dreams of higher education.

We forged new community relationships to solidify ourselves as partners in creating better futures for the children and teens we serve. For camp, these include Outward Bound, Friends of the Israel Defense Forces, Green Dot Public Schools, and Foster Care Counts. And for Youth Mentoring, these include Moishe House, Young Jewish Professionals, Masa Israel, and various synagogues and Jewish day schools.

In 2015, we were very proud to award even more scholarships and to initiate our College Access Plus pre-college counseling program, to deepen and broaden the support we provide the children we serve.

We developed innovative teen programming -- including community service projects, philanthropy programs, and advocacy boot camps -- which focus on teaching values and skills to our teen campers, encouraging them to become well-rounded, more involved members of their communities.

We thank all of our incredible donors, board members, volunteers, partners and staff. Together, we confidently start the next 100 years of serving those children and teens who need our support the most.
Centennial Campaign

As the challenges and needs of our children grow and evolve, so must our programs, infrastructure and facilities.

The goal of our Centennial Campaign is to raise $7 million to give thousands more children the chance to forge life-long relationships, experience life-changing opportunities, and believe in a brighter future.

Mentoring matters.

As JBBBSLA begins a new century of service, we will expand our mentoring program by:

• **Growing and build bridges to newly-identified underserved communities.**
  We see an increasing call from immigrant communities for mentors who can help first-generation children acculturate more smoothly. Further, our partners in the bereaved, special-needs and LGBT Jewish communities report an increased demand and need for mentors. To support these children successfully, we need additional outreach and mentoring support specialists.

• **Introducing a new, cutting-edge electronic platform (E-Mentoring).**
  E-Mentoring will create new opportunities and accelerate the growth of our mentoring program. The mentoring movement recognizes that modern technologies can greatly enhance the connection between our children and their mentors. *(See page 7)*

• **Expanding precollege counseling and financial support for higher education.**
  Many of our Little Brothers and Little Sisters overcome tremendous obstacles simply to graduate from high school and have little of the essential support required for them to attend a four-year university, community college, or trade school. Further, we have become acutely aware of how complete college counseling is essential for our children to understand their options and to reach their full education potential. *(See page 8)*

“**My Big Brother taught me to trust others and believe I could overcome any challenge put in my way. Together we try new things, discover fun new activities, and just talk.”**

- Little Brother
A Century of Hope

Camp Counts.

Our centennial campaign will enable us to expand and enhance our camp facilities and infrastructure to provide more children with life-building skills and life-changing experiences by:

- **Adding a new 1,000 square foot wing to the dining hall** to give campers and counselors space to enjoy meals together, rather than in shifts or in different locations at camp. The new facility will provide designated kosher cooking accommodations to reach and accommodate more of our community.

- **Expanding our conference center** to increase indoor programming space and to add the additional staff sleeping quarters needed to support more campers, counselors, and retreat groups.

- **Building a new amphitheater and more outdoor communal spaces** to give campers and retreat groups larger places for community meetings, all-camp programs, and worship.

- **Creating a new sports field** to provide a safer, more inviting recreation venue for all camp programs.

- **Installing solar panels and water saving devices** to reduce fixed overhead costs and ensure that the Camp is a good steward of the environment.

- **Awarding more scholarships and provide precollege counseling** (See page 8)

- **Developing innovative teen programming** to ensure that our teens learn, participate in, and demonstrate leadership in the areas of social action, advocacy and teen philanthropy.

- **Growing the Camp Endowment** to ensure perpetual operational funding and camper subsidies.

Thank you to our Centennial Campaign Donors. Together, we are impacting the lives of thousands of children and families every day.

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$500,000-999,999
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A Match Made in Heaven

Brenner and Helene Goldsen & Martin Frankel

The phrase “match made in heaven” comes to mind when I, as the mom, think of the pairing of Brenner and Martin. They simply fit together, and they have since they met eight years ago when Brenner was in third grade. Brenner was the only child of a single mom surrounded by his mother’s female friends. He was a man’s man even as a child, and advanced in anything athletic and yearned to hang with the big guys…then we met Martin.

Looking back now, it still amazes me that we almost didn’t pursue the match out of concern that Martin was so much older. As fate would have it, he was exactly what Brenner needed. At their very first meeting, Martin recalls that despite the room being filled with toys, “Brenner and I started throwing a ball and eventually expanded into the waiting room, talking the whole time.” In fact, Martin’s own energy and athleticism completely keeps up with Brenner’s. They regularly fish, kayak and bike long distances, but more importantly, they share the lessons Martin has learned over the years. He’s refocused him on the importance of schoolwork—and been there as a valued partner and guiding light when Brenner has endured the trials and tribulations of learning to make good choices.

