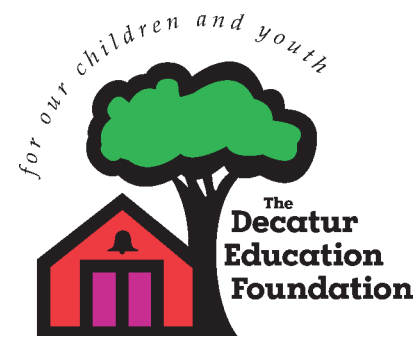


FOUNDATION Footnotes



NEWSLETTER/ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DECATUR EDUCATION FOUNDATION, INC. Fall 2009 • Volume 8, No. 1

From **Gail Rothman**, Executive Director, Decatur Education Foundation

Turning Great Ideas into Real Programs and Opportunities

Five years ago, my son, then in the third grade, had an idea. It was winter break, and he and his younger brother were looking for something to fill the time. They decided it might be fun to start a newspaper for kids in the neighborhood. He brought his idea to a very supportive teacher who knew just what to do.

One good idea, one caring educator, and one mini-grant from the Decatur Education Foundation – and *The Kids Times* was born.

It's now five years later, and *The Kids Times* continues to thrive. More than 80 students work on staff, and the paper has captured several media awards and generated more than a little money for charity.

I didn't know it at the time, but this is what the Decatur Education Foundation does: Helps turn great learning ideas into reality, all for the purpose of helping Decatur's children realize their full potential.

See *Great Ideas* on page 2



Photo by Michael Curtice



Great Ideas

continued from page 1

When an elementary school teacher has a great idea for enhancing the expedition her students are working on, DEF is there. When a high school counselor recognizes that some students need help paying for an SAT prep course, DEF fills the need. When a school administrator realizes that prepaid cell phones would enable parents in homeless families to stay connected to their children's school, DEF steps in to help.

And when an instructional coach knows that just a little extra tutoring would enable students to reach – or even exceed – grade levels in reading, DEF bridges the gap.

For nine years, in cases like these and so many more, DEF has supplied that missing piece needed for something important to happen. We've done that by raising and distributing funds, enabling volunteers to share their time and talents,

and connecting people in our community whose support makes the difference between a good idea and a dream fulfilled.

The past year has been one of exciting changes and transitions at the Foundation. After years of gaining strength and momentum under the administrative auspices of City Schools of Decatur, we knew it was time for us to stand more independently. At the close of 2008, DEF stepped out on its own, though we continue to work in close partnership with our community's schools. I am honored to have been named the Foundation's first full-time executive director. Most importantly, we have engaged in a strategic planning process to chart our course for the future.

The Decatur Education Foundation is poised to build on the strong history that has been established and reach out to new segments of our community. This annual report offers some ideas on how we'll do that. It showcases some of the wonderful ideas that became real programs and opportunities for our children.

We hope it will inspire you to continue providing the support that you have given DEF in the past – or to begin supporting an organization that you may not have known much about.

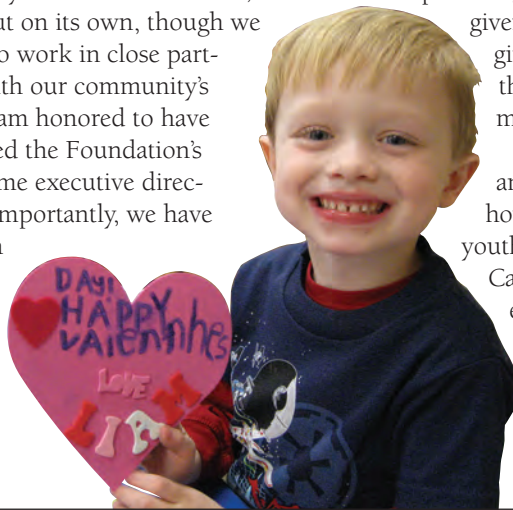
I'm available to talk with anyone who wants to find out how to help all of Decatur's youth realize their full potential.

Call me at 404-377-0641 or email me at

gail@decatureducationfoundation.org.

