



FALL 2017

# THE COMMUNITY OF WEST CENTRAL LITTLE ROCK



**1**

*A Year of  
West Central Pride*

# WELCOME

## A Word from City Director Doris Wright

### GREETINGS:

It is my pleasure to bring to you this issue of the West Central Community magazine. It is a publication designed to share with the residents of West Central Little Rock the exciting things that are going on in our community. This publication is important because it is for us and about us!

As the elected representative of Ward 6, I am proud to introduce to you the various partnerships that have been established to enrich the lives of our residents. These partnerships will aid in our work toward improving the lives of our youth, young adults and seniors as well as support our economic development efforts. Our goal is to inspire our residents to shine by showcasing the positive activities that are going on in West Central Little Rock.

We recently celebrated the one year anniversary of the West Central Community Center and I am proud to say that residents are enjoying the center and the activities and programming that is offered there. We are continuing to work on getting our pool built and we hope to have an announcement in the near future as to when we will have the funding.

As you read this publication, I hope you will be inspired by the exciting things that are going on. I invite you to join me as we continue to work on developing our community and help build a generation of young, hardworking men and women that will help our neighborhoods grow as they strive for greatness in their own lives.

Yours in Service,  
City Director Wright  
Winter '17/Spring '18



## About this publication

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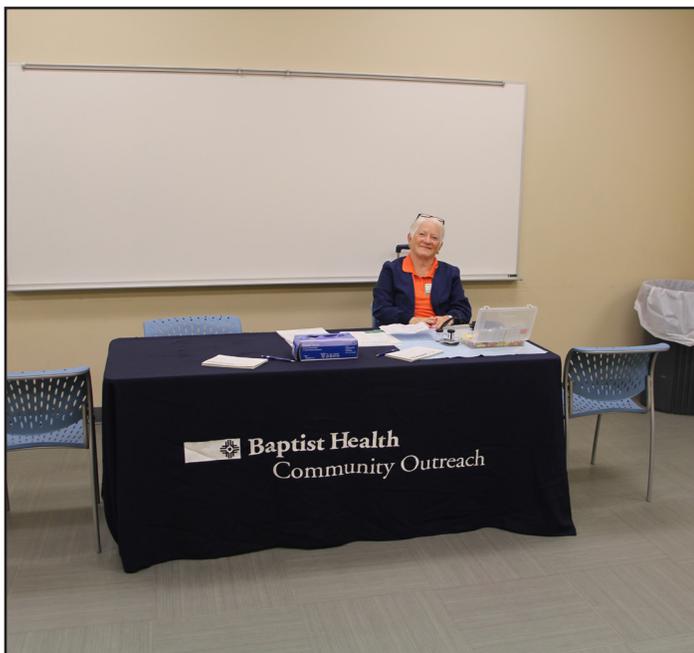
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# Meet John Eckart

## Director of Parks and Recreation

No matter where you live in Little Rock you're only minutes from the wide open spaces of a City Park – and some of the most fun things to do in Little Rock! Whether you live in downtown, midtown, north, south, east, west or southwest, you're not far from the best free family fun in Little Rock. Our city is nestled among a profusion of green open spaces and natural areas set aside for recreational, educational, ecological and aesthetic benefits for the people who live here to enjoy at their leisure.



John Eckhard, the city's Director of Parks and Recreation, is the steward of these natural treasures. Mr. Eckart started his tenure in June of this year after serving as the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Benton for the past five years.

During that time, he was able to coordinate numerous park upgrades and expand programming, most notably, the construction of Riverside Park. The new park includes: A community center with four basketball courts, a fitness area, competition and leisure pools, a 17,000 square foot senior center, a 50,000 square foot boys and girls



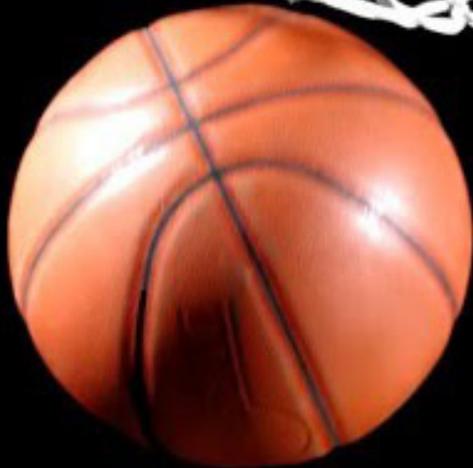
club building, three soccer fields, and five youth softball fields. Mr. Eckart notes that while he is proud of this project, he is happiest about “the positive impact it has had on the City of Benton.”

Little Rock's parks system is not only a source of pride for the city, but it has received national recognition for excellence! Little Rock Parks & Recreation became the 30th agency in the United States to

receive accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies.

