



THE GUIDING HAND of an adult volunteer can make all the difference in taking area students' interest in science and technology to new levels through participation in the FIRST Lego League.

Mentor a mission!

Your help is needed *right now* for one of DESC's most exciting partnerships – the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Lego League.

Volunteer coaches will begin working with middle school teams in just a few weeks, helping students build robots from special kits, and then developing programs to guide their mini-machines to fulfill specific missions.

The once-weekly commitment begins in October and culminates locally at a district competition in December.

Initiated in the Detroit area in 1999, the Lego League's combination of challenge, camaraderie and competition fires enthusiasm in kids and coaches alike.

To be part of this fun event, call Jameson Teamor at 248-395-2840 or email jteamor@esc-detroit.org at your earliest convenience.

Corps keeps a flexible focus on the future

Strategic planning is the Detroit Executive Service Corps' most popular service, so it only makes sense that DESC periodically update its own blueprint for success.

The current plan was last overhauled in 1999. Much has changed since then. In 1999, the Corps offered traditional consulting, student dialogues and field trips.

Not only have the numbers of those services doubled and

tripled, a host of specialized programs (including Community-Based Organization assistance, Organizational Assessments, Leaders Circles, Principal Leadership Development, Financial Knowledge and Skills and FIRST Lego League) have also been added.

To address these and other variables, preparations for the latest strategic update began in late June and continued through the summer.

A planning group identified a vital constituency: the Corps' key stakeholders.

Focus group meetings were held with public school officials, community partners and clients, as well as DESC's board of directors, volunteers and staff.

The goal was simple: to hear their thoughts on DESC – its services, processes, people, organization and role in the community. To further expand the

range and depth of input, telephone interviews were also held with funders.

The first meeting of the ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee took place Sept. 11.

Subsequent meetings will be held the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. It's expected the entire process will take three to six months.

Hank Whiting and Gene Jacoby are the facilitators.

Expanded programs spark new school year

The numbers are in, and the news is good: The 2001/2002 school year was a resounding success for Detroit Executive Service Corps efforts in education.

Student Round Table Dialogues, Parent/Student Dialogues, Field Trips, and FIRST Lego League activities touched some 3,000 Detroit Public Schools students in the past year.

Now that the 2002/2003 school year has commenced, the DESC team is excited about the opportunity to reach out to even more DPS students.

In the coming months, DESC education activities will engage 30 schools in the Dialogue Program (an increase of eight middle and high schools) and touch approximately 4,000 students.

The Field Trip Program has been expanded to include more meaningful and focused experiences to some 600 students.

A new pilot program, "Reading to Children," will be conducted at four elementary schools this school year and will involve 360 students.

Our "Computers for Kids" program will continue to provide computers to stu-

dents for in-home use. State Farm Insurance Company has donated 10 computers and Lear has once again donated six computers systems to spur this initiative.

The DESC education committee will partner with Detroit Public Schools and the Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program, marking our third year of participation in the FIRST Lego League. This program will include 25 schools and 200 students, along with science teachers, parents and cheerleaders.

As we continue to pursue new partnerships, we welcome the Christian Business

Network Inc. and the Gale Group to the ever-growing DESC family.

We also welcome the following schools to our Student Round Table Dialogue Program: Coffey, Earhart, Barbour, and Ludington middle schools, Malcolm X Academy, Mumford and South-eastern high schools, and Golightly Educational Center

In an effort to ensure that our volunteer base is strong, we urge all members of the board, advisory board and executive committee, as well as all consultants, to select at least one school at which to volunteer their service.

JOINING THE DESC TEAM

... AS CONSULTANTS

- ❖ Ida Byrd-Hill
The Harvard Group
- ❖ David Currin
Catholic Healthcare Audit Network
- ❖ Monica Daniels
Gregory Terrell & Co. CPAs
- ❖ Veena Joshi
Computer Scientist
- ❖ Edmund Lazar
State Farm Insurance
- ❖ Yolanda Mitchell
Comerica Bank
- ❖ Richard Perkins, Jr.
Comerica Bank
- ❖ William Plumpe
City of Detroit
- ❖ Richard Potchynok
Unisys
- ❖ Gary Shovlin
AOTC Resources, LLC
- ❖ Richard Starkweather
Ford Motor Company

Virginia lures long-time supporter

The Detroit Executive Service Corps bid farewell to an invaluable friend when Jim Conlan and his wife Elaine moved south earlier this summer. At DESC, Jim was most famous for his "belly to belly" fund-raising lecture that motivated board members and staff alike.

Jim joined DESC in 1989 as a consultant. Prior to his service to the Corps, he worked for 40 years at General Motors, honing his skills while rising to the position of General Sales Manager. Not content to rest on his laurels at retirement, Jim applied his corporate experience to helping Detroit-area nonprofits raise money for their

charitable works.

During his tenure at DESC, Jim consulted nonprofit clients, dialogued with students, and became a board member. His leadership in fund development helped DESC raise enough financial support to increase capacity in all programs, a legacy that will echo far into the future.

"Jim's dedication was demonstrated in many ways – like writing personal notes on all his solicitation letters," DESC President Deanna McGraw said. "It was that willingness to go the extra mile that inspired people to respond so positively to the Corps and its cause."



READY TO ROLL after 13 years of service to the Corps, Jim Conlan is seen heading for warmer winters.

For three years, Jim also shared his wisdom with DESC volunteers through his solicitation workshops.

Corps board enriched by eight new members

Several individuals were recently elected to the DESC Board of Directors – an infusion of ability and energy that includes both the retired and the actively employed. Two of the new directors have also served as volunteer consultants.

