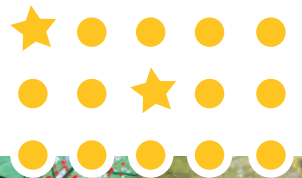


a community of **Problem Solvers**

The Decatur Education Foundation • 2019 Impact Report



We connect the big dots – people, ideas and resources – to eliminate the problems that our kids face so that every child can reach their full potential in school and life.



connect

DEF serves as a community conduit that brings resources where they're needed to ensure our students can learn and thrive.

mentoring

Established to help address the opportunity gap in our community, DEF's **Opportunity Partnership mentoring program** is now in its fourth year and has 27 kids participating. Each elementary-age student is paired with an adult mentor. DEF connects the pairs with business partners who can provide them with new experiences to learn and grow.

The Opportunity Partnership is all about providing its mentees with opportunities they might not normally have. During the summer, DEF planned a week-long schedule of "opportunities" for the mentees. In one week, they visited the Atlanta Botanical Garden, the Delta Flight Museum, the Michael C. Carlos Museum, the CDC Museum, Morehouse College, and Georgia Tech. Whew!

Opportunity Partnership Sponsors



Mentee Munawar navigates the group around the Atlanta Botanical Gardens.



Halima works with circuits at Decatur Makers.



Mentee Iszeyonna suits up in a hazmat suit at the CDC Museum.

Mentees Halima Tamiya and Megene hold ceramics at the Carlos museum.



“My favorite part this week was going to Georgia Tech. When I grow up, I want to learn coding and be a programmer. So that was a really good experience for me.”



REACH mentors Lynn Paxton and Erin Braden joined up with their mentees Jada and Gabby to learn how to make French macaron cookies.

Students learn how art and science intertwine at the CDC museum.



featured sponsor



INTOWN GYMNASTICS

In addition to providing summer camp scholarships for six of our Opportunity Partnership mentees for the past two summers, Intown Stars Gymnastics chose DEF as the beneficiary of their fall fundraiser, a gymnastics clinic with Olympic medalist Laurie Hernandez on October 19. For more information, go to intownstarswithlaurie.com



To honor DEF Board Chair Erin Braden's years of service, the Opportunity Partnership mentees worked with Decatur Makers to create a Little Free Library in her name. The group constructed, assembled, and painted the library that will be installed in front of the Trinity Walk apartment complex.



REACHING FOR GREAT HEIGHTS

We currently have 12 REACH Georgia scholarship mentees. Three or four eighth graders who show academic promise are chosen every year and are matched with adult mentors through their high school years. Jada Chester, Dylan Elder, Gabriell Smith, and Jayden Coe'r were selected in the 2018-19 school year. Upon graduation, the REACH mentees can receive college scholarships to Georgia schools—up to \$30,000! This year, our first REACH Georgia mentees graduated from high school in the Class of 2019.



THE FUN-DATIONS OF LITERACY

Kindergarten is the building block to elementary learning – the time when students start the foundations of their reading and writing skills. By using the Orton Gillingham Approach, CSD kindergarten teachers are trained to teach literacy to all types of learners. Through a DEF grant, the kindergarten team at Glennwood purchased individual white boards for their classrooms so that each student can practice dictation, handwriting, and sound awareness.



why I give

When DEF first started, employees were asked to donate \$1 per paycheck. I saw the wonderful effects of the first small grants in the classrooms, for teachers, and students. I get so excited to continue to be a part of the growth of grants and the number students and teachers whose lives are changed forever.

– Linda Nalley, retired CSD paraprofessional and DEF’s first Step Up Circle Individual Member

ADVENTURE REQUIRES ORGANIZATION

The Renfroe Middle School (RMS) connection “Adventure Quest” is a super cool class that teaches kids outdoor skills like cycling, erecting a tent, and orienteering. This requires a lot of equipment, but storage at RMS is in short supply. Through a DEF grant, PE teacher Christie Chalberg purchased wall mounts for the bikes that transformed the classroom’s storage space from cluttered to clear.