And it’s paid off. Brenner’s directness comes largely from Martin, who is always there with a steady hand when Brenner starts to spin out. “I’ve so enjoyed watching Brenner go from a kid running all over the place to a focused teenager,” Martin says. “He has the ability to communicate with peers and adults in a very respectable way, and his work ethic is beyond his years.”

Martin believes that “The best part of being part of JBBBSLA is giving back.” And the bond between the two goes deep as well. It fills me with joy every time they get together, because I know Brenner is both having fun and taking another step toward becoming a good man. Today, Martin comes to his water polo and swim meets and guides him as he learns how to have his first real girlfriend.

As for Brenner himself? I asked him what JBBBSLA and Martin mean to him, and with perfect teen succinctness, he summed it up perfectly: “They’re family. I can’t imagine life without either one of them.”
Community-Based Mentoring brings positive Jewish adult role models into the lives of underserved Jewish children and teens, ages 6-18. This program is based on the traditional mentoring model, in which a young person (mentee) is paired with an adult (mentor) in a one-to-one relationship.

- We served 279 children this year, including 82 new mentees.
- We hosted 33 events to recruit mentor and/or mentees.
- We sponsored 5 agency match events including our Passover Seder, a private party at the L.A. Connection Comedy Theater, a Beach Party, a Shabbaton at Camp, and our annual Hannukah party.
- 97% of scores on the Strength of Relationship surveys were above 4.0, with an average score of 4.89 on a 5-point scale.
- Our average match length was 36 months, which is 41% above the national goal.
- Launched a “live” group mentor training program that will be held every 4-6 weeks.
- Launched a secure, password-protected website for our mentors.
- Implemented Innovative Mentoring Software that allows us to maintain and update vital information on mentors and mentees, keep track of their progress, monitor survey results, and generate data for analysis and reporting requirements.

The JBBBSLA Scholarship Program offered financial assistance to 38 select, motivated, graduating Little Brothers and Sisters to support their pursuit of higher education - a greater than 20% increase from last year.

Launched E-Mentor Pilot Program

“Real Me” is our pilot E-Mentoring program, which matches 15-18 year old Jewish mentees with adult Jewish mentors in a one-to-one mentoring relationship. This innovative, hybrid model combines monthly in-person meetings with an online E-Mentoring platform, designed to enhance non-cognitive skills and cultural identity. Our professional mentoring specialists support matches through both the online platform and the program’s in-person meetings. Our staff facilitates these monthly group meetings, enabling us to integrate and reinforce the curriculum, while also building a sense of community. Through the relationship with their mentors, our mentees will develop their social skills and personal identity, experience emotional growth, learn about time management and strategies for coping with stress, and discover their role in their community. This program gives teens a safe place to find support and learn to cope with life’s challenges.

This program was launched in October 2015, with the goal of empowering our mentees to reach their full potential. E-Mentoring will create new opportunities for mentees and accelerate the growth of our youth mentoring program. We are the first organization of our kind on the West Coast to combine traditional one-to-one mentoring with the proven E-Mentoring technology platform.

To facilitate the development of this platform, JBBBSLA has hired icouldbe.org Inc. (ICB), which has a reputation for developing and managing proven E-Mentoring programs. The platform is monitored by our staff, to ensure compliance and safety in communication between the matches. Working with ICB, our staff has created a curriculum that is unique to our agency and, utilizes videos, electronic games, and directed dialogue to enhance mentoring relationships.
Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters of Los Angeles is proud to offer our high school age mentees and campers professional pre-college support through our new College Guidance Program.
After interviewing hundreds of scholarship applicants over the years, we have become acutely aware that many of our teen mentees and campers do not receive appropriate college guidance and are not fully equipped to take college entrance exams. They are not coached on essay writing and interview techniques, provided with financial aid application guidance, given information about scholarship opportunities, or provided with college selection advisement.

In 2015 we launched our College Guidance Program for mentees and campers in the 11th grade. The curriculum featured entrance exam preparation, college selection, personal statement writing, mock interviews, and direction on how to obtain financial assistance.

Currently, students begin this program in the 11th grade, but we have learned from experience, as well as research, that the program would have greater impact if it began in the 9th grade. Therefore, we are in the process of securing funding to enable us to develop curriculum for 9th and 10th graders and serve greater numbers of youth in need.
Camp Changed My Life
Davina Valenzuela, Age 18

My life was difficult from the beginning. I had a father in prison and an absentee, drug-addicted mother. I was nine months old when my older sister and I found a permanent home with my great grandparents who eventually became “mommy” and “daddy” to us. My mother would often appear and disappear in our lives, though we were too young to truly understand why that was. Eventually, my mother was incarcerated.

