



Big Brothers Big Sisters

Building a bigger, better future.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF GREATER KANSAS CITY
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

NON-PROFIT YOUTH MENTORING ORGANIZATION

Micheal Lawrence remembers exactly why Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Kansas City first started working with Commerce Bank in 1996.

"It was lockbox fees," recalls Lawrence, chief executive officer. "We were collecting pledges through the mail and wanted to be good stewards of our funds. Commerce offered us a low rate."

Two decades later, the non-profit known for matching 'Littles' and 'Bigs' in one-to-one mentoring relationships receives most donations online. So it no longer uses a lockbox. But its relationship with Commerce—like the chapter itself—has grown substantially. It is today the fastest growing Big Brothers Big Sisters chapter in the country, serving about 1,800 children a year, up 75 percent since 2008. In 2015, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America named it Agency of the Year.

"Demand for our services continues to grow, and we've grown to keep up with it," says Lawrence. In recent years, that resulted in both the chapter's largest-ever fundraising campaign and national recognition of its innovative approaches to recruiting millennial volunteers.

"Commerce has provided constant support along the way, introducing us to solutions that have helped us improve our financial position so we can help more children," he says. In addition to financing the chapter's \$3.5 million acquisition and renovation of its new headquarters in 2015, the bank also provides the



“The bankers at Commerce know and support our agency's vision, and they are active in the community. They are an important member of our team.”

credit line, term loans, merchant services and operating accounts the agency needs to fulfill its mission.

"Seven years ago, we weren't in a financial position to even establish a line of credit," notes Lawrence. "Thanks to successful fundraising and strong financial management, we paid off our old debt while doubling our operating budget and establishing a three-month cash reserve."

"Commerce is not only our bank," says Lawrence. "They support our events and encourage their employees to get involved. They are a great partner."