For our children and youth,

Gail Rothman



DEF Sponsors Special Day at the Book Festival for Decatur Students

Photos by Michael Curtice

Students at City of Decatur Schools each year trek to the square on the Friday before the AJC Decatur Book Festival to hear presentations from authors and to enjoy hands-on activities related to books and the joy of reading. Students in kindergarten and first grade are visited by authors in their classrooms. This special day for students is made possible by Decatur Education Foundation's sponsorship of the Decatur Book Festival.



Outgoing Board Chair Honored with a Culinary Gift

Tony Powers, chair of the Decatur Education Foundation Board of Directors for the past two years, oversaw a period of transition that resulted in the hiring of the Foundation's first full-time executive director, moving to new office space in downtown Decatur and reaffirming the Foundation's commitment to the children of Decatur.

Knowing that Tony is an avid gourmet chef, the Board chose to honor his service by purchasing industrial food processors to be used by the students in the culinary arts program at Decatur High School. The mixers will allow students to be trained on restaurant-quality equipment and give them real-world skills to ensure their future success.



Tony Powers with DHS culinary arts students and culinary arts instructor Dana Kinney (second from left).

Photo by Michael Curtice

Lemonade Stand Leads to Extra Sweet Gift for DEF

Last May, Louise Purcelle and her friends in the Clairemont-Great Lakes neighborhood opened a lemonade stand during the neighborhood's annual yard sale. They planned on donating their proceeds to a charity. Because Louise and her friends loved the book fair at their school, Louise decided to give the \$28 they made from selling lemonade and cookies to the Decatur Education Foundation. Her reason: She wanted other children to be able to enjoy buying books as well. Louise is now a third grader at Clairemont Elementary.

The Book Club, an initiative begun by the Decatur Business Association, supplies funds that help students in kindergarten through fifth grade to build their own personal libraries. Applications for funds are made by school principals.

Louise Purcelle and friends donated proceeds from their lemonade stand to DEF



Foundation Friend: Arthur Ratliff



Arthur Ratliff with Tony Powers

Every picture tells a story and thanks to Foundation Friend and professional photographer Arthur Ratliff, DEF has been able to share wonderful moments of student engagement and learning opportunities with our constituents including the photos of the Tour deCATUR Road Race on page 10.

mini-grant stories

Whiz Kids: Renfroe Students Win Acclaim in 'Competitive Robotics'

If you're hoping that you'll someday have a robot to help you around the house, then keep an eye on a group of Renfroe Middle School students. They just might be the ones who build it.

The students, all members of a club called STEMCELL (which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics Club to Encourage the Love of Learning), participated in the first Lego League Robotics Competition during the 2008-09 school year. Despite having never participated in "competitive robotics," the Renfroe students emerged as a force to be reckoned with. Each of the school's three teams captured honors and accolades, and one even made it to the statewide finals.

A \$1,000 mini-grant from the Decatur Education Foundation proved to be a key catalyst for launching the robot engineers of STEMCELL. The funds helped buy materials, print team T-shirts, and cover registration for the competition. The DEF mini-grant was also leveraged into a \$1,000 donation from local engineering firm Merlab and a \$500 gift from an anonymous donor.

"The funds were needed because student interest was so high," says Lew Lefton, the parent coordinator for STEMCELL. "We had 30 students join the club early in the year, and competition rules limit the teams to just 10 members." Renfroe's three teams were imaginatively named Diez Legos, Dancing Jalapeños and Legologists.

In building the robots, the students worked after school for an hour and a half each Thursday. "Because the theme was Climate Connections, the robots had to accomplish climate-related missions," explains Kevin McMahon, who teaches science at Renfroe. "So the students worked on a research project that involved identifying a climate-related problem that affected the Atlanta area, communicating with people around the world who were experiencing similar problems, and developing and sharing a solution."

The Renfroe students arrived at the regional qualifier competition in December ready to wage battle against 26 other teams, many of which had competed before. Diez Legos placed third in Technical Robot Design and Dancing Jalapeños captured first place in teamwork.

As for the Legologists, they didn't place in any single category but their high collective score allowed them to advance to the Super Regional qualifiers in Warner Robins, Ga.

