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**BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF EASTERN MISSOURI CELEBRATES BIGS, PARENT, AND PARTNERS OF THE YEAR**

**St. Louis – February 17, 2020** – For the eighth straight year, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri (BBBSEMO) is honoring individuals and organizations for extraordinary commitments to Be There for young people in St. Louis City and County, St. Charles County, and Cape Girardeau County.

BBBSEMO recognized 2019’s standouts at a special January gathering as part of its participation in National Mentoring Month:

*Big Brother of the Year:* Joe Jovanovich
*Big Sister of the Year:* Maureen Simmons
*Parent of the Year:* Eugenia Washington
*Community Partner of the Year:* The Muny
*Corporate Partner of the Year:* AT&T

*Staff Member of the Year:* Relda Brooks
*Board Member of the Year:* Bill DeWitt III

“Every day gives us the opportunity to make a decision,” says Rebecca (Becky) J. Hatter, CEO and President of BBBSEMO, “and there are always reasons to beg off or postpone. But those moments of saying “yes” challenge, excite, change, and ultimately define us. We’re so grateful to each of our honorees for showing us how powerful a yes can be.”

An album of professional photos from BBBSEMO’s annual celebration is live on the agency’s Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pg/BBBSEMO/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10157301782184541&__tn__=-UC-R>). Reflections from each awardee and Then/Now match photos are featured at <https://www.bbbsemo.org/2020/02/05/national-mentoring-month-celebration-2020/>.

**About Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri** **(BBBSEMO)**
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri, founded in 1914 as a “charter” affiliate of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, is guided by the principle that “In relationship, young people grow up with love, hope, and opportunity.” BBBSEMO’s approach includes five key elements: Create trusting, enduring relationships between young people (ages 5-25) and adult role models, mentors, and advocates; support academic success kindergarten to career; promote health and well-being; host life-skills training and development; coordinate temporary resources to support youth, parents, and families. The agency supports children and families in St. Louis City and County; St. Charles and Jefferson Counties; and Cape Girardeau and Scott Counties. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri is a proud member of the United Way. For more information, contactMiya Norfleet (email - media@bbbsemo.org, phone - (314) 615-1094) or visit [www.bbbsemo.org](http://www.bbbsemo.org/).