



Savannah - Chatham County
Local. Outreach. Volunteer. Educators.

L.O.V.E.
MENTORS

Helping
Children
Learn

www.lovementors.org

December, 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

While 2021 presented a challenge to schools, students, and mentors, the L.O.V.E. Leadership Team continued to work with the Board of Education and individual schools and camps. We donated books to schools, sent children to summer camps, and launched a virtual mentoring program.

You will see here there are more things in the works -- holiday book programs, after-school tutoring, summer camp plans.

In January there will be a brain-storming session with representative mentors from all schools in a focused RELAUNCH L.O.V.E. PROGRAM so that

happy
holidays!

we will be ready to react in the autumn when schools begin.

We will not know for several months what the schools will be doing, but we will be ready with a flexible plan. We trust our mentors will be there once again as the children will need our one-on-one mentoring more than ever.

HOLIDAY BOOK PROGRAM

By: Ginny Pierce

What would life be like without books? Books are essential for opening minds to reading and learning through pictures, letters, sounds, words, stories, facts, and history that increase knowledge and enjoyment.



L.O.V.E. being a non-profit organization, was able to set up a discount purchasing account with Scholastic through its Literacy Partnership Program several years ago and each year I receive a large catalog of books and collections to select for our program.

Using the Scholastic catalog, I have been purchasing all the books for the Fall and Spring Book Fairs for several years that is held for mentors, enabling them to select books for their students that are at each student's appropriate reading level.

Last year, due to the Covid pandemic we were not able to mentor in person at any of our schools so we did not have a Book Fair, but wanting to keep the L.O.V.E. exposure and commitment with the schools we decided to purchase books that Site Director liaisons at each school desired.

This year we are still faced with the restrictions on our face-to-face mentoring sessions in the schools due to the continuing Covid pandemic. However, the L.O.V.E. Board decided to continue supporting our Title One school's and selected all first-grade students to receive a book for the holidays. Most of these young children have very little reading materials and books are a treasure to them.

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Taking advantage of the Scholastic \$1.00 book specials, I was able to purchase 3 books for each of the 670 first grade students in nine schools. Each student in first grade will receive a holiday zip lock bag containing the same three books:



- “The Caring Me I Want to Be”,
 - “Pete the Cat: Pete’s Big Lunch”,
 - and a non-fiction book titled
 - “What Can Insects Do?”.
- Each bag will have the L.O.V.E. bear book label and we are asking the teachers to personalize the bags with each student’s name on the label.



Happy Holidays Children!

NEW AFTER-SCHOOL VIRTUAL MENTORING PROGRAM

By: Bill Monroe



Although volunteers are still not allowed in the schools, the children need our help. Last year we ran a pilot program at four schools where we used Zoom calls to mentor children virtually. We learned a lot in this pilot and feel confident that we can, in fact, help our children by

using virtual technology. Starting in January we will partner with the volunteer group Loop It UP which is helping to run an after school program in some of our schools. We have had a great response to our request for volunteers in this project with over 25 L.O.V.E. mentors willing to work virtually with targeted students in the 2nd and 3rd grades.

The program will be supported in person by Loop It UP members who will be on site and will take place late in the afternoon from 4:30 - 5:15 p.m.

We will start the program at LOW Elementary in early January and expand to Haven later in the month or early February.

A zoom/technology training session is being planned for mid-December. It is our intention to expand to other schools once we get up and running.



And YES, we could use more volunteers to expand the program. Just email Bill Monroe at: wjmonroe@bellsouth.net or call him at: 912 656-4498 to join the program.

SUMMER CAMP CONTINUES

By: Carol Black



L.O.V.E typically rewards scholarships to students we mentor and their siblings to attend area summer camps. Due to the pandemic the 2021 school year was not a typical school year. However, we were aware that

the need for summer camp with some academic focus was needed more than ever. The board decided it was best to turn to two camps that we have worked with for many years: Frank Callen Boys and Girls Club and the West Broad Street YMCA. Both camps are full day camps that provide at least one meal a day.



Importantly, they also provide reading and math instruction as well as fun activities. The camp's directors were tasked with selecting students they felt could most benefit from a scholarship.

In addition to camp scholarships, we provided funds to help support an additional staff member at each of our largest camp partners, Frank Callen and West Broad Y, to provide concentrated educational assistance for the children.

