



# Mentoring Matters

## Over 70 Children Mentored in Jasper Co. *Twenty Children Still on the Wait List*

Over seventy children are now being mentored in the Jasper County School System. At the start of the school year, 61 children were believed to be on the wait list and 47 mentors committed to return for the 2010-2011 academic year.

After receiving updated records from the schools and matching students with new mentors, the number of children on the wait list is currently 20. New referrals from all schools are expected as well. Jehan El-Jourbagy, executive director of the mentor program, is still in the

process of interviewing more middle and high school students to see if they are open to having a mentor.

Since the last newsletter, Ms. El-Jourbagy presented informational and recruitment programs to the following:

- Team Jasper
- Mentor Appreciation Dinner
- Monticello Presbyterian Church
- Bank of Monticello
- Jasper County Senior Center

- Southern Crescent Technical College - Jasper County.

Thirty-six new mentors have been recruited since June 2010 .

Active recruitment of mentors takes place in January, July and August of each year.

Ms. El-Jourbagy is constantly on the lookout for new recruitment opportunities, so if you know of a good place to recruit mentors (church, civic meeting or employer), please let her know.

Jasper County Mentor Program, Inc.

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### Announcements

- ☺ Twenty children remain on the wait list.
- ☺ The last new mentor training session in 2010 will be held at the Bank of Monticello on Monday, September 23 at 5 p.m.
- ☺ You may NOT bring outside food to your mentee.
- ☺ To offer suggestions on the Christmas program, please contact Jehan.

## Back to School Kickoff & Mentor Appreciation

Thirty-four mentors and three board members attended this year's back-to-school kickoff and mentor appreciation dinner on Monday, August 16, 2010, at the new Deptula's Restaurant on Frobel Street.

Debra Hopkins, the mentor program's former executive director of five years, was recognized for her service to the organization and was honored with a standing ovation.

After sitting down to enjoy dinner, everyone enjoyed "Getting to Know You" mentor trivia, with 25 questions testing everyone's knowledge of their fellow mentors.

The highest scoring table got 19 correct.

Everyone then listened to an update on the program, including statistics on who participated last year and who is being mentored. The crowd also learned that 42 students were waiting for mentors.

The program was a good opportunity for mentors to get to know each other and for the program director to get to meet many of the mentors. Pictured above in back-



ground are mentors Donnie Pope, Angie Lee Willis, Dee Brooks, Stacy James, and board member Jason Parr and in foreground, mentor Morad El-Jourbagy, board member Shawne Holder and mentor Dianne Parr.

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# Truancy Intervention Project collaborates with Mentor Program

## Judge Hatchett to Speak at TIP Conference

Judge Glenda Hatchett was a senior litigator for Delta Airlines and Chief Presiding Judge of the Fulton County Juvenile Courts before she found fame on the Judge Hatchett show. What many people may not know is that while she was on the bench in Fulton County, she helped found what is now known as the Truancy Intervention Project (TIP), a program with a mission to provide advocacy and other resources for Georgia's children and their families to prevent school failure.

Judge Hatchett will be the keynote speaker at "Charting the Course: Rein-

vesting in and Reengaging Georgia's Youth," TIP's conference on delinquency and truancy intervention in late October of this year.

The Jasper County Mentor Program collaborates with the Truancy Intervention Project in addressing truancy in Jasper County by providing mentors. Our mentors stress the importance of school attendance, thus curbing truancy before it becomes a major problem and thus a legal issue.

Ms. Caren Cloud, TIP export coordinator and staff attorney, recently spoke at Team Jasper about the his-

tory of the Truancy Intervention Project, increasing awareness in this community and presenting methods to address truancy.



## One in three children obese in rural areas

Georgia is ranked number two in the nation for overweight children and obesity between the ages of 10 and 17, according to the Trust for America's Health and research funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation released June 29, 2010.

In addition, Jasper County, as a rural county, has a higher obesity rate than the state average (2009 Georgia Department of Human Resources Data Summary: Obesity in Children and Youth).