WINNONA PARK OUTDOOR MAKERS SPACE

Everybody knows that kindergarteners need outdoor time. Winnona Park kindergarten teacher Maleea March saw that her students could benefit from some simple tools to help them explore their natural environment. With a DEF grant, she purchased supplies as well as a storage facility to keep them in. The tools and gadgets fuel their imaginations and encourage group exploration and play. Having the storage makes transitions to and from recess a breeze, and allows other classes to enjoy the equipment.



connect

grants

DEF funded **37** teacher innovation grants totaling \$45,000 and supported every school in the district in the 2018-2019 school year.



SUMMER IS FOR FUN

With the help of a Special Education Summer Grant (SES), CSD students Audrey Trujillo (left) and Katie O'Keefe attended a week at sleepaway camps. They participated in lots of fun camp activities and made new friends. They were two of 25 CSD students who received SES grants to have new experiences during the summer months.

25 special education summer grants funded, totaling \$11,500



F.AVE FIFTH GRADERS ARE GLOWING

After seeing how Sphero Robot balls got middle and high school students excited about computer science and coding, F.AVE teacher Whitney Ricker knew she needed some for her own students. With the help of a DEF grant, she purchased everything she needed to create engaging STEM projects that give students the opportunity to learn and develop their coding skills in enLIGHTening ways. The students' reviews of the new equipment are glowing!



“Real science happens when students are excited about what they’re learning – when they start making connections between what they’re learning and real-world scenarios.”

— Maria Bachman, RMS Science Teacher



HAIR-RAISING HAPPENINGS IN 8TH GRADE SCIENCE

Eighth-grade students may be notoriously hard to impress, but RMS science teacher Maria Bachman knew that a Van de Graaff generator would engage her students and get her science classes excited about electricity and its properties. This hands-on scientific tool provides lots of classroom activities that bring scientific concepts like opposite forces, currents, and lightning alive for the students.



COLLABORATION CHANGES PERCEPTIONS

Students at DHS participated in a two-day workshop with artist Lavie Raven. Through social-emotional prompts, they worked in groups to discuss big topics like life, family, and hardships. They wrote poetry expressing common emotions or goals that they chose as a group. They used the themes that emerged from that exercise to create graffiti art. By teaching students to engage with people different from themselves over topics that impact their community, it helps them to find their commonalities and to see past barriers like race that often divide us.



DHS student Nashon Smith shakes hands with civil rights icon and Georgia Congressman John Lewis as fellow students look on during their Close Up trip in D.C.

CLOSE UP IN D.C.

In February, more than 50 Decatur High School students traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the Close Up Program – an educational trip to our nation’s capitol to learn about our government and how to be a civically involved citizen. Through the students’ fundraising efforts as well as \$12,000 in financial support from DEF, this group was our biggest and most diverse group yet. According to Jennifer Gonzalez, Close-Up trip coordinator, there are 100 students interested in attending this year!



50
high school students traveled to D.C.



Support from DEF results in students seeing themselves as valued and worthy of this type of experience, and they stretch to excellence. This means we get to go to DC with a student group that looks like the beautifully diverse Decatur community.”

– Jennifer Gonzalez, DHS social studies teacher



why I give

“I give to DEF because DEF has supported me and my classroom projects. I participate in the payroll giving program because it allows me to impact a wider spectrum of kids –

my donation benefits kids all over the district, not just the kids in my classroom.”

– Nick Brooks, F.AVE music teacher and payroll giving program participant

connect

scholarships

At the close of every school year, we honor some of Decatur High School's hardest-working seniors with college scholarships at our Celebration of Excellence. This year, through the generosity of our donors, we added four new scholarships, allowing us to award 29 seniors with scholarships totaling more than **\$75,450.**



Photo: Arthur Ratliff

LAWRENCE AND GERTRUDE PAXTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Founded by Decatur resident and DEF volunteer and mentor Lynn Paxton in memory of her parents, this scholarship was awarded to Kelly Gordon for her integrity, a strong work ethic, resilience in the face of obstacles, and a drive to improve her community with a focus on social welfare. *Scholarship recipient Kelly Gordon stands with her mother (right), Lynn Paxton, and Lynn's daughter Katie.*

DEF EQUITY IN ACTION SCHOLARSHIP



As a founding officer of Decatur's first Black Student Union, and a recipient of the Coretta Scott King Award, Kenya Oliver was an obvious choice to receive the Equity in Action Scholarship which is awarded to a senior who consistently demonstrates a commitment to equity, works to promote social justice among his/her peers, and strives to combat racism.