Middle school was a particularly painful time in my life. My sister started abusing drugs and the tension at home had a negative effect on me. It was difficult for me to focus on school over the screams. It felt like my family was falling apart once again. I struggled with depression, began to isolate myself from others and engaged in unhealthy ways to cope with the emotional pain and anger by cutting myself. Eventually, my older sister was arrested for possession of heroin. My life continued to tumble down. My depression worsened and my grades suffered. I contemplated suicide.

Camp was always a safe haven for me as a child and the only place I ever felt completely safe. Away from camp, my first year of high school was a disaster. I only wanted to go out with friends, didn’t study and skipped homework assignments. I was being foolish and I knew it. So I made a change… I became a Counselor in Training (CIT) at camp. I learned that I have more potential in life than I was living up to and I needed to start caring about school and responsibilities. As a CIT, I learned many things. Things I did not know I was capable of. I learned that life is going to challenge you and there is nothing you can do about it besides fight through it. I interacted with children of all ages, all backgrounds, and everyone had a different story. I became more patient with myself and others. It was at the Camp that I became a leader. I became someone new. I felt important. I felt needed.

Today, I am an Arnold S. Nelson Scholarship recipient and am attending Moorpark College, studying criminal justice. I want to become a youth parole officer so I can help others. Despite all the challenges I faced at a young age, thanks to Camp, I grew up and created the person I wanted to be.
Camp Programs and Partners

Camp Bob Waldorf – Ages 7 -15
This summer, over 600 campers participated in activities such as swimming, arts and crafts, horseback riding, and archery. Each activity tied into and reinforced the four pillars of camp: **Identity, Inclusion, Respect** and **Community**. Campers ages 14-15 participated in a special, elevated camp program focused on advocacy, philanthropy, and community service.

Team Bob Waldorf and Kibbutz Bob Waldorf Weekend Retreats – Ages 7- 15
During the school year, we hosted 6 weekend retreats for returning campers. These weekend retreats allowed campers to continue the growth and learning that occurred during the summer while they reconnected with their camp friends and participated in some of their favorite camp activities.

Kibbutz Bob Waldorf – Ages 7- 15
This summer 319 Jewish campers attended this pluralistic, 12-day cultural Jewish experience. Campers participated in typical camp activities as well as took part in Israel education programs and cultural Jewish experiences.

Kibbutz Explorations – Ages 12- 15
New this summer was a 12-day elective-based program. 32 campers chose from three exciting Core Programs: Technology and Filmmaking, Farm-to-Table Cooking, and Outdoor Adventure.

Witherbee Wilderness Camp – Ages 14 – 17
This summer we hosted seven character-building backpacking adventures for returning campers. Witherbee Campers explored the outdoors, prepared their own meals, slept under the stars, and learned about nature for five-day or seven-day sessions.

Arnold S. Nelson Scholarship Program
This program awarded 22 post-secondary scholarships to graduates of the Witherbee Wilderness Backpacking program. On July 12th we held a special ceremony honoring the scholarship recipients, and their families, at Camp Bob Waldorf on the Max Straus Campus.

FIDF Campers
This summer we partnered with Friends of the IDF to welcome 21 of their “LEGACY” campers to Kibbutz Bob Waldorf on the Max Straus Campus. The LEGACY program offered camp experiences to Israeli children, ages 12-13, who had lost a family member while they were serving in the IDF. These campers lived in cabins with their friends from Israel, but participated in all activities with the entire Kibbutz community. In addition to taking part in exciting camp activities, they also had the opportunity to tour Los Angeles and spend a day at Universal Studios theme park. These 21 campers were given experiences that they have never had before. Kibbutz Bob Waldorf became their second home, a place where they bonded with other campers, experienced healing and compassion, and returned to Israel with memories that will last a lifetime.

Partnership with Green Dot
This past year, Camp Bob Waldorf on the Max Straus Campus and Green Dot brought 61 middle school students to camp for a five day summer camp experience. Three middle schools participated: ANIMO James B Taylor, ANIMO Westside, and ANIMO Mae Jemison. These three schools conducted essay writing contests amongst their leadership classes so that students could earn their ticket to camp. The students that were chosen by their schools were awarded full camp scholarships.

The goal of this partnership was to offer each participating student a new experience that would teach them values and influence them to become role models at home, in their schools, and in their community. Our camp and the ANIMO schools track the success of each student, to ensure that they will return to camp year after year.
A Year in Review 2015

A Year in Pictures
A Year of Celebration
Thank you to our amazing donors. Together, we are impacting the lives of thousands of children and families every day.

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Celebrating the Past - Envisioning the Future

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2016

AT

THE PETERSEN

6 PM Dinner Stations and Cocktails
7:30 PM Program
9 PM Decadent Dessert Reception