

Decatur City Schools Foundation

# YEAR IN REVIEW

October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022



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

# Our Work



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. 3rd through 8th graders who exceed 1M words not only receive a t-shirt, but also a gift card! This year we were fortunate enough to have 140 students read 1 million words or more and a student from Austinville Elementary and one from Austin Middle School read 5 million words!



End-of-the-Year Celebration

DCS faculty and staff are super heroes! After the rollercoaster of initial COVID struggles, we knew DCS employees needed a little lift. We were pleased to celebrate them with an end-of-the-year celebration in May of 2022. Lunch was provided to all and DCS leadership recognized and honored retirees.



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, earn a pizza and cookie party. It is tons of fun and these students enjoy the friendly competition and celebration (while increasing their reading proficiency)!



DCS STEM Bus

Rollin' into STEM is a new DCS initiative. This mobile STEM lab or "STEM Bus" will serve our 12 elementary schools and local neighborhoods. It will have the capacity to provide learning opportunities for 45 students at a time. Our goal is to expose students to enhanced STEM education and make learning come to life through hands-on activities.



Career Academies Furniture

We are proud to provide funding for furniture that will go into the new building at the Career Academies of Decatur. These furniture pieces will provide multiple functions for mixed use spaces and that's a major plus! When parent or industry nights are hosted there, they have the ability to change the room to accommodate the need.



DCS Institute Day

In August, DCS leadership hosts an event to kick-off the new school year. This year they asked us to make it extra special by providing a surprise. We were certainly up for the challenge! With the generous support of our donors, our school liaison committee put together an outstanding goodie bag filled with items such as a free carwash to delicious restaurant gift cards and school supplies!

# Our Work



Automotive Academy

With an increase of automotive manufacturing in Alabama, we know continued investment in career technology is a must! This year we were thrilled to secure funding for the Career Academies of Decatur's Automotive Academy. These funds provided them the opportunity to purchase much needed tools and supplies.



Wetland's Edge  
Environmental Center

Wetland's Edge Environment Center (WEEC) is the culmination of a partnership between IVXP (formerly BP) and Decatur City Schools to offer students a chance to learn about nature "up close and personal." All of our schools have the opportunity to visit WEEC and experience what this program has to offer.



Robotics

CoderZ is an online coding platform that combines STEM, computer science, and critical life skills. This program provides award-winning STEM courses that make learning feel like a game! Kids develop hard and soft skills as they play their way through fun bite-sized missions. The 3D robots bring coding to life.



Teacher Mini-Grants

It is always enjoyable visiting all 17 of our schools. It is even more enjoyable delivering checks to each of them! We are happy to facilitate the Senator Arthur Orr teacher min-grants. This year we provided support for 400 teachers. Applications for this open late spring.



Greenpower USA

Greenpower is an exciting hands-on STEM activity where students learn to design, build and race their own battery powered racecar. Decatur City Schools hosted Decatur's first regional Greenpower race in April of 2022 and we look forward to hosting this event again this April.



School Entrances

Thanks to the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce's Partners in Education and Bonnie Plants, we were able to spruce up the front entrances of all of our schools. It made for a nice welcoming not only for the faculty, staff and students, but for the families touring our elementary schools for kindergarten orientation night!

# Our Financials

**90%**  
Programs

**\$786,664\***

**Total Funding to DCS**  
**October 1, 2021- September 30, 2022**

**7%**  
Fund  
Development

**3%**  
General &  
Administrative

\*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.

## To Our Donors



Drei Marthaler  
2022-2023 President

The Foundation staff and board of directors would like to express our deepest gratitude for your continued support. The special projects and programs outlined in this report would not be possible without your generous contributions.

The economic downturn has threatened the existence of many nonprofits nationwide. While most nonprofits hope to only sustain and survive, the Foundation has thrived. To be able to reach our fundraising goal for the Believe Grow Achieve Campaign during these recessionary times is a truly incredible accomplishment. I attribute this to the hard work of our staff, as well as the generosity and commitment to education in our community. It is an honor serve on the Foundation board of directors and witness these qualities firsthand.