Scholarship recipient Kenya Oliver embraces former DHS Principal Arlethea Williams.



Photo: Lynette Davis



Photos: Arthur Ratliff

COURAGE TO SUCCEED SCHOLARSHIP

The DEF Courage to Succeed Scholarship was created in honor of DEF Executive Director Gail Rothman's tenth year leading the Foundation. The scholarship was awarded to one female and one male student who exhibit resilience, tenacity, and determination in the face of adversity. Seniors Aleesha Patrick and Jared Dyche were the deserving recipients of this new scholarship.

DEF Executive Director Gail Rothman with scholarship recipients Jared Dyche and Aleesha Patrick.



Photo: Lynette Davis

KENNEDY SEGARS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

A scholarship was established to honor the life of Kennedy Segars, a DHS graduate from the Class of 2018. Kennedy's bright future was tragically ended by a drunk driver. She attended a historically black college and had aspirations of becoming a lawyer. Her memorial scholarship was awarded to Mario Bemby for his demonstrated leadership and his commitment to community service.

Scholarship recipient Mario Bemby stands with his mother, Kennedy Segar's mother, Mawuli Davis, Jana Johnson-Davis, and Ingra Myrick.



teacher awards

We have amazing teachers in Decatur, and it's important to acknowledge the great work that they do every day. DEF partners with City Schools of Decatur to honor outstanding teachers several times throughout the school year.

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Teachers of the Year are recognized at the October school board meeting where DEF presents them with a gift from the community. The teachers of the year for 2018-2019 are: Stacey Labouchere, College Heights ECLC; Kelly Nichols, Clairemont; Amelia Copp, Glennwood; Malisa Henderson, Oakhurst; Latonya Henry, Westchester; Katie Woodbridge, Winnona Park; Michael Holliday, FAVE; Johnnie Stroy, Renfroe Middle School; and Jennifer Gonzalez, Decatur High School.

EXTRA MILE AWARD

In the spring, students write essays about how their teachers go the extra mile, and the winning essays are announced on CSD's Opening Day in July. This year's recognized teachers:

Dana Wertz (pictured) – Westchester teacher nominated by Shilah Ferguson

Julie Parker – Westchester teacher nominated by Stefan Ferguson

Desiree Cabrices – Westchester teacher nominated by Cora Phelps

Michelle Reynolds – Glennwood faculty nominated by Naomi Lewis

Shronda Edwards – FAVE teacher nominated by Gavin Violante

Artesha Chaney – FAVE teacher nominated by Isla Martini and Houser Pugh

Angie Prophet – FAVE faculty nominated by Luke Wietsma, Fiona Sullivan, and Claudia Crenshaw

Johnnie Stroy – Renfroe teacher nominated by Leah Cox



Photo: Greg White

CLARENCE STRICKLAND MAKE A DIFFERENCE AWARD

We annually honor teachers who have shown compassion and care for a student in a time of great need. The award is named for its first recipient, DHS custodian Clarence Strickland, shown here with this year's five recipients: Kirk Setzer, Winnona Park; Gloria Ann Alexander, Clairemont; Jenna Black standing in for Phyllis Primus, DHS; Laura Pitts, Winnona Park; and Cheryl Nahmias, DHS. The awards are presented to the teachers at the annual Celebration of Excellence in May.

coordinate

Through its network of community partners, local businesses, individuals, and City Schools of Decatur, DEF organizes a number of events that support its mission and funds its causes. Our community partnerships allow us to have more impact, address more need, and reach more students.

\$216,000 raised from six major events



Photo: Hector Amador

MEAD ROAD MARDI GRAS

Clarinet, tubas and drums, oh my! This annual home-grown community parade and party has supported music and arts grants for CSD schools since 2014! Last year, the festive event donated \$10,100 to DEF! Start working on your costumes now – the next parade is February 8, 2020.

This event is listed as a grant in DEF financial documents.

