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Quality of Life Unit Exceeds Expectations
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Stribling. IN THIS ISSUE Creating Support Networks

A Message from Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling:
Happy New Year to you and your family!
2018 was a busy year for my team, building on programs we created my first year in office and challenging ourselves to create a better, safer DeKalb.

Our office grew with the addition of several attorneys enthusiastic to learn what it takes to be a successful prosecutor. Our focus continues to be developing their skills to improve productivity, efficiency and better results for those we serve.

Our community outreach programs, such as Dancing with the DeKalb Stars and Because We Have Daughters, saw an overwhelming amount of support from the DeKalb County community. We are encouraged to find more ways to creatively engage our community and educate them on preventive tactics.

We strengthened our partnerships with other law enforcement agencies, local nonprofits and community leaders. These partnerships help us serve and protect victims and their family.

Our office served the community by advocating for our citizens. We advocated for victims and their family.

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We work everyday for our community and we are only able to do the work with your support. We thank you for that support and hope we continue to have your support to create a better, safer DeKalb.

DeKalb Solicitor-General Secures Over $300,000 for Engaging Men Project

The DeKalb County Solicitor-General, in partnership with Men Stopping Violence (MSV), Decatur Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi and the International Women’s House, Inc. (IWH), was awarded over $300,000 to form the Engaging Men Project. The grant comes from the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women with a focus on addressing domestic and sexual assault through the engagement of men and boys.

The Solicitor-General’s Office processes over 3,000 misdemeanors every year, more than one-third of which involve domestic violence. Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling has a deep commitment to ending the violence against women. She recognizes an important factor in ending this cycle is to better engage men.

“My team and I are dedicated to building a better, safer DeKalb through education, partnerships and pursuing justice for our victims,” said Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling. "This grant from the Office on Violence Against Women helps us fulfill those commitments. This grant allows us to partner with three organizations with an immense commitment to bettering our community and ending the cycle of abuse. It also gives my office, as well as our partners, an opportunity to make meaningful allies in our fight to end domestic violence."

Creating prevention programs are primarily designed as lessons in risk reduction for potential victims. The goal of the Engaging Men Project is to create constructive prevention programs and accountable programs – created by Men Stopping Violence – that address men’s role in the cycle of abuse and rely men as allies.

The Solicitor-General’s Office will oversee the implementation of a six-part program that involves Men Stopping Violence coordinating educational and training workshops for members of the Decatur Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi. The program will also require the members of Kappa Alpha Psi to incorporate what they learn about the violence against women into their Guide Right Program, which is a mentoring program that pairs their members with young men in their community. To ensure the Engaging Men Project maintains safety for victims of domestic violence, the International Women’s House will assist in the planning and implementation.

The grant also assists with the creation of a summer internship program with Men Stopping Violence. The organization will select young men, who are preparing to go to college, to work closely with the non-profit and execute what they have learned through the various educational sessions.

DeKalb County’s Solicitor-General Creates Support Network with Local Faith Leaders

Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling hosted her inaugural Faith Leaders Breakfast: Building Partnerships. The breakfast was an interactive discussion with the faith leaders in DeKalb County at Rehoboth Baptist Church. The purpose of the breakfast was to establish partnerships throughout DeKalb County with various clergy members.

Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling recognizes many members of the DeKalb community, who have been victims of a crime, turn to their faith-based community for support and guidance.

“Our goal was – and always will be – to equip the faith-based communities with a thorough understanding of the criminal justice system, what services we provide and what steps we can take together to keep our community safe,” said Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling. “We hoped to establish partnerships throughout DeKalb County with our faith leaders to create a strong network for the most vulnerable in our community. With faith leaders’ participation, we were able to take one step closer in accomplishing this goal.”

Topics discussed during the breakfast included tactics for ending the cycle of youthful repeat offenders through diversion programs, addressing the numerous unmet needs of the mentally ill through DeKalb’s Misdemeanor Health Court, and ways faith leaders can collaborate with the Solicitor-General’s Office to create meaningful solutions.

Over 30 clergy members attended the breakfast. Leaders had an opportunity to hear from multiple heads of law enforcement agencies, such as Sheriff Jeffery Mann and District Attorney Sherry Boston. Major L.J. Rascoe, of the DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office, led a discussion focused on the use of body cameras in police work.

Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling reflected: “My team and I worked hard to bring an informative and interactive session to those respected leaders. We’re thankful for their participation and look forward to working with them to create a better, safer DeKalb.”
Quality of Life Unit Exceeds Expectations, While Building Meaningful Partnerships

In 2017, DeKalb Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling recognized the immediate need to build a unit completely focused on the quality of life issues in the community she served. To address these issues, the DeKalb commissioners approved a mid-year budget to form the unit presently known as Quality of Life.

Since the unit’s inception it has held offenders accountable by imposing community service projects and strengthening relationships with other regulatory agencies.

“We accomplished so much within our first year,” said Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling. “We held repeat code violator accountable, collaborated with community members and our law enforcement partners to host the DeKalb Stars event,”

The partnerships with various agencies were an intricate part to ensuring we strengthened our partnerships with other agencies by hosting in-depth trainings. The prosecutors in this unit have such a passion for our community and worked tirelessly to resolve these issues.

“We are proud of the work we’ve done, but recognize there’s still a lot left to be done. We appreciate the opportunity to do this work and look forward to improving the quality of life for all DeKalb citizens,” said Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling.