The highest rate of obesity is among black females in rural areas, and in 2005, among that data set, 33 percent were considered obese, a truly startling number. In other words, one in four third graders in Georgia is obese, but 1

in 3 black children in rural areas is obese.

Despite 33 percent of children considered overweight nationally, 84 percent of parents believe their children are a healthy weight.

Mentors are in a position to lead by example and teach children about healthy eating and living habits. By simply taking or selecting healthy items to eat while sharing lunch, a mentor can discuss the benefits of healthy foods. A mentor can also discuss the child's physical activity by walking together from location to location in the school or discussing what he or she is doing in

physical education class.

Only one in five high school students consume the minimum recommended amount of fruits and vegetables and 45 percent of middle school students and 56 percent of high school students do not meet the requirements for physical activity (2009 Data Summary).

In addition, adult obesity in Jasper County is 30.1 percent, higher than the state average (2007 Georgia Department of Human Resources Fact Sheet: Adult Obesity by County). As mentors, we can encourage healthy eating practices, increase awareness of the health risks and costs associated with obesity, and increase physical activity.

**"Mentors can encourage healthy eating practices."**

## Newest A+ Employers: Bank of Monticello & Sheriff's Office

Hosting an informational session on the Jasper County Mentor Program during a morning staff meeting in August, the Bank of Monticello showed its support of the organization, encouraging its employees to serve as mentors and even offering to pay for lunch on the day an employee meets with his or her mentee.



Three bank employees submitted applications, and on Monday, September 23, 2010, the Bank of Monticello will be the site for the final new mentor training of 2010.

After Jasper County Sheriff Charles Roper agreed to support the program by permitting employees to meet with children at the school one day a week, six sheriff's deputies committed to serving as mentors, with four already trained and serving at the schools and two

more planning to attend the training next week at the Bank of Monticello. Currently serving as mentors include Donnie Pope, Earl Favors, Amantae Sands and Mike Steele.



A+ Employers agree to support the program financially or through workplace advertising and by permitting employees to commit to meeting with a child during lunch one day a week.

## PolyTech donates computer to Mentor Program

A month ago, the mentor program's computer crashed, and PolyTech rose to the occasion when asked if anyone had a computer to donate.

PolyTech Industries, one of the mentor program's first A+ Employers, has several employees who serve as mentors, and the local business also supports the program financially.

PolyTech responded immediately and

donated a high quality Dell computer with 1GB of memory, a Windows XP operating system, speakers, and a flat-screen monitor.

Please support PolyTech and thank the owners and employees when you see them. Mentees include Tammy Boggs, Robert Grimsley and Shawn Lynch, and the president is Jimmy Rabitsch.



## Comments & Advice from Washington Park Teachers

Teachers greatly appreciate mentors and what they can do for children. Mentors provide another source of support for children, serving as an invaluable contact for a classroom teacher.

In order to improve the mentor program and make sure we are best serving the school system, the director solicited input from educators at all the schools. The teachers at Washington Park, the school with by far the greatest number of mentored children, offered many suggestions. Here are some of their comments followed by suggestions.

**On gifts . . .** *"I had a mentor who liked to give gifts to a child in my class, and one time, she brought a large gift with giant bows, and though it was incredibly nice, the other children felt left out. It would be better if the mentor would just leave the gift at the front office for the child to collect at the end of the school day."*

Your time is the greatest gift. Gifts are not expected or required. If you would nevertheless like to give a gift,

please leave it at the front office of the school for the child to collect at the end of the day.

**On lunch friends . . .** *"I do not feel it is my responsibility or duty to give permission or deny permission to other children who want to eat lunch with another child's mentor. The mentor should make the decision and not put that on us."*

Set boundaries with your mentee. If your mentee continuously asks if his or her friends may accompany you during your visits, then either explain that your time together is supposed to be one-on-one or tell them they may pick one friend once a month, but they must pick a different friend each time. Do not ask the teachers to make a decision for you.

**On ice cream . . .** *"Sometimes a mentor will come and visit and buy ice cream for all these children. They don't need to do that."*

Again, your greatest gift is your time. Do not feel obligated to purchase your

mentee or other children treats.