\$10K raised from each

BOOK SALE

Every Labor Day, we host the Reader-to-Reader Book Sale at the Decatur Book Festival. The sale promotes literacy for all ages and brings in important funds that go right back to helping Decatur kids. Thanks to everyone who donated books and volunteered, we brought in \$10,000 last year!





TOUR DECATUR

For almost 20 years, DEF has hosted Decatur's biggest 5K event.

The race brings out families and teams who walk and run together every year. Some of our student athletes run both the 5K AND the one-mile fun run, and the tot trot has become a big crowd favorite. As DEF's biggest fundraiser, the event is an important spring tradition that brought in more than \$80,000 last year.

\$80K
raised

water trailer

In our effort to be more environmentally responsible, DEF partnered with some amazing people at Corrective Chiropractic, Decatur Makers, and the Decatur Sustainability Board to create a water trailer. We introduced it at Tour deCatur to provide water via compostable water cups instead of disposable plastic water bottles. To date, the trailer has replaced 2,200 plastic water bottles at three events. Find out how to rent the trailer for your next outdoor event at tinyurl.com/def-water



EAT AND GREET

\$8K
raised

JOE'S BENEFIT

\$21K
raised



SUPPER & SIPS

For 10 years, DEF has hosted a fall party to help raise funds to support Decatur's kids. What started out as an intimate backyard affair grew into a community event that now showcases some of the city's best local chefs – last year's event included Taiyo Ramen, Steinbecks, Leon's, Scout, and Butter & Cream as well as drinks provided by Decatur Package and Victory Beer. More than \$87,000 was raised to support the Opportunity Partnership Mentoring Program, DEF Teacher Innovation Grants, and other initiatives that impact Decatur's kids.

new date This year, Supper & Sips is moving to November! We heard you – October has become too crowded – so this year's event is November 14. For ticket information, visit defsupper.com



\$87K
raised

collaborate

DEF is tackling some of the serious issues facing children in our community: food insecurity, racial inequity, opportunity inequity, and behavioral health. Solving big problems requires working with others to combine resources and share information and expertise. We are pleased to work in a community with so much compassion and ingenuity. Look at what we've been able to accomplish in the past year:

behavioral health

JOE'S FUND SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DECATUR STUDENT CENTER

The students at Decatur High School now have the Decatur Student Center, a dedicated space in the school to support their nonacademic needs. The Center is a safe place where students can come to talk to a counselor or to just chill out. The Center is currently offering a number of group sessions that cover a variety of issues and staffs a part-time counselor. The Center is funded in large part by Joe's Fund – a DEF fund created to honor the life of DHS graduate Joe Bodine who lost his battle with addiction in 2016.



featured partner



As part of their "Be Rich" campaign, Decatur City Church donated a gift of \$25,000 to help make mental health services accessible to low income students.

<p>MIRROR MIRROR ON THE WALL</p> <p>FORMER GSU INTERN AMENAH WILL USE MUSIC AND STREET ART TO EXPLORE HOW POP CULTURE AND MEDIA MAY IMPACT HOW WE VIEW OURSELVES.</p>	<p>TRUE TO YOU</p> <p>FORMER GSU INTERN JONATHAN FOCUSES ON THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES THAT MANY STUDENTS FACE IN NAVIGATING IDENTITY, PURPOSE, ASPECTS OF IDENTITY AND SOLE SPACES FOR THOSE TRYING TO FIND THEIR TRUE VOICES. WITH LEARNING SKILLS TO NAVIGATE RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO MAY STRUGGLE TO UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE.</p>	<p>GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME!</p> <p>IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS FOR SUCCESS BY LEARNING HOW TO GET ORGANIZED, PRIORITIZE WORK, AND STUDY EFFICIENTLY.</p>
<p>THE ART OF EXPRESSION</p> <p>WORKING WITH OUR HANDS AND MINDS, YOU WILL DEVELOP SELF-AWARENESS AND LEARN TO EXPLORE AND EXPRESS EMOTIONS THROUGH ART. NO ART EXPERIENCE OR ABILITY IS NEEDED!</p>	<p>DECATUR STUDENT CENTER</p>	<p>REDUCING STRESS WITH RILEY THE DOG</p> <p>This educational group will help you understand your own feelings, your feelings of others, and how to manage stress (anxiety, depression, and conflict).</p>
<p>RUN THE WORLD (GIRLS)</p> <p>FORMER GSU INTERN AMENAH'S GROUP WILL FOCUS ON EMPOWERING, UPLIFTING, AND LEARNING SELF-ADVOCACY.</p>	<p>healthy relationships</p> <p>FORMER GSU INTERN JD HELPS YOU INVESTIGATE AND NAVIGATE WHAT MAKES UP A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP, DYNAMICS OF A RELATIONSHIP, HOW TO HANDLE BREAK-UPS, AND MORE.</p>	<p>Money 101</p> <p>I learn how to manage and grow your money. This 8-week group will help you learn how to plan for your financial future.</p>