“Their range of talents adds to the knowledge and intellectual capacity of the board,” DESC Chairman Bill Adams noted of the eight inductees.

“Skills in education and educational systems, financial management, human resources, media relations and retail management enhance overall board effectiveness,” he added. “Their input will better equip us to deal with the service needs of the Detroit-area non-profit



CHOSEN TO SERVE at the leadership level are new board members (from left) Will Caldwell, Suzanne Dibble, Harvey Tull, Mike Fisher, Robert Brown and Pamela James. Not pictured are Joanne Niederoest and Greg Bowns.

community and public schools.”

In a related development, Dr. Karen Roth, a serving board member and di-

rector of DESC’s Leadership for Principals program, joined the executive team as Vice Chairman.

Pilot program will foster board development

After nearly two years of intense negotiation, the Southeast Michigan Nonprofit Continuum has launched a comprehensive board development training program that will be unparalleled in scope of services.

The August action marks the first successful joint venture between five of the Detroit area’s most influential non-profit management assistance organizations (Accounting Aid Society, Community Legal Resources, Detroit Executive Service Corps, Michigan Nonprofit Association, and United Way Community Services).

The six-month program will service five client organizations, each chosen by a Continuum member for already present levels of expertise as well as potential for further development.

Each organization will be given access to a full range of Continuum services, such as strategic planning, management/board training, fund-raising, financial manage-


ment, marketing, public relations and legal consultation.

“This pilot project is significant to the management assistance service delivery system,” said Deanna McGraw, DESC President. “We are demonstrating how five providers can work together to im-


prove and expand their services.”

At the end of the six-month period, the program will be evaluated. “We are fully confident that these initial five nonprofit agencies, as well as future nonprofit clients, will see the benefits of this collaborative effort,” McGraw said.

**SEPTEMBER
COMMUNICATOR CONTRIBUTORS**




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DESC COMMUNICATOR

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DESC is a not-for-profit organization of both retired and active executives who give management counsel to non-profit agencies, governmental units and public schools on a voluntary basis.

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A friend indeed

On Aug. 5, James R. Butler, Global Director of Supply Management of GDx Automotive in Farmington Hills, presented a \$5,000 check from the GenCorp Foundation to DESC President Deanna McGraw, in support of the organization's work, particularly in the Lego League and Leadership for Principals programs.

GDx is also encouraging active and retired employees to consider a partnership with DESC's education programs. HR Administrator Deanna Johnson will coordinate this effort.

DESC responds to second SOS

The South Oakland Shelter, better known as "SOS," has a powerful mission: "to provide emergency shelter to those in need and to work to remove them from the cycle of homelessness."

Since 1985, with the cooperation of more than 55 churches and synagogues that each provides food and shelter for a week each year, SOS has been fulfilling that mission. Most years, SOS and the host sites contribute more than 10,000 client/days of food and lodging.

Effectively meeting such needs requires more than good intentions. In September of 2000, SOS requested DESC to assist in developing a Strategic Plan to help guide its future growth. SOS officials spent more than six months carefully evaluat-

ing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing SOS and then chose specific Action Plans to address them. Their Strategic Plan was completed in 2001, and the Action Plans are now in progress.

Recently, SOS approached DESC for assistance in Fund Development. A relatively new program, this service gives nonprofits guidance in creation and implementation of a long-term income strategy.

The SOS request was a direct result of the Strategic Plan. Further funding is important to accomplish the second part of their mission: to implement new initiatives and expand cooperation with other agencies in providing life skills, training, and support for clients trying to escape homelessness.

It is a common misconception that SOS clients are "street people," when in reality most are families and couples who just cannot accumulate the capital for home ownership or rental downpayment.

"Our experience with DESC and the information gained has proved to be invaluable," SOS Director Duncan said. "The SOS Board is taking a more active role and is making awesome strides in supporting the agency mission. And the strategic planning committee and I are still working diligently to remain focused and meet our goals."

SPOTLIGHT ON ...

Jim McElroy has served as a DESC volunteer consultant since 1994. He is also President and founder of McElroy & Associates, where he acts as Senior Consultant.

He previously served as Corporate Manager for Organization and Employee Development and Training for Bundy Corp. He additionally spent 15 years with Ford in Domestic and International Personnel and Training.

Jim earned his Bachelor of Business Administration

from Manhattan College of New York and did graduate work at New York University in Industrial Relations.

His knowledge and experience has been put to good use at DESC. Jim has not only consulted with charitable organizations and public schools, he has taken a leadership role in developing new programs and internal consulting training. He has also worked on the CBO committee to design effective management services and training for clients.

JIM MCELROY



His greatest contribution has been the development of assessment tools and training in planning, facilitation and presentation skills.

According to DESC President Deanna McGraw, "I always learn something about good management practices when I interact with Jim."

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

ROUND TABLE DIALOGUES

- Oct. 3 Cadillac Middle
- Oct. 16 Earhart Middle
- Oct. 17 Boynton Learning
- Oct. 29 Martin Luther King
- Nov. 14 Mackenzie High
- Nov. 19 CMA
- Nov. 27 Foch Middle
- Dec. 4 Farwell Middle
- Dec. 10 Coffey Middle
- Dec. 12 Drew Middle
- Dec. 16 Barbour Middle

CONSULTANT TRAINING

- ❖ Sept. 17 9:30 – noon
Grant Writing
- ❖ Oct. 22 9:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Presentation Skills

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

- Nov. 14 Session 1:
9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Nov. 15 Session 2:
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Sept. 19 9:30 a.m.
- Dec. 12 9:30 a.m.