



DECATUR CITY SCHOOLS
FOUNDATION

Year in Review

Oct. 1, 2022 - Sept. 30, 2023

Our mission is to promote and enhance educational
excellence for all students in Decatur City Schools.





>>> MARCH MADNESS <<<

March Madness is a competitive reading initiative of the Million Word Challenge. We recognize the top class at each of our elementary and middle schools. The class with the most average words read per student earns a pizza and cookie party. It is tons of fun and these students enjoy the friendly competition and celebration (while increasing their reading proficiency)!



STATE REPRESENTATIVES FUND

>>> DISTRICTWIDE INITIATIVES <<<

Representative Terri Collins secured funding for the new Pre-EPIC program at the Career Academies of Decatur, Pre-ACT for middle and junior high students, K-3 Mastery of Standards software, and an item for the Excel Center. Representative Parker Moore secured funding for new equipment and supplies for the Scholars' Bowl program. We are so grateful for their support and look forward to witnessing the impact that this funding will have!



>>> SCHOLARS' BOWL <<<

We were pleased to secure funding to expand and enhance the scholars' bowl program districtwide. This program provides students with the opportunity to broaden their knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, fine-tune collaborative skills, and gain access to scholarships. This program is made available to students in grades 4th through 12th.

Your Generosity in Action!



>>> DARC <<<

We are proud to support the Decatur Austin Robotics Coalition. This year they won the BEST award, best robot, most photogenic robot, and 3rd place marketing at the Tennessee Valley Best competition at Calhoun Community College. They advanced to SOUTH's BEST at the University of North Alabama in December and finished in the top 16 out of 60 teams from 5 states.



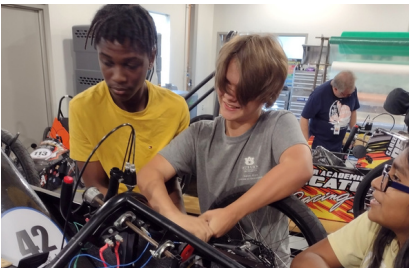
>>> CAREER ACADEMIES' EQUIPMENT <<<

Senator Arthur Orr secured funding for much-needed equipment for the Building, Automotive, Precision, Welding, and Culinary Academies along with a sound system for the new Career Academies of Decatur's cafetorium. These items will continue to help prepare our students for college and careers!



>>> MILLION WORD CHALLENGE <<<

We love celebrating reading success! Students who read 1 million words during the school year are rewarded with a Million Word Reader t-shirt and are recognized during their awards day. 3rd through 8th graders who exceed 1M words not only receive a t-shirt but also a gift card! Increased independent reading leads to more exposure to vocabulary words and better comprehension!



»» **ENGINEERING ACADEMY** ««

The engineering academy offers students the chance to gain valuable skills that can be applied to a wide range of industries. Whether they're interested in designing and building products, or developing new manufacturing processes, there are many opportunities to explore. Thanks to a generous donor, we were able to expand these offerings with a new 3D printer, 2 soldering stations and a new vacuum station.



»» **INSTITUTE DAY** ««

We are grateful for all DCS faculty and staff and enjoy showing them our appreciation. Because of the generosity of our donors, we were thrilled to provide all DCS employees bags filled with \$50 worth of coupons for food, school supplies, and services around Decatur! Items ranged from a free carwash to sushi, ice cream, and post-it notes.



»» **TELLO DRONES** ««

We were thankful to receive funding to provide 3rd graders districtwide with the opportunity to participate in drone clubs. This is a great additional extra-curricular STEM activity for our students. They will also strengthen their team-building skills and flex their competitive muscles as they compete later this spring in DCS's inaugural Drone competition.

Help Fuel Our Mission



»» **PRE-EPIC PROGRAM** ««

The Career Academies of Decatur is about to launch a new Pre-Excellence in Process Industrial Controls (EPIC) program in the fall of 2024. This will be available to students who are eager to earn their EPIC certification at Calhoun Community College. Process technicians are in high demand. This is an excellent career path and we are proud to support it!



»» **FRECKLE FRENZY** ««

Freckle is an excellent online math platform that provides self-paced exercises that are differentiated to meet the needs of each student. With its engaging lessons, Freckle encourages students to become independent learners and helps them build a strong foundation in math. We were thrilled to reward students last February who logged the most time on Freckle!