A variety of groups are available to students at the Decatur Student Center.



DECATUR DINNERS

Together with the city and key community groups, DEF sponsored Decatur Dinners in August. More than 1,200 people attended 100 potluck dinners across the city to break bread together, meet their neighbors, and talk about race and equity. These conversations were intended to be the first step in helping our community to see things from a different perspective and to learn how to support one another despite our differences.

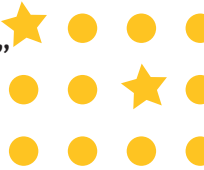
racial inequity

DIVERSITY TRAINING

We collaborated with City Schools of Decatur (CSD) to offer “Courageous Conversations” training for all 800 CSD employees. In conjunction, DEF has also invested \$42,000 in affiliate training so that there will be a trained CSD employee at every school who can facilitate courageous conversations and resolve issues of inequity. DEF also provided the two-day training to 55 community members, made possible through donations matched by a gift from Decatur City Church. If you’re interested in attending a future training session, please visit decatureducationfoundation.org/equity.

“The experience will powerfully change your personal perspective, and the training equips you with a framework and vocabulary that enables open, honest, and productive dialog around racism and its destructive effects on our community. As one of only two men in a 50+ person training, I would especially encourage my male counterparts to consider attending; I promise you will find the experience worthy of the time invested.”

— Todd Ohlandt, Board Chair of DEF



food insecurity



new school on the block

DEF has supported Talley Street in several ways: purchasing sensory materials for the school’s occupational therapist and establishing a resource closet that’s being sponsored by Keller Knapp Realty. The closet will be stocked with food and supplies for students who need them.

Student helps organize donated food. Photo taken by DHS Photography Club member Abigail Duda.



LIGHTEN THE LOAD

While it’s not always obvious in Decatur, there are students at every school in the district who experience food insecurity – the lack of reliable access to a sufficient amount of affordable, nutritious food. For students who rely on having two meals a day at school, weekends and school breaks can be difficult. Last year we launched Lighten the Load which enlists the help of our community to help families in need. Neighborhood groups associated with each elementary school signed up for a school break and filled 80+ boxes with food to help local families. The program continues with different churches and neighborhood groups signing up to coordinate the donation, collection, and distribution of 80 boxes’ worth of food for each of the weeklong school breaks.

collaborate with us

If your group would like to sign up, connect with us at decatureducationfoundation.org/lightentheLoad.

500

boxes of food delivered last year

collaborate

ARTS INFUSION PROJECTS BLOSSOM

Last spring, DEF funded three Arts Infusion Grants at three CSD elementary schools. At Glennwood Elementary, first graders worked with artist Jeff Mathers to create an environmental sculpture reflecting their study of the life-cycle of plants. At Westchester Elementary, with guidance from movement artist Ericka Shannon, third graders wrote and performed a play that combined lessons about math concepts and the shelter needs of Native Americans. Textile artist Marquetta Johnson worked with Oakhurst first graders to create a Sensory Cart with beautifully decorated snow globes, fluffy pillows, kaleidoscopes, personal harps, and other items that helped them learn about and appreciate the diversity of learning, mobility, and sensory differences in their community.

Zara's Fund, which was established to honor the life of Zara Yee Hawthorne, an Oakhurst kindergartener and art lover, supports arts infusion projects in CSD schools.



what is arts fusion?