**On outside food . . .** *"The kids here are excited to see mentors and they notice everything. When a mentor comes in with a bag full of Dairy Queen, the other kids get jealous."*

The new school-wide policy is no outside food. You may purchase a school meal or bring your own lunch in a brown bag. According to Ms. Joan Thornton, the school nutrition director, outside food for the children is not permitted.

**On classroom shadowing . . .** *"There was a mentor who spent four hours in my classroom once. We shouldn't expect mentors to do that, should we?"*

No! Mentors are there to listen to a child, and the relationship is supposed to be a one-on-one. Therefore, the time you spend with your mentee during lunch or advisement should really be between the two of you (in a public area, like the lunchroom, media center or gym). If the child asks that you sit in on class, ask the teacher first and never stay longer than one hour.

**"Your time is the greatest gift."**

## Donations to the Mentor Program; \$23,000 Still Needed

The following entities donated to the mentor program this fiscal year (starting July 1, 2010), helping us to reach our fundraising goal of \$30,000. So far, the program received \$6,998 in cash donations from the following individuals, grant makers, churches, businesses or fundraising events:

- PolyTech Industries
- Monticello Baptist Church

- Steve & Lynne Jordan
- Jim & Erin Lynch
- The Monticello News
- Truancy Intervention Project
- \$183 in donations from mentors for the Back to School Kickoff
- \$25 in Shop for a Cause donations

All funds donated support the

program through recruitment, mentor training, educational field trips, T-shirts, mentor appreciation activities, special events, such as the holiday dinner, supplies and materials and educational campaigns.

We depend on local support to keep the program running strong. **Please make a tax deductible contribution before the end of the year.**

# Words of Encouragement from the Executive Director

In the first month of school, 78% of all returning mentors already met with their mentee one or more times, and of the new mentors, 81% visited with their mentee for the first time within the first two weeks of their match.

The children see our faces and our name tags in the lunchroom, the hallways, and the media center, and the teachers and administrators are pleased to see community members taking such a vested interest in the students. Your

presence in the schools sends a message to the students that the community cares about them.

Consistency and dependability are the greatest assets of a successful mentor. These kids look forward to our visits and rely on our presence. Never doubt that you are important to them.

I am humbled and pleased when I see cars I recognize in the parking lot of the schools, when I look in the sign-in books, knowing that caring adults are

spending time with children in such great need of personal attention.

Do not forget to account for your time because it assists me in evaluating and fundraising. (I was terrible about this, and I have no doubt I gave Debra Hopkins countless headaches!)

Teachers and administrators have commented on the strong presence of mentors in the schools . . . and I am thankful for your strong presence in the life of your mentee!

## Mentees in The Monticello News Chasity Thomas & Kweilin Manning

Mentee Chasity Thomas was recognized in The Monticello News as being "Dressed for Success" as part of a program at Jasper County High School that honors children who come to school dressed professionally. Chasity is in the ninth grade and the mentee of Ms. Nancy Lynch.

Mentee Kweilin Manning was captured in a photograph along with a snapping turtle in an event at the Get Ahead House on Funderburg Drive. The Get Ahead House provides after-

school and summer activities to children in need. Kweilin is in the third grade at Washington Park Elementary School and is the mentee of Mr. Troy Cannon.



Picture of Ms. Nancy Lynch and Chasity Thomas



## New Mentors Trained for the 2010-2011 Academic Year

Juanita Davis  
Ellen Drossman  
Sage Edwards  
Morad El-Jourbagy  
Earl Favors  
Bob Ferrante  
Greg Holder  
Mary Lou Jordan  
Michaela Kelly-Jackson  
Victoria Lawrence  
Gregory Luginbill  
Mary McGee  
Tracy Norton  
Jackie Pate  
Donnie Pope  
Hannah Pope

Lisa Pope  
Rebecca Rogers  
Amantae Sands  
Nancy Schurrer  
Bob Schwartz  
Sheryl Schwartz  
Casey Seay  
Susan Smith  
Mike Steele  
Angie Steele  
Elizabeth Strawn  
Melissa Strozier  
Jeanne Trammell  
Rufus Whitlock  
Candice Yancey