Mr. Eckart is excited by the opportunities that lie ahead and has made it his main focus in the short term, to maintain and improve existing Parks and Recreation facilities. He also seeks to increase participation in all Parks and Recreation programs while offering new opportunities for Little Rock's youth, adults, and seniors.

# Slam Dunk!



Am I My Brother's  
Keeper Community  
Basketball Tournament  
scores major success

# How a community basketball tournament with humble beginnings has grown to be much more

**H**er father's legacy in sports and the loss of her daughter's father to gun violence inspired Little Rock native and Chief Operations Officer for Balanced Communications Tamara Farisa to start the Am I My Brother's Keeper? (AIMBK) Community Basketball Tournament. A 1993 Parkview High School graduate, Tamara never could have imagined how her story would resonate with so many or how the AIMBK tournament would help to answer community cries to stop gun and gang violence.

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**Save the Date**  
**AIMBK 2018**  
**June 10-12**



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The purpose of the AIMBK tournament is two-fold: To celebrate Little Rock's youth during National Children's Day and to combat the influence of gang and gun violence in Arkansas' capital city. Generally celebrated the second Sunday in June, National Children's Day gives individuals the opportunity to slow down and focus on some of the people who mean the most to them – family.

The basketball tournament helps to address gang and gun violence by giving middle and high school students a constructive way to spend their time – through youth sports, education, and community involvement.



# AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

A COMMUNITY BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



City of Little Rock Director Doris Wright of Ward 6 and the West Central Sports Complex (WCSC) proudly joined Fari-sa and a team of volunteers to help host the 2017 AIMBK Tournament. Their goal was to raise funds for youth sports and programming at West Central Sports Complex.

The double elimination, bracket-style tournament also featured a \$500 cash prize to the first place winners and an additional cash prize to the second place winners.

Visit [www.amimyb.com](http://www.amimyb.com) or the AIMBK Facebook page to learn more about registration and details for the upcoming tournament, June 10-12, 2018.

# New look, new sound, same mission



**West Central Community Radio**  
98.9 LPFM

KWCP is an innovative, non-profit, noncommercial LPFM radio station dedicated to serving the West Central Little Rock community.

Our motto is "West Central Pride" and our programming will help us foster that pride in our community residents! How will we achieve this? We will use community radio as a medium to share information that will let residents know that they are important and that we care about them and their families. Our programming will launch in January 2018 and will feature the following:

1. West Central Job Link - presented by the City of Little Rock Department of Human Resources, this will be a weekly show that will provide information on jobs available with the city. In addition, information will be provided on available jobs in major industries such as Little Rock Port and hospitality sector (hotels, restaurants, etc) of West Central Little Rock.
2. Housing & Neighborhood Programs will have a show hosted by Ruby Dean, Neighborhood Resource Specialist; the show will feature information



from the various divisions within the department such as Code Enforcement, Housing Rehab and 311.

3. Dana Dossett will host a show designed for non-profits to educate them on the process of working with the city.
4. Bill Ingram will host the Bill Ingram Sports show.

In addition to these shows, KWCP will work with area schools to develop a show for their school that will allow students to create, write and produce a show about their school.

In order to address the target populations of West Central Little Rock, KWCP LPFM will host talk radio and play a variety of music BUT the main music format will be known as the: **The Mix - Classic Hip Hop and Old School R&B.**

## KWCP 98.9 FM has recently undergone an exciting relaunch!

The music is new yet it has a familiar sound as it's mainly classic R&B and hip-hop. The music is meant to bring a smile to listeners' faces and ultimately, make the dream of John Barrow Neighborhood Association board members a reality.

Overall the station will use music to entertain; but once we have the

community residents listening, they will be informed about jobs, activities and programming that will help us serve them and their families. James Smith will serve as Operations Manager for the station. James brings a wealth of experience to the position, having worked with such professionals as Tom Joyner and Barry Gordy.

Jamal Quarles will serve as the station's Program Director.

Volunteer opportunities are open to members of the community. Working with WCCR allows individuals – especially young adults – to gain valuable experience in how to prepare, host, and engineer a radio show of professional caliber.



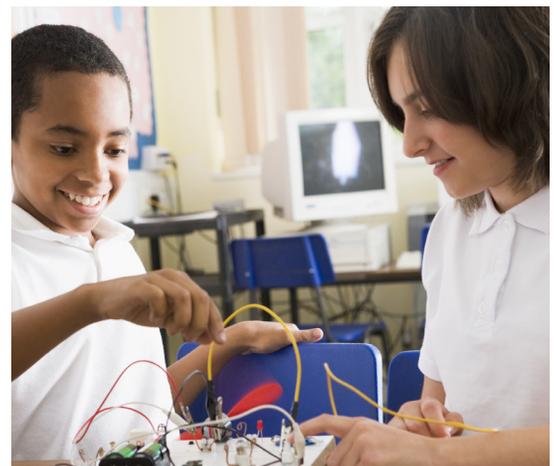
In the Department of Community Programs we believe that any child growing up in Little Rock should feel safe, supported and inspired to pursue a life of value. And all of Little Rock's children, youth and families deserve to live in a community where they can achieve a sustainable and meaningful quality of life. That's what makes our community a strong and vibrant one.

