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Miami Valley's Arts, Culture & News Weekly

**BIG BROTHERS
BIG SISTERS
SENDS DAYTON
OVER THE EDGE**

BY: JENNIFER HANAUER LUMPKIN
PG. 22

**DON'T
LOOK
DOWN!**

PHOTO: PETER WINE, MEDIA MOMENTS PHOTOGRAPHY



SCENE 15

Mason's Western & Southern Open returns



FESTIVAL 16

15 years of the Dayton Hispanic Heritage Festival



BLUES 19

Bluesman Joe Bonamassa at Frazee



DINING 31

Breakfast at Tank's Bar & Grill

PHILANTHRAPPELLING

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS' BIG STEPS FOR CHARITY

BY JENNIFER HANAUER LUMPKIN



Average Friday got you down? Want to see the world—at least the Dayton part—from another angle? How about instead of a long day at the office, you take a long walk down Dayton's second tallest building? C'mon, you know there's a little adrenaline junky in you. And it's for a good cause! Sound fun?

On Friday, Aug. 14, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Miami Valley will host their big annual fundraiser utilizing the services of Over the Edge, a company that provides signature rappelling events for nonprofit organizations across the U.S. and Canada. Be one of the first 90 people to sign up and raise \$1000, and you get to rappel 27 stories down Key Bank Tower into Courthouse Square.



The Over the Edge event benefits Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Miami Valley; photo: Peter Wine, Media Moments Photography

The prerequisites are minimal, the only distinct one being that participants must weigh between 110 and 300 pounds. Aside from that, there are no age, experience or physical requirements.

"One year we had three generations do it, grandfather, daughter and granddaughter," says Matt McDowell, director of partnership and fund development at BBBBSGMV, who has gone over the edge the past three years.

The presenting sponsor for Over the Edge is LexisNexis, who has provided great support for BBBS over the years. Two executives, Jeff Reihl and Keith Hawk, will be putting their mouth where their money is and repelling themselves. Other key sponsors include Liberty Nursing Centers, Fifth Third Bank, Liftoff Entertainment, Indigo Life Media, DP&L and Freund, and Freeze & Arnold. This year's goal is to raise \$140,000 and have 90 people repel.

But, *why*? What could compel someone to repel? Especially when there's going to be a perfectly good beer truck down on street level.

"They want to step up to this challenge, face their fear," says McDowell. "Another big one is, it's for a good cause."

Or some, as in the case of our editor Sarah Sidlow here at DCP, will be "doing it for the Instagram." And what an Insta it will be!

Going Over The Edge

Now in its fifth year, Over the Edge has previously taken place in September, coinciding with Urban Nights. This year the event will be combining powers with The Square is Where. Rappellers will be dropping into Courthouse Square from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., adding to the regular noontime entertainment of The Square is Where. From 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The Square is Where Goes Over the Edge Drop Party will celebrate the brave souls who trotted down the face of Key Bank Tower with live entertainment, food and beer trucks and activities from Tomfoolery Outdoors.

In addition to the higher probability for fair weather, this earlier August date has some calendar advantages.

"Having [Over the Edge] in August is better than in September, because then the Littles were in school," says Val Hunt Beerbower, Downtown Dayton Partnership's public relations and communications manager. "This will give the Bigs and Littles an opportunity to do it together."



Rappeller Erin Miranda flashes a fearless smile as she rappels down the Key Bank Tower; photo: Peter Wine, Media Moments Photography

The high visibility of the event and the built-in draw of Courthouse Square during the summer months both serve to greatly benefit BBBS.

"I'm hoping that it will create a stronger presence for the organization and a better tie to what it is that they're doing in the communities that they serve," says Beerbower. "Hopefully give it a boost to their mentor enrollment."

Over the Edge garners strength every year.

"It's continued to grow, and more and more people have seen it each year," says McDowell. "It's just more and more fun. We raise more money, which is money that goes directly to helping us mentor more kids."

McDowell sees rappelling down one of Dayton's largest buildings as more than just ropes and gear.

"It's the symbolism, too," McDowell says. "Every step of the way, there is someone with you. Every single step of the way. Even rappelling down the building, there's someone with you, figuratively, on the radio. There's someone there. You didn't do this alone."

"[Rappelling is] very similar to what Bigs do for Littles. A Big is there to help guide you, to be a friend and guide you to overcome multiple hurdles that you might experience ..."

- Matt McDowell.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Miami Valley

McDowell compares rappelling from great heights to the experience of BBBS.

"It's very similar to what Bigs do for Littles," says McDowell. "A Big is there to help guide you, to be a friend and guide you to overcome multiple hurdles that you might experience in your childhood. And they help give you, in very subtle ways, skills and knowledge. They help give

you the emotional intelligence and the confidence to overcome these things. ... Many of the children who we're helping as they're growing up, they're scared. When people see them acting out, their reaction is punitive: 'Let's punish them.' They're scared. They're acting out, they're crying out for help. And there's not enough people there to help them. With Over the Edge, people are scared, but there's someone there to help you every step of the way to get you through it. And that's what the Big is trying to do."

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Miami Valley

Originally founded in 1904, BBBS has been a part of Dayton since 1958. Due to their strong board and stable finances, this year they received the Gold Standard award from BBBS of America and achieved the Agency of the Year award, the best of 240 in the small to mid size category.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24...

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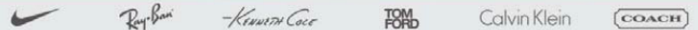
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