**They join:**  
LeAnn Airington  
Nancy Baeder  
Glenda Bentley  
Tammy Boggs  
Dee Brooks  
Jim Burch  
Liz Caldwell  
Mary Camp  
Troy Cannon  
Jim Daniel  
John DeGarmo  
Jehan El-Jourbagy  
Jan Evans  
Valerie Fritz  
Robert Grimsley  
Sheri Guli  
Tiffani Hendrix  
Debra Hopkins  
Rick Jackson  
Sidney Jackson  
Stacy James  
Elaine Luginbill  
Shawn Lynch  
Nancy Lynch  
Larry Lynch  
JoEllen Mack  
Bill Marsh  
Dianne Parker  
Dianne Parr  
Kasey Reid  
Gigi Shields  
Mike Shields  
Sandra Shockley  
Johnny Smith  
Jim Walsh  
Ellen Watson  
Gail Williams  
Angie Lee Willis

# October 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 <i>No School</i>	9
10	11 <i>No School</i>	12	13	14	15	16 
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 <i>Conferences</i>	28 <i>Conferences</i>	29 	30
31 						

## Important Dates

### Macy's Shop for Cause

Saturday, October 16, 2010

### Deer Festival 5K and Parade

Saturday, November 6, 2010

### JCMP Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 16, 5 pm

### Monticello Community Band Concert

"An American Christmas"

Friday, December 3, 2010

### JCMP Holiday Dinner & Program

Tuesday, December 14, 6 pm

### Mentor Appreciation Lunch

Thursday, January 20, 2011, noon

### JCMP Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 15, 5 pm

### JCMP Field Trip

Saturday, May 14, 2011

## Tips for a Safe Halloween from the CDC

**S** Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.

**A** Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.



**F** Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.

**E** Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.

**H** Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you.

**A** Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.

**L** Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.

**L** Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.

**O** Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.

**W** Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.

**E** Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.

**E** Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Otherwise, stay outside.

**N** Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.



Source:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/family/halloween/>



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### Board of Directors

**Preston Campbell**  
**Otis Clark**, Vice Chair  
**Sage Edwards**  
**Shawne Holder, Ph.D.**  
**Jason Parr**, Chair  
**Johnny Smith**, Treasurer  
**Shannon Usry**

### Executive Director

**Jehan El-Jourbagy, Esq.**



**"We believe every child deserves at least one person unconditionally committed to his or her success."**

## Spotlight on Faculty: Middle School Principal

With decades of experience as an administrator, Ms. Susan Eilers comes to the Jasper County Middle School as interim principal. Ms. Eilers has a gentle yet firm disposition and was eager to hear about the mentor program and how it serves the school.

Married with two sons, one the Director of Educational Programming at Lockerly Arboretum in Milledgeville and the other a web designer in Atlanta, she agreed to meet with me in mid-July when we spoke together in her tidy office at the middle school.

### **Where did you grow up?**

*I grew up in Atlanta. My family was of modest means. That is, I am very much aware of the relationship between low-income or economically disadvantaged students and poor educational success.*

### **Tell me about your educational background.**

*I attended Georgia State University and received a Bachelor of Science in*

### **Interview with Ms. Susan Eilers by Jehan El-Jourbagy**

*Education and Sociology. I started my career in Rockdale County as an elementary school teacher, because*



*that was a job that was available when I got out of school, and then I taught seventh and eighth grade. I felt my particular skills sets were best suited for that age group.*

*I also attended Georgia College where I received a masters and spe-*

*cialist in educational leadership. I later served as a school counselor and taught middle school science in Rockdale and Jones Counties.*

*I was a principal and personnel director in Jones County, and I consider myself a retired principal.*

### **Do you know about the mentor program?**

*I am not very familiar with the program. With my background, I do know it is important to provide as many resources as possible to students. Mentors can serve as one of these resources. It is so important to share information so students can get the opportunities they deserve.*

### **How can the mentor program help?**

*Middle school students feel a need to be independent and test their boundaries, so it is even more important for caregivers to be there for them during that time. They need support and supervision more than ever.*