Arts-infused learning happens when teachers and visiting artists work together to plan classroom lessons using the arts to engage the students in learning about academic subjects. Arts Infusion engages all types of learners, promotes creative thinking, builds connections across and between academic subjects, and develops problem-solving skills.



Westchester students build the frame of a homeless shelter as part of their project.

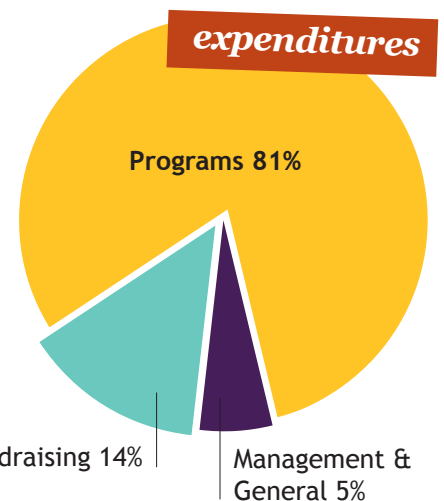
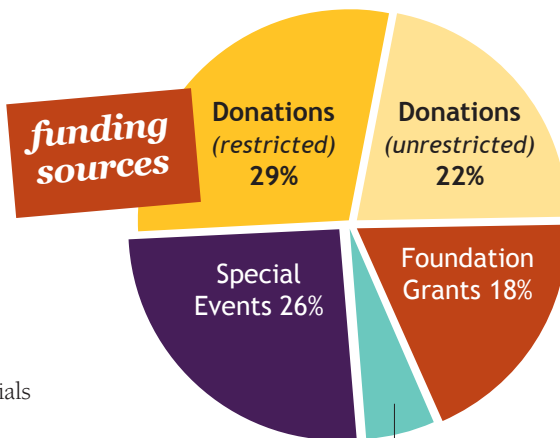


Textile artist Marquetta Johnson works with an Oakhurst student.

financial snapshot

Total funds invested in our kids this year: **\$818,149.**

More detailed financial information including our FY19 Audited Financial Report will be posted at decatureducationfoundation.org/financials later this fall once completed.



Are You a Problem Solver?

join our community

In what way can you help DEF make a difference in the lives of Decatur's kids? As a mentor? Or maybe as a part of our Carpool Crew? Whatever your interests are, we've got a way for you to plug in and make a difference in our community.

step up circle

New this year: You or your business can join the DEF Step Up Circle to make an annual commitment to support DEF. Participants represent the best in our community and include current CSD families, alumni, community members, and Decatur businesses. Find a level that's right for you at decatureducationfoundation.org/stepupcircle.

"I believe deeply in the work that DEF does to support the children and teachers in our community. From collecting school supplies to providing grants for teachers, scholarships and mentorships for students and more, DEF enriches the lives of so many, and I am honored to support their mission."

— Amy Widener, DEF's first Step Up Circle Business Member



volunteer



mentor

Our Opportunity Partnership Program (now in its fourth year!) is in need of more adult mentors who can give 2-4 hours per month. Contact marie@decatureducationfoundation.org to get connected.

Like many nonprofits, we rely heavily on our volunteers. Whether you prefer to help out at events or on a weekly basis, we have ways for you to donate your valuable time to DEF. Find out more at decatureducationfoundation.org/volunteer.

ALUMNI

Are you a member of the proud alumni of Decatur High School? Connect with us to stay updated on reunion information and fellow classmates. Visit our table at the DHS Homecoming game on October 25 and sign up for our alumni newsletter! Not going to the game? You can submit your class updates at decatureducationfoundation.org/alumni



Decatur
Education
Foundation

During the 2018-2019 school year, our community said yes to supporting the work of the Decatur Education Foundation in so many different ways. If you are inspired by the stories in these pages, consider making a gift, in any amount, so we can ensure that all children in Decatur have opportunities to reach their full potential.

Help us connect the dots.

donate

decatureducationfoundation.org/donate

volunteer

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mentor

decatureducationfoundation.org/mentoring

learn more

decatureducationfoundation.org

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**Members who
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James Cobb
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Karen Paty

*Completed board service in 2018

**Ex-officio

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