With all Little Rock citizens working together, we can make that vision a reality. We've made good strides in the past and now it's time to do more.

Join us, and let's make Little Rock a place to **thrive**.



[lrdcpcares.org](http://lrdcpcares.org)





# How One Woman's Vision for Housing Changed a Community

The seed of Pam Brown Courtney's vision was planted more than 15 years ago, when she saw a 10-acre tract of woods with infill housing. Located in the 72204 zip code, most developers saw only risk when they stared at the mostly empty expanse of acreage. Ms. Courtney, however, saw potential. She recognized that there was an opportunity to create a safe, peaceful community where families could find median-income housing of the same quality as homes in similar, yet unaffordable neighborhoods. Covenant Cove Community was born.

Covenant Cove actually began as a for-sale residential community, but because of the housing market crash and the time and money already invested in the project, it became a beautiful for-lease community comprised of 51 homes. Ms. Courtney says of her diverse community, "We have the best residents in Little Rock living in our community ... to show our appreciation to

our tenants, once or sometimes twice a year, we have neighborhood events, celebrate graduations, provide education scholarships, organize free giveaways, and participate in other activities."

But building and growing a community isn't all fun and games.

Ms. Courtney didn't realize how many members of the community – representatives and residents, bankers, attorneys, and politicians – she would have to meet with before she could even break ground on the Covenant Cove project. And like virtually every American citizen at the time, she couldn't have anticipated the economic crisis on the horizon and impending real estate and construction market crash. It seemed that much of the Cove's story was an uphill battle; yet, from the start, Ms. Courtney and her vision defied the odds. As she tells it, "Covenant Cove Community was built



by a girl from the hood who was informed by a professional evaluator that it was in her best interest to abandon her dream ... But I remembered my mother's voice saying, "With God anything is possible."

Perseverance through trials and tribulations paid off and Ms. Courtney's unwavering belief in her vision culminated in a quiet, peaceful community with great caring neighbors. When asked what she finds most rewarding about this project, Ms. Courtney says that she loves sharing the lessons she learned while helping to build Covenant Cove. "I tell others, 'You are your own best thing and the dream seeds that lay dormant in your heart can come alive whenever you choose to believe'... I hope to remind others to continue to believe in themselves and their dreams ... Dreaming, believing

and a willingness to work hard is a serious combination."

On October 17, 2017, The Covenant Cove Community received the City Beautiful Commission Award and was honored at the City Directors Board Meeting – a fitting ending for an underdog-turned-champion! But is that really "the end?" It may be a case of "happily ever after," but the Cove will continue to evolve and, as is so often the case, dreams beget bigger dreams. There is a new project on the horizon: Diamond Park. Also located in West Central Little Rock, the cozy residential community with patio homes and loft condominiums is in Phase I of its development. It's still taking shape, but with Ms. Courtney involved, it will be, without a doubt, a sanctuary for dreamers, doers, and community.

# West Central Little Rock Faith-Based Coalition

Area churches working together to save our community from violence and fear

Beginning in November 2016, our city has been plagued by violence much of it resulting in the loss of life. To date, we have had over 50 homicides. After the senseless murder of a young African American man at 32nd and Barrow Road, I approached my pastor Dr. Kevin A. Kelly and asked him for help in our effort to stem the tide of violence in our city. Our city is being torn apart by this senseless violence. Our neighborhoods are not safe for our citizens and the community is holding the Little Rock Board of Directors (BOD) responsible for the issues that exist in our communities. While I understand the BOD has a role to play, we as a legislative body cannot be solely responsible for what is going on in our community BUT, we do have an obligation to respond.

The plan that I outlined to him is my attempt to respond to what is going on in the West Central area of Little Rock that I represent. There are so many factors that play a role in where we are and chief among them is the celebration of violence in our media, music and our laws. It is my belief that a targeted approach is necessary in order to be effective. If we attempt to take on the whole city, we will become overwhelmed and discouraged. Therefore, as the elected representative for the area, I have decided to put forth a strategy which moves beyond the rhetoric I have been hearing. The example we set here in West Central Little Rock can serve as an example for the rest of our city. Towards that goal, we have established the West Central Little Rock Faith Based Coalition.

