
Andrew F. Cummings
Drug Court Director

Fredericka S. Dent
Deputy Drug Court Director



PRESS CONTACTS:

Shannon Zagorin
Special Projects Coordinator
Phone: 404.371.2206
snzagorin@dekalbcountyga.gov

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Drug Court Foundation provides an exploration into the world of books for at-risk youth through its literacy project.

DECATUR – The foundation for the DeKalb County Drug Court through funds provided by a Decatur Rotary community grant will host a book club over the next year. The book club is designed to serve middle and high school aged children of recovering addicts within the drug court program. The \$2000 grant was awarded in May and the first book club meeting took place this month.

Research consistently points to literacy as a major protective factor for at-risk youth. The book club is a way to engage the participants through the use of reading. It is a resource to expose youth to other reading material; outside of conventional reading as required by schools. The formation of a book club through the literacy project will allow the participants to develop pro-social and communication skills with other members of their peer group. They may share similar interest other than simply being at-risk. The book club participants will also be able to communicate around similar cultural experiences, school activities, college and other future goals. The focus is to create a natural environment in which the participants feel free to pursue questions relating to life experiences as they occur in literature. It further allows for creative expression through free choice in reading material, journal writing, and communication.

The DeKalb County Drug Court foundation is the non-profit entity to the DeKalb County Drug Court (DCDC) program run by Superior Court. It is a two-year judicially supervised drug treatment/alternative sentencing program. The program serves non-violent, felony-level offenders whose criminal behavior is driven by drug addiction. The non-profit component holds an annual gift drive for the children of those in the program, runs a clothes/personal care items closet to assist the participants, and actively engages in community outreach efforts.

The book club will meet at different locations throughout the next year exposing the members to unique literary experiences. Activities will include book festivals, movie screenings, and author meet and greets. All materials will be paid for through the Decatur Rotary grant as well as other community partners, such as Little Shop of Stories, The Bakery of Cakes and Ale, and Kroger.

If you are interested in providing support for the Literacy Project or other DeKalb County Drug Court Foundation endeavors please contact Shannon Zagorin at snzagorin@dekalbcountyga.gov or 404.371.2206.

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