

May-July 2026



High School Bigs shine on BBBSA's national stage



We were honored to present our innovative High School Bigs program at the BBBS national convention in Atlanta this June. Two of our High School Bigs shared their experiences mentoring elementary students, showcasing the effectiveness of our curriculum to BBBS agencies across the country.



Congratulations, Graduates!

We are so grateful for Katie, Cayden, and the rest of our High School Bigs who graduated this spring. They learned leadership and mentoring skills while helping their Littles with schoolwork and personal relationships. These Bigs showed younger students the power of hard work, service, and a positive attitude.

[Learn more about our wonderful grads](#)



Lucas wins national award

BBBSWNC High School Big Lucas Johnson, at left with Polk County school superintendent Todd Murphy, earned the Congressional Award Gold Medal – the United States Congress' highest honor for young Americans.

Lucas, one of our presenters at the BBBSA national convention, said this of being a High School Big: ***"I would say that's probably my greatest achievement."***

An outdoor adventure builds confidence



Talking about achievements - Caitlyn and Ky'Ren, both long-time Buncombe County Littles, completed a 22-day backpacking expedition this summer.

"The trip was very inspirational for the environmental career I want to pursue by showing me exactly why the world's beauty needs to be preserved," Caitlyn said.

The trip, she said, "helped me voice my concerns in a calm manner, hearing the other person out, and finding a solution instead of arguing and resolving nothing."

"It was incredible to see how much both of them gained from the experience," Program Coordinator Tessa Valladares says.

Ahhh, summer!

Matches spend summer days exploring outdoors

School may be about to begin, but we're still celebrating summer with hikes, pool parties, and baseball games. Follow some of what we're up to at [our Events calendar](#). And check out some of the match activities we enjoyed.



Haywood County Bigs, Littles, and Advisory Council members went to Dream Haven Animal Rescue in Waynesville in June to learn about caring for large animals and how an animal rescue operations works. The experience created new volunteer opportunities for our matches.



Thank you,
Highlands-Cashiers Land
Trust, for taking us to
McKinney Meadow to learn
about native plants and
pollinators.



Thank you, Asheville Tourists,
for hosting us for a night of
baseball in June. It was great
to hang out with other Bigs
and Littles.



"What an incredible experience it was," Brandon Fouts, Program Coordinator, at right, said of our trip to the Cherokee Tribal Fish Hatchery in Cherokee. "It was a unique opportunity to connect with nature and learn more about local conservation efforts."

Many thanks to these recent sponsors



We are very grateful for The Ramble Biltmore Forest Charitable Fund's grant that helps support our High School Bigs program in Buncombe County.



Thanks to Starbucks partners (employees) and The Starbucks Foundation for recognizing how we are making our communities stronger.

Challenges are opportunities for Project MARS



A year of service with Project MARS at a local elementary school hones skills that help members like Connor Lacroix, above, make college and career choices. It also boosts the confidence of the children they work with and mentor.

"Serving at a nature school brings its own unique challenges, like cold hands and heavy legs," Connor says. "But it has its own rewards as well - life lessons learned through experience, the struggle of building a fire, the value of hard work, and the beauty of a strong community."

[Read more about Connor's year with Project MARS](#)



NOW RECRUITING

School Engagement Coordinators

For the 2026 - 2027 school year



PROJECT MARS

 <https://projectmars.wixsite.com/ameri corps>  **AmeriCorps**
North Carolina

Project MARS is looking for enthusiastic people like Connor to serve in local schools and communities in the coming school year.

The paid work is fun and fulfilling and comes with benefits like health insurance and child care.

Share This Now

Join us for these summer events



Boots & Bourbon

THURSDAY | AUG 06 | 2026

CHIMNEY POND FARM | GLENVILLE, NC
5:30P TIL 8:00P

LIVE MUSIC BY SETH & SARA
DINNER BY LIZ DOTSON & VILLAGE PANTRY
LOCAL BEER, BOURBON TASTING, COCKTAILS, WINE
LIVE & SILENT AUCTIONS

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Dirty Dancing
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BENEFITING  **BBBSWNC**
Big Brothers Big Sisters.

CHANGING LIVES. ❤️ BUILDING CONFIDENCE.

AUGUST 29 2026

JOIN US
for an unforgettable evening
of dinner, dancing,
and making a difference
for children across
our community.

5:30 PM - 8:00 PM
CAITLYN FARMS
286 A R Thompson Rd
Mill Spring, NC 28756
50's & 60's Attire

For Tickets contact louisej@bbbswnc.org