In January, days before the Super Regional, the Legologists met to work on their robot, only to find that their project board was missing.

"The coaches kept up a frustrated search for quite a while," McMahon recalls, "but the kids simply started from scratch to build a new project board. They showed really great teamwork – and they were still gluing things together during the car ride to the tournament."

The students' energy and effort paid off: out of 40 teams competing, Renfroe's Legologists placed third. Their research project, technical presentation and performance of their robot propelled them into the state competition at Georgia Tech, the Big Dance of Lego Robotics.

McMahon says that while the Legologists "performed well at Georgia Tech, unfortunately that was where our season ended." But no one was unimpressed with the accomplishments of all three teams, faring so well among 250 teams statewide in their inaugural season of robotics competition.



mini-grant stories

Every Picture Tells a Story

Mini-grant enables Oakhurst teachers to weave Spanish and Art into Expedition

During the spring of 2007, Frank Valerio and Mikki Durkin, Spanish language teachers at Oakhurst Elementary, teamed up with art teacher Amy Evans on an idea to weave Spanish and art into expeditionary learning: They would teach Oakhurst students how to make arpilleras.

Exquisitely detailed hand-sewn three-dimensional textile pictures, arpilleras originated in Chile, where women political prisoners used them to camouflage notes sent to helpers outside. They have become an integral part of the region's rich story-telling tradition. The teachers recognized that arpilleras would make a lovely piece of that year's second-grade expedition, "Everyone Has a Story," while also enabling children to make cross-discipline connections.

With a mini-grant from DEF for \$1,500, Valerio, Durkin and Evans purchased the supplies that helped them turn their idea into deed. These inspired and inspiring teachers began the project

by working with the three second-grade classes to create rough drafts of three areas of the Decatur community. The classes eventually selected one design each for their final products. The arpilleras they created were beautifully detailed pieces that told stories about life in the community of Decatur.

The students created another set of arpilleras during the second semester. These were science-based and focused on the second grade's "Sun, Moon, and Stars" expedition.

The project's effectiveness was apparent in the students' finely crafted final products and in how proud they were of their work. The classes donated three of the six arpilleras to the PTA Spring Fling fundraiser. These pieces created quite a buzz during the auction and brought in more than \$1,000. This money went back into the school system, further connecting art and Spanish to the community. The classes eventually used their designs to collaborate on another project, an investigation titled "Murals Tell Stories." Students researched mural painting, then helped design and create the mural that now decorates the downstairs hallway of Oakhurst Elementary. The mural was completely student-

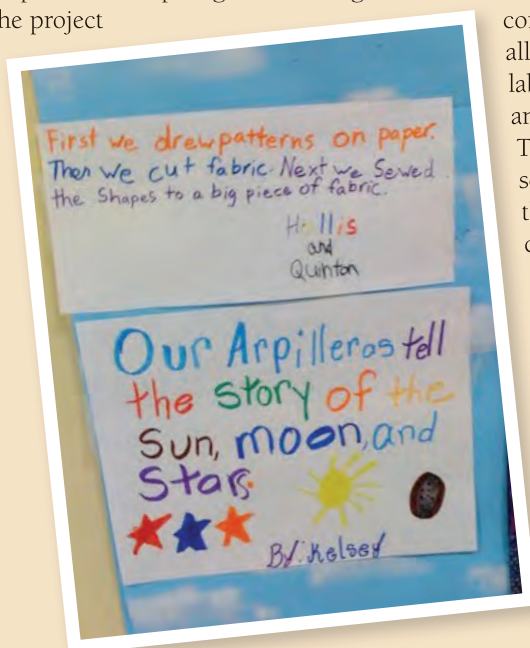
generated, and was their interpretation of the Decatur community and how both Spanish and art connect with their lives.

Oakhurst's second-grade expedition deftly incorporated language arts and social studies. It also met several key

GPS standards and satisfied curricular objectives in both Spanish and art. The teachers incorporated math, science, and social studies into their Spanish and art instruction, providing the students with more opportunities to master

the GPS during the academic day. "We feel that we were able to facilitate more student participation and academic success through this project," said one of the teachers.

