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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

BTB UPDATE: Participation in Bigs in Blue Program Skyrockets



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is thanking Florida law enforcement agencies and officers for helping grow the Bigs in Blue Program. Last July, Attorney General Moody, Florida Department of Law Enforcement and Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles announced a partnership to increase law enforcement participation in Big Brothers Big Sisters' mentorship program, Bigs in Blue. The partnership followed the issuing of a Back the Blue Award to Big Brothers Big Sisters for creating the program that connects at-risk youth with law enforcement mentors. Since then, more than 115 new mentorship relationships were formed and four new Bigs in Blue programs were created in Florida.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "I'm excited to report on the progress we've seen in this area of bridging gaps between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Forming positive relationships with children and providing a structured environment to learn and grow, as well as showing at-risk youth that officers care about their wellbeing, are important goals of this program, and I am pleased it is already impacting communities across our state."

FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen said, "Florida's law enforcement officers are focused on helping their communities so it's not surprising that so many would jump at the chance to make a difference in the life of a child. We appreciate this opportunity and thank General Moody for her leadership and support of Florida's law enforcement community."

Florida Highway Patrol Director Colonel Gene Spaulding said, "It is an honor to collaborate with Attorney General Ashley Moody and our law enforcement partners on the 'Bigs in Blue' initiative. FHP Troopers are from the communities that they serve. Service is one of our values that we

take pride in and will continue to provide mentorship to the future leaders of tomorrow."

Big Brothers Big Sisters CEO Jody Clifford said, "Big Brothers Big Sisters of Florida is extremely grateful to Attorney General Moody, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for their support of our statewide Bigs in Blue program. Not only does this partnership enable us to serve more at-risk youth by initiating critical one-to-one mentorship with members of the law enforcement community, but also provides the important benefit of establishing and strengthening the bond of trust between law enforcement and the families that they serve."

Each Big Brothers Big Sisters location in Florida reported increases in law enforcement mentor volunteers since the announcement of the partnership between the Attorney's General Office, FDLE and FLHSMV. This partnership encourages participation in the Bigs in Blue program across all three agencies by using an existing state administrative leave policy.

For more information on the partnership, click here.

In June 2019, Attorney General Moody presented a Back the Blue Award to the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay for their outstanding Bigs in Blue program. Bigs in Blue pairs law enforcement personnel as one-on-one mentors to children in the communities they serve. The mentors serve one hour a week, spending time with local children by helping with academics, playing sports, going for walks and much more. For more information on the Back the Blue Award given this past summer, click here.

For more information on Attorney General Moody's Back the Blue Award, or to make a nomination, click here.

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Attorney General Ashley Moody's Back the Blue campaign highlights law enforcement officers, citizens and organizations taking extraordinary steps to forge positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Supporting law enforcement is a top priority for Attorney General Moody and the mission of Back the Blue is to commend Florida's brave law enforcement officers and Floridians who back them.