»» **GREENPOWER USA** ««

Greenpower is an exciting hands-on STEM activity where students learn to design, build, and race their battery-powered racecar. Decatur City Schools hosted Decatur's first regional Greenpower race in April of 2022 and have since expanded with another race in the fall. This program is available to students in 5th - 12th grades.

Impact Spotlight



Beth Hellebrand
Robotics Instructor
Scholars' Bowl Coach

As a teacher and academic coach at Decatur Middle School, I cannot fully express the gratitude I have for the DCS Foundation. The support that they have shown our districtwide robotics clubs and scholars' bowl teams has been outstanding.

For instance, as we worked towards making the DCS Middle School Robotics program more self-reliant, we began planning an annual Decatur Robotics Competition. However, funding was needed to get it started. The Foundation quickly contacted a generous donor and secured the needed funding. We will be piloting this competition this spring.

Our Scholars' Bowl program is a growing academic sport that we have competed in for many years. It is an amazing benefit to our students on so many levels. Thanks to the generosity of a Foundation donor, we were able to replace and add to our buzzer inventory and purchase additional practice materials.

I have seen both Robotics and Scholars Bowl make such a difference in my students' lives, but everything I have done with my students could not have been accomplished without the Foundation's help.

City Saver Update



The City Saver Card sale is a Foundation fundraiser that our outstanding students help with each fall. For every card sold, the school retains a portion of that sale. This year we were happy to give back \$7,008 of unrestricted funding to our schools.

To Our Donors



Ashley Ashwander
DCS Foundation, President
2023-2024

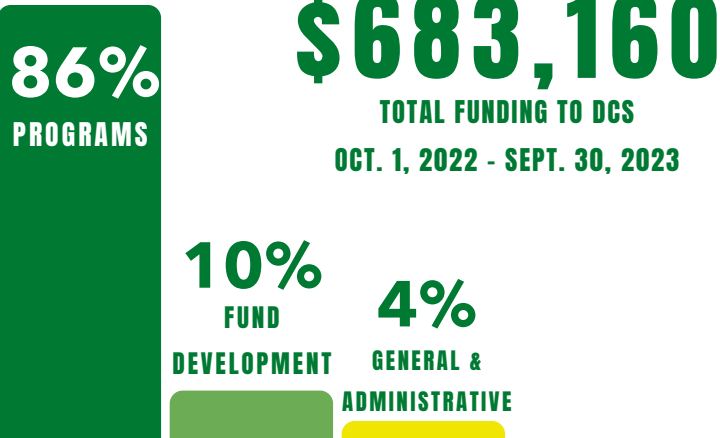
What an exciting time to be a part of the Decatur City Schools Foundation! On behalf of our incredible Foundation staff and board of directors, I would like to express our deepest gratitude for your continued support.

Together, we are helping carry out the Decatur City Schools' mission that every child attending our schools is college or career-ready upon graduation.

With your generosity, our Foundation has proudly completed the Believe Grow Achieve Campaign and we are excited to celebrate that milestone. We also look to a promising future with so many opportunities ahead for our students, including the Launch 2024 internship, newly implemented elementary Scholars' Bowl teams, and the growth of CAD (Career Academies of Decatur), just to name a few.

Thank you so much to every donor; you are truly making a difference in our community for many years to come. With your continued donations, we are carrying out the Foundation's mission to promote and enhance educational excellence for all students in Decatur City Schools.

Foundation Financials



*Total funding to DCS includes funds secured by DCSF but paid directly to DCS. Contact us at (256) 616-1734 for a copy of our Annual Audit or Form 990.

Believe. GROW. Achieve.

DISTINGUISHED PARTNER

\$250,000 - ABOVE

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DIAMOND PARTNER

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PLATINUM PARTNER

\$50,000 - \$99,999

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*2023 Champion of
Education Award*



Pictured left to right: Foundation Executive Director, Stevi Price; Senator Arthur Orr; Award Recipient, Doug Shoemaker and Foundation Board President, Drei Marthaler

During the Decatur City Schools' End of the Year Celebration, we had the privilege of recognizing Mr. Doug Shoemaker as the 2023 State Senator Arthur Orr Champion of Education. After serving as a Decatur Austin Robotics Coalition (DARC) mentor for 15 years and an elementary tutor, he truly embodies what it means to be a champion of education. We were also honored to have Senator Arthur Orr present to help us recognize Mr. Shoemaker. Thank you Senator Orr for your outstanding support of our schools and thank you Mr. Shoemaker for your commitment to helping our students succeed!