“With a mini-grant from DEF for \$1,500 Valerio, Durkin and Evans purchased the supplies that helped them turn their idea into deed.”



The poster at left describes the procedure for creating an arpillera, a three-dimensional textile picture. At right is a detail from one of the Oakhurst students' creations.



mini-grant stories

Mini-Grant Brings Off-Site Enrichment

Last year, with help from a mini-grant from DEF, Oakhurst Elementary's Exceptional Student Services teacher Tiffany Moody developed a program providing community-based instruction for students with disabilities. Over the

course of the year, the students went on several outings into the community, where they were exposed to various settings and gained invaluable real-world experience.

Every day for a week, four students were taken to a MARTA station, where they practiced purchasing tickets and then using these tickets to ride the train or bus to get to destinations throughout the city. By the end of the week, two of the four students could place exact change in the machine and retrieve their tickets independently. One of the students was able to navigate the group to the turnstyle and down the steps to where people wait for the train.

At the DeKalb Farmers

Market, students explored different sections in the store and interacted with employees behind the counter. They selected several items for making fruit salad, and unloaded these items from the cart during checkout. Two of the students helped the teacher count out dollar bills to purchase the items.

Only two students participated in the bowling trip, which allowed the teachers to work very closely with them. By the end of the trip, the students were independently retrieving the ball but continued to need help with placing their fingers in the holes.

Students also traveled to Stone Mountain's Great Barn, where they enjoyed a sensory experience; the Center for Puppetry Arts, where they worked hard on their take-home souvenirs (a fish puppet); and the Georgia Aquarium.



Students enjoy a trip to the DeKalb Farmers Market

Fifth Grade Students Make History Learning About Influential Scientists

Last spring, fifth graders at Glennwood Academy introduced their school community to a group of influential scientists and educated them on how these individuals have made a difference in the world. This living history museum, funded by a mini-grant from DEF, was the result of a semester-long research project led by fifth-grade teacher Theresa Schilling.

At the beginning of the year, the students in Ms. Schilling's class each picked a historic figure they felt had had a significant impact on our world. They chose, among others, a psychiatrist who specialized in schizophrenia, a crypto zoologist, a doctor who was an expert on autism, and an anthropologist who researched Egyptology.

They then set out to research these people. The grant also covered books the students used to do their research.

When the students had gathered enough information about their research picks, they then became these scientists and invited other students and teachers at Glennwood to visit their living history museum. The "scientists" talked about their research with museum visitors and answered questions.

"The project was fabulous because students were able to self-select a topic they felt made a difference in the world," said Ms. Schilling. "Through their research



they were able to decide if the topic they selected did impact our world, and how." Not only did the project reinforce the students' research and inquiry skills, but it was also experiential and fun, as well as educational for the school community at large.

mini-grant stories

Noah's Ark Service Project Benefits Animals and Children

Evidence, the zebra found injured on the side of I-75 in April 2008, was one of the beneficiaries of a year-long service project carried out by Alison Mansfield's Pre-K class. DEF awarded the class a mini-grant to fund their work with the nonprofit organization Noah's Ark, a care home for foster children and an animal rehabilitation center, where Evidence was taken after recovering from his injuries. With money from the grant, the class took three field trips to Noah's Ark and completed a variety of projects to help the animals and children.

During the field trips, the students learned about the rehabilitation of the many exotic animals at Noah's Ark. "Several students decided they want to be animal rescue workers when they grow up," said Ms. Mansfield. The class grew especially fond of Evidence, whom they "adopted." They visited the zebra on his birthday with an edible gift that they had researched,

purchased, wrapped, and decorated. They also met Evidence's caretaker, who taught them about the needs of zebras. The kids learned even more about Evidence and how he came to Noah's Ark from a book that they purchased for the classroom with funds from the mini-grant.

In December, the class made holiday cards for the children in the care home. For Valentine's Day, they made gift baskets full of Valentine cards, patterned candy necklaces, tissue paper flowers, and more. The students also ran a wildly successful book drive at school to collect new and gently used children's books for the children's home. They collected, counted, carried, and presented more than 500 books, as well as diapers and canned foods, to Noah's Ark children's home.

