

Leadership Sandy Springs *Community Connections*

Each year the Leadership Sandy Springs class completes an initiative that benefits the community. These “*Community Connections*” (Previously known as Class Projects) must be consistent with the LSS mission, be related to one of our Program Days or Discussion Session topics, and be completed by end of the class year. If the effort is not a one time event or task, arrangements must be made for handing the program over to an existing community organization. The *Community Connections* enable Class members to hone leadership skills while working with individuals with different leadership styles and backgrounds, strengthen their relationships with fellow class members and accomplish something which benefits Sandy Springs.

Past Leadership Sandy Springs *Community Connections* have had significant positive impact on Sandy Springs. In fact such organizations at Sandy Springs Revitalization and the Youth Enrichment Program at Community Action Center grew out of efforts begun by Leadership Sandy Springs.

Below is a summary of some of the past *Community Connections*;

'88 SSRI and Citizens for Sandy Springs – Conducted a Roswell Road beautification program that led to the creation of Sandy Springs Revitalization and a city of Sandy Springs feasibility study that led to Citizens for Sandy Springs.

'89 Created Evening Discussion Groups – Held four evening discussion groups to follow up on issues that were presented during the various Leadership Days. Topics have changed over the years but these remain an important LSS activity for class members, alumni and interested individuals from the community.

'91 Youth Leadership Program – Developed a Community Leadership Program for high school juniors which consisted of several program days in partnership with North Fulton Extension Service. The class was held for several years. Brochures still exist and when there is a need in Sandy Springs the program can be reinitiated.

'92 High Point After-school Program Scholarships – Raised money to send low income students at High Point Elementary to the YMCA after-school program. Class members served as tutors and mentors at the school.

'93 Roster of Service Organizations – Created a directory of service organizations and other important community resources. It was published in the Northside Neighbor newspaper and widely distributed to Sandy Springs residents.

'94 Hammond Park Van – Conducted a letter-writing campaign urging Fulton County officials to set aside budget dollars for the purchase of a van to transport senior citizens and at-risk youth to Hammond Park facilities. Today several vans serve Seniors in our community.

'95 Bowl-a-thon Fundraiser – Held a bowl-athon and sold t-shirt sponsorships to area businesses with the proceeds going to expand Leadership Sandy Springs and its community outreach programs.

'96 Sandy Springs Banners – Sold sponsorships to local businesses to promote the Sandy Springs business district. Banners saying, “Sandy Springs: a Great place to Work, Live, Play”, were hung along Roswell Road in the business district.

'97 Copeland Road Park – Worked to create park facilities to serve the residents of the Copeland Road (now Northwood Drive) area. Vacant land behind Royal Patio was not feasible, so money was raised to improve playground equipment at Allen Road Park.

'98 Youth Enrichment Program – Created a scholarship program that sends underprivileged children to area camps. Program continues under the Community Action Center.

'99 Leadership Marketing Materials – Planned to redo the Leadership brochures, and printed materials to more accurately represent the organization. Program is currently being completed by the PR committee.

'00 Sandy Springs Sign Toppers – Sold and installed sign toppers placed atop street signs through the Sandy Springs community to promote a sense of Community and provide visibility for the Sandy Springs area. Proceeds from the sign sales went to the Youth Enrichment Program and Leadership Sandy Springs scholarships.

'02 Community Volunteer Day, Sandy Springs Non-profit Directory – Class started the, now annual, Volunteering for Sandy Springs Day in which volunteers from LSS and the community tackle specific projects identified by our non-profit organizations. A tri-fold “Sandy Springs Non-profit Directory helps individuals identify where to go for particular services and highlights volunteer opportunities and was distributed to agencies and handed out at Sandy Springs Festival.

'03 Three projects were chosen: Revitalization and reorganization of the Sandy Springs Round Table to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of our community was accomplished by rewriting the by-laws and facilitating an organizational meeting of proposed members; Provide research and recommendations to the Community Action Center to help in determining a place to relocate and expand services; began discussion about funding options for Development of a Dog Park in conjunction with Sandy Springs Conservancy on the site of The Great Park at Morgan Falls, this project is still pending.