DeKalb County Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling raised over $21,500 through Annual Dancing with the DeKalb Stars, a domestic violence resource expo and fundraiser, for local non-profits. Women’s Resource Center to End Domestic Violence and International Women’s House. The event, which was held at Porter Sanford III Performing Arts & Community Center, exceeded fundraising goals through ticket sales, sponsorships and partnerships with the DeKalb Elementary School of the Arts.

“Our goal for this event was to create a fun and safe environment for our community to learn more about the cycle of abuse. We also wanted Dancing with the DeKalb Stars to truly become a community owned event,” explained Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling. “With students from the DeKalb Elementary School of the Arts selecting our event to donate to and to see such enthusiasm from members of our community, I believe we accomplished our goals. My team and I are proud to deliver a memorable night and we appreciate the continued support we receive from DeKalb County.”

“The event featured a Resource Expo that included 15 non-profits, who assist victims and survivors of domestic violence, and a dance competition comprised of 7 teams of notable DeKalb County community members. Winners of the ABC-inspired dance competition were David Manuel, division manager of DeKalb County Solicitor-General’s House. The event, which was held at Porter Sanford III Performing Arts & Community Center, exceeded fundraising goals through ticket sales, sponsorships and partnerships with the DeKalb Elementary School of the Arts.

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DeKalb Solicitor-General Participates in Record Restriction Job Fair and Summit

DeKalb County Solicitor-General, along with multiple law enforcement agencies, partnered with Saint Philip African Methodist Episcopal Church to host the county’s first Record Restriction Summit and Job Fair, formerly known as expungement.

Citizens interested in participating had to submit applications prior to the April 21 job fair that was held at the partnering church. Record restriction is available to anyone arrested by DeKalb County Police Department or Sheriff’s Office and did not result in a conviction.

“Having your record restricted can improve your chances at securing that job or housing,” said Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling. “We wanted to give that chance to the public. It’s one of the many ways we hope to improve the quality of life for all citizens.”

DeKalb Solicitor-General Selects Chamblee High School Student as Winner of the 2018 Stop Teen Dating Violence PSA Contest

As part of Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month in February, Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling partnered with Cinderella’s Gowns, The Men’s Wearhouse of Lithonia and Lynette Clove, an independent sales director for Mary Kay, to host the second annual Stop Teen Dating Violence PSA Contest.

The goal of the contest was to engage students in a conversation about healthy relationships and how to prevent relationship bullying among teens.

Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling invited DeKalb County high school seniors and juniors to produce a 1-minute video promoting healthy teen dating practices that prevent dating violence and highlight positive character traits such as honesty, compromise, good communication, individuality, understanding and problem solving.

Christian Livingston, a junior at Chamblee High School and an audio/video technology and film student of Hakim Felts, was selected by the Solicitor-General for her creative take on the isolation that takes place in abusive relationships.

“Ms. Livingston depicted the signs of isolation for a teen in an unhealthy relationship in 2018,” Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling said. “We had so many impactful entries that we decided we wanted to select a piece that was unique, exemplified signs teens should look for and something this generation could relate to. Texting is how this generation communicates. As I watched her story unfold I immediately knew other teens would watch this and connect with it.”

Livingston was awarded the prom prize package, which included dinner for two, a gift certificate from Cinderella’s Gowns and The Men’s Wearhouse for attire for herself and a guest, and makeup services courtesy of Lynette Clove of Mary Kay.

The Office of the DeKalb Solicitor-General encourages any teen who is aware of or experiencing teen dating violence to reach out to www.loveisrespect.org, call the hotline at 1.866.331.9474 or text “LOVEIS” to 22522 for assistance.

The Latest from The Office of The DeKalb County Solicitor-General

February 2019

Davis Bozeman Law Firm Awards Solicitor-General with Community Service Award

Attorneys, Mawuli Davis, Robert Bozeman and Harold Spence, presented Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling with the first Davis | Bozeman Community Service Award. The three partners of the firm chose the Solicitor as the recipient of the award for her courageous work to create funding and support for survivors of domestic violence.

“I’m honored to have my continued dedication to making DeKalb a better, safer place recognized by other leaders in our community,” said Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling. “I’ve made it my mission to pursue justice. We get justice by ensuring victims have the resources they need to get back on the right track. Partnering with local organizations who do that is a piece of that pursuit, but those organizations can not function without the support of our community. That’s where I see myself, this position and office, as a bridge.”

The award was presented to Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling during the Davis Bozeman annual Holiday Affair held at Porter Sanford Center for Performing Arts.

Solicitor-General, Columbia Drive United Methodist Church and Decatur Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. Host Toiletry Drive for Youth in Foster Care

Solicitor-General Donna Coleman-Stribling partnered with the Decatur Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., and the Columbia Drive United Methodist Church, to host their annual toiletry drive for CHRIS 180, Inc.

Throughout April, which is recognized as Child Abuse Prevention Month, both organizations accepted toiletry donations to assist youth living in CHRIS 180 facilities.

CHRIS 180 is a DeKalb County non-profit organization that supports abused children in foster care by providing counseling, shelter, adoption services, and a transitioning program for youth who have aged out of the foster system.

On Saturday, May 5, in recognition of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week and Child Abuse Prevention Month, Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling worked with teen volunteers, provided by the fraternity partner, to assemble the hygiene gift packs that go into “Welcome Kits” that CHRIS 180 provides to youth when they first arrive. Kits were assembled in the partner church’s gym.

The focus of the drive was to provide the youth with the toiletries that are essential but often overlooked.

“Young people are our community’s future, so it’s important we help them in any way possible,” said Solicitor-General Coleman-Stribling.

The drive received donations from other law enforcement agencies, such as the DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office, Superior Court Clerk and State Court Clerk.