Between visits, the class stayed in touch with Noah's Ark by writing letters to Miss



Diane, one of the directors. In turn, Miss Diane wrote to the class when new animals came to Noah's Ark, and she let them know how the children there were doing.

"Every task that the students completed for the service project was a socially conscious way to work on age-appropriate skills in literacy, math, social studies, and motor skills," said Ms. Mansfield. Through this project, the children gained greater appreciation for what they have and became more aware of how to help others.

DEF Launches New Website

The Decatur Education Foundation Web site is back and it's better than ever! A wonderful group of volunteers worked together to create the new design for our site. Special thanks to Nancy Condon and Bill Andrew for the technical knowhow, Lampe-Farley Communications for design consultation, and Michael Baxter of Resonance Marketing for help with the copy and articles. Check us out at www.decatureducationfoundation.org.



Foundation Friend: Jerry Brown

When the Decatur Education Foundation moved into new office space in downtown Decatur, Foundation Friend Jerry Brown was



Jerry Brown with Tony Powers

there to lend a hand. With donations of supplies ranging from a copier to sticky notes and a lot in between, Jerry helped furnish and stock the Foundation's new home.



Find us on
Facebook

Scholarship Awards 2009



Bill Mealor Jr. Memorial Scholarship

2009 winner: Wilson Billingsley

Pictured with Bill Mealor, Stephanie Corder and Marie Mealor



The Patrick Family Foundation Scholarship

2009 winner:

Salle Mack

Pictured with Hilda and Pat Patrick



The Thomas Hawk Memorial Scholarship

2009 winner:

Ezzard Glenn

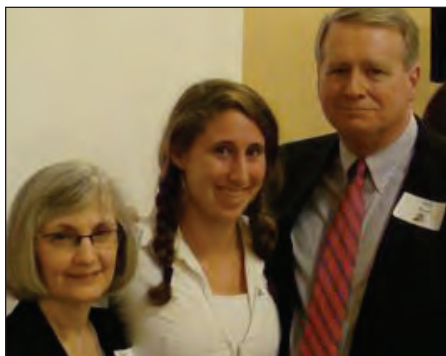
Pictured with Ann Whitley



Harry Edwards Class of 1960 Memorial Scholarship

2009 winner: Jacob Hamalian

Pictured with Charlotte Rhodes, Peggy Smith and Jimmy Moore, DHS Class of 1960



The Sarah Lynn Woolf Memorial Scholarship

2009 winner:

Olivia Gorbatkin

Pictured with Bill and Donna Woolf



Carl and Mae Renfroe Memorial Scholarship

2009 winners:

Matthew Sistrunk and Egan Connor Short

Both winners are pictured with Frank and Sue Tetterton



Kudos to CSD Stars!



The Carriere Family Scholarship for Teachers

2009 winner: Marca Tigner
Pictured with Jane and Ed Carriere



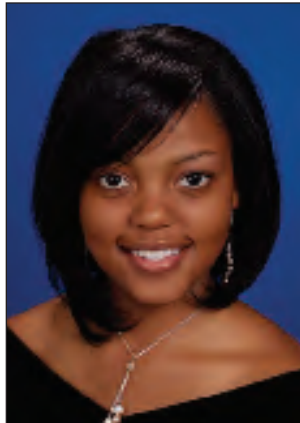
2009 Outstanding Teachers of the Year

Left to right: Michele Stiger, Colleen Dunbar, Angela Gabriel, Frank Valerio, Debra LeDoux, and Kevin McMahon (the district teacher of the year)
Not pictured: Kristen Tavel



Westchester Life Skills Scholarship

2009 winner: Anna Rose Gable



Coye Foundation Scholarship

2009 winner: Ahna Kelley Gable

2009 STAR Teacher and STAR Student

Julie Martin and Anna Rose Gable



Foundation Friend: Michael Baxter



Michael Baxter with Tony Powers

After nine successful years of helping the students of Decatur achieve academic and personal success, the Foundation knew it was time to “tell our story.” With the help of marketing expert and Foundation Friend Michael Baxter of Resonance Marketing, the Foundation has been successfully sharing our stories in both print and electronic form.



