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Photos



Becky Levasseur, left, and Deborah Everett have been a close mentoring pair for more than two years. They are being held up as examples of mentoring success, appearing in a national TV ad supporting the endeavor.

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By **Derek Vital**

The Herald News

Posted Jan 01, 2010 @ 10:17 PM

FALL RIVER — A Fall River mentor and mentee were selected as part of a national competition to be featured in a public awareness campaign for National Mentoring Month in January.

Featured this year are Deborah Everett and Becky Levasseur of Fall River. They have been matched for two-and-a-half-years through the Big Friends Little Friends program administered by Family Service Association.

Big Friends Little Friends Case Manager and Recruiting Specialist Mary Vasconcellos said they were notified that the pair had been selected in August and the public service announcement was shot in September. Included in the 30-second commercial are scenes filmed at Family Service Association on Rock Street.

Vasconcellos said this is the first time one of their matches has been selected for the honor. The match selected for last year's commercial is from New Mexico.

"This is a big deal for us," said Vasconcellos.

Levasseur, who turns 16 this month, considers Everett to be her confidante, according to Vasconcellos. They enjoy going to the mall, making pizzas and attending special events.

"Deb has said that she can't imagine Becky not being in her life," said Vasconcellos. "They both cherish the time they spend together."

Mass Mentoring Partnership in Boston submitted the mentor/mentee pair as part of the comprehensive recruitment and public awareness campaign they run during National Mentoring Month.

"Great matches are products of great mentoring programs," said Mass Mentoring Partnership President and CEO David Shapiro. "Deb and Becky are a prime example of this. We are proud to have their story featured nationally and proud to have Big Friends Little Friends as a part of our program network in Massachusetts," said Shapiro.

ReelPeople is a project of the Harvard School of Public Health, one of the three national partners for National Mentoring Month, along with MENTOR and the Corporation for National and Community Service. ReelPeople features one mentoring pair each year in a national television public service announcement, chosen through nominations from the mentoring field.

Mass Mentoring Partnership is the only statewide organization dedicated to strategically expanding quality mentoring to meet the needs of youth across Massachusetts. MMP serves more than 165 mentoring programs statewide, supporting 20,000 mentoring relationships.

Big Friends Little Friends is a youth mentoring program that was started by Family Service Association in the fall of 2003. The program's primary purpose is to positively impact the lives of children in Greater Fall River through one-to-one mentor-mentee matches.

Big Friend mentors are thoroughly trained men and women at least 18 years of age who have gone through a careful screening process. Big Friends come from many diverse backgrounds, but share the general desire to make a difference in the life of a young person, the organization said. FSA encourages all potential Big Friends to make a minimum one-year commitment to serve and to meet with their Little Friend three to five hours a week, bi-weekly or monthly within that year.

For more information about Big Friends Little Friends, contact Family Service Association at 508-678-7542 or visit [www.frfsa.org](#).

E-mail Derek Vital at dvital@heraldnews.com.

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 23 hours ago
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This is hopefully, the wave of the new year. With most of the news being negative, this is a nice change. How one responsive adult can help a teen. For single or married couples with no children, it's a way to get involved with the youth of our area, in need of a confidant. This could change the lives of so many.

InAVanDownByFallRiver

20 hours ago
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Becky is a wonderful young lady, I am proud of her and the effect this positive relationship has had on her success! Keep it up and congratulations kid!!!

FRvisitor

14 hours ago
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I love this story !!! Anything that has a positive impact on our youth should be applauded. Login or register to post a comment:

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