'04 Three projects were undertaken: A memorial honoring Sandy Springs Veterans was placed at the Heritage Sandy Springs site, complete with a community veterans day celebration; a Theater Night at Georgia Ensemble Theater to benefit LSS scholarship funds and provide resources for projects undertaken as a part of Volunteering for a Better Sandy Springs Day was held; and a group is working to provide current information on

community resources and organizations to be used to update the SandySprings.org web site.

'05 One team worked with Fulton County and Heritage Sandy Springs to arrange for directional signs to be placed on major highways and interstates directing people to the Sandy Springs Historical Site. The other team put on a one day Leadership Sandy Springs Condensed program for candidates running for City Council and Mayor in November.

'06 One team is presenting the Mayor and City Council with an historical marker, installed at the SS Historic Site commemorating the inauguration of the City of Sandy Springs and held a Birthday Celebration for City leaders; The other project teams worked with Community Action Center to expand their services by establishing a computer lab. The lab donated and installed through LSS will be used during the day to provide job skill training and job search for CAC clients. The other team prepared a detailed strategic plan and identified resources for an after school program targeting promising students who lack family support to encourage them to pursue secondary education and assist them in the process.

'07 One team presented the City with "Flag retirement Boxes" placed at fire stations to collect US flags ready for retirement by the Boy Scouts who will perform flag retirement ceremonies a regular intervals in the future and worked with Fire Dept to set up the initial CRP and AED training for SS. The first annual A Youth Day was held at Hammond Park to promote programs offered by the City of SS, Parks and Rec and provide a fun family event for SS. The One Brick at a Time campaign was held in conjunction with HSS to fund benches for Heritage Green with the bricks installed on near the benches. The other team worked with the SS Police Dept to bring the Safe Teen Georgia Driving program for teens to SS to reduce teen accidents.

'08 One team gathered information about services for the homeless and inserted that information into bags containing toiletries and other much needed items which were then delivered to Community Action Center and Mary Hall Freedom House. Another team spread the word about Storm Water Runoff issues and secured volunteers to place special markings being provided by the City on drains which feed directly into our streams. Promoting CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training and becoming certified to help others was undertaken by a third team.

'09 The projects included creating a list of the community service organizations that provide assistance to the less fortunate such as food pantries, homeless services and mental health for distribution at community agencies, schools and government offices. Working with the Sandy Springs Court System, created a compilation of not-for-profit organizations willing to use Probationers given court-appointed community service as part of their sentence. Researched and created educational material about Morgan Falls Dam for 2nd and 3rd grade students.

'10 Community Connections completed by the Class of 10 included: Working with the Sandy Springs Police Department, Solicitor, and Courts, developed a marketing/promotional campaign for the Parents Reducing Injury and Driver Error (PRIDE) program. In concert with Senior Services North Fulton, coordinated and implemented enhancements to the current senior citizens' activity and fitness calendar to attract a more diverse group of participants. Working with the LSS Board, Sandy Springs High School Administrators, and area high school students, established the foundation for Youth Leadership Sandy Springs.

'11 Community Connections completed by the Class of 11 included: Sandy Springs Education Force: The LSS Community Connections team followed up on leads and contacts for creating a robotics exhibit/themed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) event to be held in the Fall of 2011. Child Development Association: Based on an outline provided by the CDA, the LSS Community Connections team designed, sourced, and installed learning stations at various locations on the wooded property of the CDA. These learning stations will be used to create a fun and educational experience for the kids when on a nature walk. Volunteer for Better Sandy Springs: This LSS Community Connections team worked with VBSS to recruit and assess potential VBSS work-sites. Heritage Sandy Springs: This LSS Community Connections team reviewed the Doug Kessler Lightning 10K/5K race and created a promotional plan of "best and recommended practices" with the ultimate goal of driving more runners to the race.