Mary Elizabeth Brown Wilson Scholarship

2009 winner: Shaun Harrison
Pictured with Elizabeth Wilson

TOUR deCATUR 2009

Seventh TOUR deCATUR Run Breaks Record

Nearly 1,000 runners and walkers turned out March 21 for the Decatur Education Foundation's seventh annual TOUR deCATUR 5K, making it the best-attended Tour race ever.

The event brought in more than \$14,000 for the Foundation, which provides support and enrichment for Decatur's children and youth. Funds go toward mini-grants and scholarships for students and teachers.

For the second year in a row, the race started at Renfroe Middle School and took runners on a course past Winona Park Elementary and Oakhurst Elementary before returning to Renfroe. The morning began with a one-mile fun run, with many CSD students participating.

Four Decatur residents took top honors in the race. Kristian Blaich was the top finisher in the 5K (time: 16:50) and Jonathan Corso was the Masters winner (17:31). Christine Carlton finished first among women runners (19:48), and Joy Provost was first among Masters women (24:44).

"The TOUR deCATUR exemplifies how our community can come together to support our children and youth," says Gail Rothman, DEF's executive director. "This year's record attendance is proof positive that Decatur cares."



(Photos courtesy of Arthur Ratliff)



TOUR deCATUR 2009 Thanks to Our Sponsors

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Aikido Decatur
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Save The Date! TOUR deCATUR 2010 is March 20!

Student EdVentures

DEF Grants Help Students Gain Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience

Two Decatur High School students received grants from the Decatur Education Foundation to help cover the costs of traveling to Washington, D.C., for the historic inauguration of President Barack Obama.

Eilis Gehle, a freshman, and Vincent Antinozzi, a junior, joined 31 other Decatur High School students to attend the inauguration as part of the Close Up program. Both received \$500 Student EdVenture grants, which the Foundation awards to help students gain valuable education experiences.

Most of the DHS students who traveled to D.C. worked last summer and fall to raise money for the trip, which cost \$2,400 per student. Gehle and Antinozzi were among seven students who applied for DEF's Student EdVenture grants.

"I'd never been to Washington before," Gehle said, adding that the swearing-in ceremony was a moment she will never forget. "You could see all of these people waving flags – and to see that many people who cared about our country and president was just amazing."

Chris Billingsley, a DHS social studies teacher, said the students participated in programs from 8:30 in the morning until 10 at night. They staged a mock presidential campaign and election, visited a number of area attractions and attended the Close Up inaugural ball.

EdVenture scholarship recipients complete an application that details their interest in a subject and why they would benefit from the trip. They also submit two teacher recommendations. DEF awards as many as five scholarships per



trip, depending on available funding.

More information on DEF's EdVentures program can be found at www.decaturreducationfoundation.org.

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Low Country Boil No. 6 Bigger, Better, Shrimpiers

Photo by Drew Staus



The Low Country Boil, one of DEF's two signature fundraising events, stretched its legs last year with a move to the Solarium in Oakhurst. It was a cool evening for some hot food, cold drinks and plenty of great music from Atlanta Cajun favorites Hair of the Dog and The Dammages.

The Seventh Annual Low Country Boil is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 22, 6:30 p.m., at the Solarium, 321 Hill St. Your \$50 ticket includes food, beer, wine, soft drinks, and a T-shirt. Make plans to join us for Low Country Boil No. 7 on October 22.

Get your tickets for Low Country Boil No. 7 now! Visit www.decaturlowcountryboil.com for information.

Awards Banquet

Since 1986, achievements of students, teachers and volunteers from City Schools of Decatur have been recognized and celebrated at an annual awards banquet organized and funded through the efforts of Susan Purdom and the Support Group. It is with great respect and admiration for Susan that DEF has accepted the opportunity to present this outstanding annual event. Here are some photos of award recipients from the 2009 banquet, the first produced by DEF.