Thank you to all of our donors for having the confidence in the Foundation to make a difference in our community. With your support we will continue to promote and enhance educational opportunities for all DCS students.

**CAREER ACADEMIES OF DECATUR**

Tour the Career Academies of Decatur from the comfort of your home! Simply hover over the QR code as if to snap a picture. The link will appear.



# Impact Spotlight



## Rollin' Into STEM



Faith Plunkett  
Elementary Instructional Technology

I had the pleasure of visiting Osceola County Schools in Florida a few years ago. They had a mobile STEM lab that was utilized at their schools and throughout their community. I quickly fell in love with this initiative and was eager to bring it to Decatur City Schools (DCS).

Not long after my visit, Governor Kay Ivey passed a set of digital literacy mandates ensuring that all elementary students received computer science education and all secondary students had the option to take a course in their school.

After the passage of this legislation, I was hopeful to get our very own STEM bus rollin'. I quickly received approval from DCS leadership. Then I worked with the foundation on securing funds.

We are hoping to have the bus completed by the end of March. It will primarily provide STEM experiences to our elementary students. Additionally, it will serve as a hands-on professional development model for our teachers. We have also partnered with several companies in the area to provide workforce development to parents while their students are experiencing STEM on the bus!

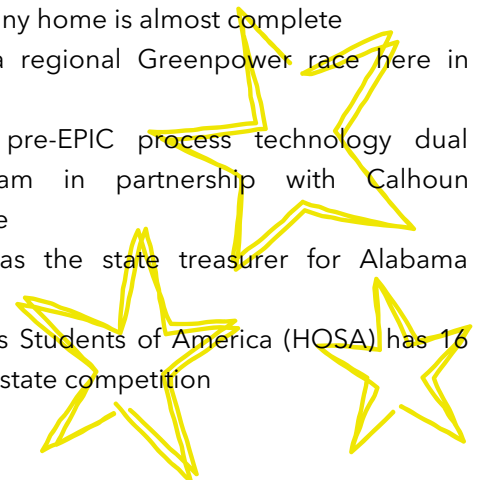
I am very excited to finish this project and cannot wait to see the impact it will have on our students and community!



The faculty and staff of the Career Academies of Decatur (CAD) are working diligently to prepare the next generation of our workforce. CAD provides multiple ways for a student to gain industry relevant expertise and certifications. They can also earn credits towards a two or four year degree.

The Foundation has had the privilege of partnering with CAD to establish and sustain these opportunities. Here are their recent accomplishments:

- Increased College and Career Readiness to 93%, up from 61% in 2018
- Addition of HVAC dual enrollment opportunity in partnership with Calhoun Community College
- Establishment of a Heavy Equipment Operation Academy
- NASA HUNCH program where parts for the International Space Station are manufactured in the Precision Machining Academy
- Construction on a tiny home is almost complete
- Establishment of a regional Greenpower race here in Decatur
- Up and coming pre-EPIC process technology dual enrollment program in partnership with Calhoun Community College
- Student selected as the state treasurer for Alabama SkillsUSA
- Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) has 16 finalists heading to state competition



# Believe. GROW. Achieve.

CAMPAIGN 2019 - 2024

## DISTINGUISHED PARTNER

**\$250,000 - ABOVE**

Senator Arthur Orr

## DIAMOND PARTNER

**\$100,000 - \$249,999**

3M Foundation

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Representative Terri Collins

## PLATINUM PARTNER

**\$50,000 - \$99,999**

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## GOLD PARTNER

**\$10,000 - \$49,999**

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\* In-Kind Donation

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**\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Anonymous

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**\$1,000 - \$4,999**

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## PARTNER

**UP TO \$999**

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**\$500 & UP**

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**\$100 - \$249**

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Decatur Morgan Hospital

Julie Perry, Redstone Family Realty

### HONOR ROLL

**\$50 - \$99**

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Clint Peters, EXP Realty

Joy Carton, Parker Real Estate

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In Honor of Roger Schabel

by Julie Perry

In Honor of Ken & Kelly Hayes

by Julie Perry

In Honor of Jackson & Amelia Tanner

by Ronnie & Vicki Dukes

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In Memory of Dr. Charles Howard

by Ran & Betty Pickell



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