THANK YOU TO OUR LOYAL DONORS

By: Kevin Dutton



Even though we have not been able to mentor in person for going on two years, we still have been able to provide over 3,000 books for the schools we support. We have also been able to send up to 50 students to summer camps at either Frank

Callen Boys and Girls Club or the Westside YMCA.

All of this was made possible by our wonderful sponsors that have continued to support us through the COVID shutdowns.



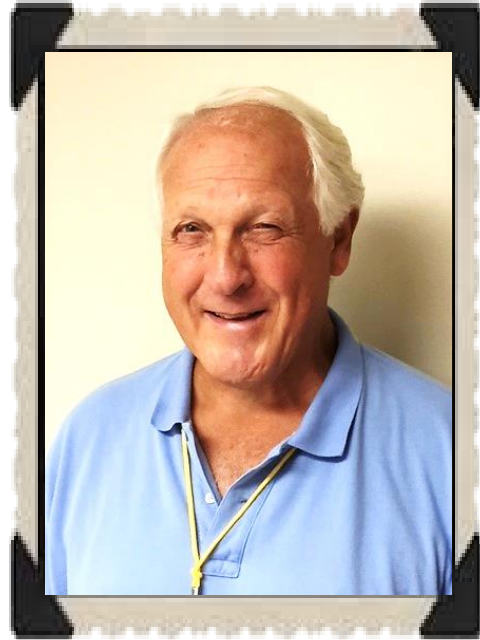
We received around \$20,000 during 2020 and 2021 combined. Our major donors through this period are the Kiwanis Club of Skidaway Island, the Lyn Stacie Getz Foundation, Gulfstream Aerospace, Constellation Inc., and many personal contributions. I just wanted to give a shout out to all of these wonderful sponsors without whom we would not be able to accomplish all that we do at L.O.V.E.

STAND BY, L.O.V.E. MENTORS

By: Dan Malachuk

For the foreseeable future, the school system is not likely to add to the risks they are trying to manage by allowing volunteers into their buildings, perhaps especially volunteers like us whose time is spent in close contact with the children. Many parents share this concern. Just as we begin to see some progress, another “variant” comes along. Depending on which expert is talking, the range of potential outcomes are both troubling and comforting at the same time. The results in the test tubes provide one perspective; lesser rates of hospitalizations, another.

Our numbers are anecdotal; most of our mentors are likely vaccinated and boosted, but we all know of breakthrough cases. The children we would see come from a community that has barely reached 50% vaccinated at the adult level and no data is yet available at the student level. Most of our mentors are in the most vulnerable age category and not eager to risk additional exposure from young children, albeit innocently or without cautionary symptoms.



In the week before Thanksgiving, at the 9 schools where we mentor, 6 schools had no cases. At the other three schools, one had 3 cases, another had 2, and the third had 1. We may not be certain about the precision of these data, but the school system publishes a weekly tally of cases for students and staff by school and it is mostly filled with zeros.

The school system believes they are managing this aspect of the covid challenge well. Like advocating masks and vaccinations, undoubtedly restricting access by outsiders is part of their success narrative.

Looking ahead, we'll be working with our site directors on how best to re-launch in the Fall.

**WE WISH ALL OUR L.O.V.E. MENTORS
A HAPPY, HEALTHY
HOLIDAY AND NEW YEAR
THAT FINDS US MENTORING
OUR STUDENTS ONCE AGAIN**





L.O.V.E. believes that improving a child's education is the foundation for improving quality of life. Classroom teachers have little opportunity to work one-on-one with students. L.O.V.E. provides this benefit to students.



L.O.V.E. Leadership Team

School Liaison-SCCPS..... Open Position
Mentor Recruiting and Assimilation Dan Malachuk, Officer
Recording Secretary..... Sam Lambert, Officer
Treasurer.....Kevin Dutton, Officer
Mentor Resources and Training Ginny Pierce
Publicity and Events Carol Fallon and Denis Healy
Camp Coordinator Carol Black
Training Co-Chair Catherine Ruhl
At Large Bill Monroe
Administrative Support Mike O'Neill and Roy Samras
Publication Design Dr. M. Louise Walters, The Leadership Center



**Thank You For
Helping Children Learn**