Administrator of the Year

City Schools of Decatur's Administrator of the Year for 2008-2009 is Renfroe Middle School Principal Bruce Roaden. He's pictured here with Superintendent Phyllis Edwards.



◀ Extra Mile Awards

Teachers at City Schools of Decatur work hard and put in a lot of effort in their teaching jobs, but each year the awards banquet recognizes teachers that have gone the "extra mile" for their students. These awards are student-nominated.

Winners and Presenters

Tiffany Moody, Oakhurst Elementary, nominated by Will Hertz
Jill Simmons, Winnona Park Elementary, nominated by Jonathan Marcus
Russell Stewart, Glennwood Academy, nominated by Eva Ramirez
Jackie Thiesen, Glennwood Academy, nominated by Joey Emerson
Rodney Thomas, Glennwood Academy, nominated by Ben Goldberg
Cindy Tarrant, Renfroe Middle School, nominated by Zoe Laird
Jon Reese, Decatur High School, nominated by Neima Abdulahi

Volunteer of the Year ▶

At every school in our system, volunteers log hundreds of hours: writing newsletters, cooking spaghetti dinners, mulching gardens, reading to students, tutoring, raising money...the list goes on. Each year we ask the schools to choose one volunteer who has assisted the school community in significant ways.

School	Volunteer of the Year
Clairemont Elementary	Robert Pope
Oakhurst Elementary	Beth Thompson
Winnona Park Elementary	Michele Hillegass
Glennwood Academy	Tom Boyette
Renfroe Middle School	Terri Kruzan
Decatur High School	Kenneth Nuttall



Giving Back: Allan Coye

His education has taken him to New York, London, and Yale University. Now Decatur High School graduate Allan Coye ('97) wants to give something back to Decatur.

Last spring, he did just that by creating a scholarship fund through the Decatur Education Foundation. The Coye Foundation Scholarship made its first award of \$1,000 to Ahna Kelley, a 2009 Decatur High grad who is now attending the University of Georgia.

Coye, 29, received his undergraduate degree from Georgia Tech. He pursued a career in finance, doing internships on Wall Street and in London, and has worked for powerhouses Credit Suisse and Lehman Brothers.

He recently decided to take time off to earn an MBA. He has just started his graduate studies at Yale.

Coye has worked with young people throughout his career. He created the Allan Coye Foundation to increase educational



opportunities for minorities, and he hopes to expand the scholarship offered through DEF.

Coye remembers how the City Schools of Decatur helped build his confidence through activities like soccer, swim team, drama and debate.

"It provided me with a small and supportive community where I could try a lot of things," he says of his education here. "I'm thankful to be a part of the Decatur community."

Decatur Education Foundation

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DEF Bids Farewell to Sherri Breunig

The DEF bade a fond farewell to Sherri Breunig, the Foundation's founding executive director, who retired in October 2008. With a tribute at the Low Country Boil, the Foundation thanked Sherri for all her work in helping to grow DEF from an idea into a successful and strong organization that has affected hundreds of lives in our community. The photograph was presented to Sherri at the 2008 Low Country Boil.



Financial Report 2008-2009

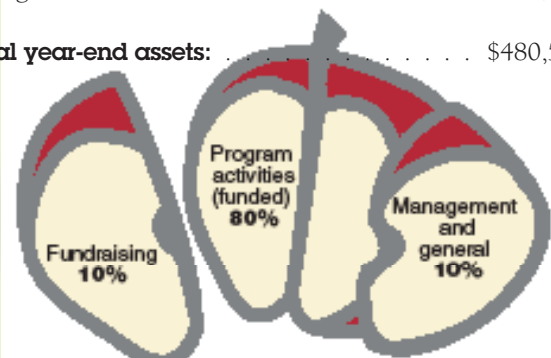
Revenue and support

Unrestricted contributions	\$147,630
Restricted contributions	\$62,615
In-kind support	\$47,879

Expenses:

Management and general.	\$19,098
Fundraising	\$19,482
Program activities (funded).	\$157,945

Total year-end assets: \$480,574



Honor Roll of Supporters 2008-2009

Sept. 1, 2008, to Aug. 31, 2009

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