## **Faith Based Tradition, Presence and Potential**

In this task, the faith-based community has much at stake and much to contribute. What we believe, where we are, and how we live out our faith can make a great difference in the struggle against the violence gripping our city. We as the church, see the loss of lives. We serve the victims who are oftentimes members of our congregations. And we know of the fear that has taken hold over our communities. We must confront this culture of violence with a commitment to life, a vision



of hope and a call to action. Our assets in this challenge include:

- the example and teaching of Jesus Christ;
- the biblical values of respect for life, peace, justice, and community;
- our teaching on right and wrong, on family and work, on living a peaceable life with others, and on rights and responsibilities;
- our tradition of prayer, which can lead to a disarmament of the heart;
- a commitment to marriage and family life, to support responsible parenthood and to help parents in providing their children the values to live full lives;
- a presence in the neighborhoods – our churches are sources of life and hope in places of violence and fear;
- an ethical framework which calls us to practice and promote responsibility, forgiveness, generosity, concern for others, and fairness;

## **The Plan**

Here in West Central Little Rock men and women

of faith along with our community leaders can work together to offer hope in place of fear, to fight violence with programs of peace, to strengthen families and weaken gangs. Here are a few examples of what I would like to see us come together and offer:

1 On June 9-10, 2018, I am working with an organization out of Dallas, Texas called Balanced Communications, to host the "Am I My Brother's Keeper?" Community Basketball Tournament. The purpose of the event is to promote education and participation in youth sports as a means to combat gang violence. Balanced Communications is led by former residents of Little Rock who graduated from Parkview High School.

2 Work in concert with the West Central Community Center and the City of Little Rock's Department of Community Programs to offer youth outreach that would include workshops on conflict management and violence prevention.

3 Partner with the West Central Sports Complex to promote sports as a positive alternative to violence. Member churches could help in recruiting kids to play sports; church members can serve as coaches and score keepers.

4 Partner with the Little Rock Police Department and the West Central Community Center to promote a Safe Places Program for youth in the neighborhood.

5 Partner with KWCP 98.9 West Central Community Radio and use a multi-media approach that would include: TV, radio, PSA's, and social media to reach gang members to help them refocus their lives and reconnect with Church and community.

6 Raise funds to provide 30 teenagers with jobs for the summer as a viable alternative to gangs through employment opportunities. These young people would then clean up and help maintain our neighborhoods by cutting grass, picking up trash, cleaning our parks.

### The Frame Work

Much is being done, but more is required. The city is reorganizing its priorities with the implementation of the Youth Master Plan and recommitting our resources to confront the violence in our midst. This is not a simple process and there are many challenges and the results will take time to show; but by implementing

the plan that outlined above, we can do our part to assist with this effort and in so doing, create the type of community we want to live in and the kind of future we want for our children.

### The Path Forward

An invitation was sent to all 24 churches in West Central Little Rock; the five churches listed below responded and agreed to form the West Central Faith-based Coalition. The Pastor's met on December 7th to discuss the frame work of the organization and how it would function. We will come together again in January/February to plan our strategy for moving forward.

## ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

### Bread of Heaven Missionary Baptist Church



### Rosedale Church of God in Christ



# Senior residents remind youngsters it's never too late to go for gold

Meet the New Executive Director of Arkansas Senior Olympics, Greg Eberdt

Greg Ebert started as Executive Director of Arkansas Senior Olympics in April of 2017 but in no time, he felt right at home. "One of my favorite things about working for this organization is the diverse range of people I've gotten to meet in such a short amount of time. I'm excited to help Arkansas Senior Olympics continue to grow." Taking into account how many events are included in the Senior Olympics, it's hard to imagine it growing—there are already 19 events! To compete in sports like swimming, track and field, basketball, tennis, table tennis, golf, and archery, participants are divided into brackets based on age range, five years above or below their own. Men and women compete in gender-specific events unless playing in team events or mixed doubles.

An annual event, the Arkansas Senior Olympics has relocated from Hot Springs, Arkansas to Little Rock, where it is now held at the West Central Community Center. The 2017 Arkansas Senior Olympics took place September 13th – October 8th and 2018 dates will be posted on the Arkansas Senior Olympics website ([arseniorolympics.org](http://arseniorolympics.org)). Every two years, winners of events in Arkansas Senior Olympics go on to compete against other respective state winners in the National Senior Games, the most recent of which



was held this past June, in Birmingham, Alabama. The 2019 National Senior Games will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

While qualifying Senior Games events are a big part of Arkansas Senior Olympics, participants get to enjoy many other light-hearted, yet equally challenging activities that allow individuals of all age ranges, abilities, and degrees of

health to participate. These activities include beanbag baseball, basketball shoot, softball throw, baseball throw, and chair volleyball using a lighter ball for play. The ultimate goal is for everyone to stay active, have fun, and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow seniors!

To learn more, visit <http://arseniorolympics.org/new/> or call 501-321-1441.

# Meet Ms. Arkansas Senior America 2017, Sherry Marshall

After winning Ms. Arkansas Senior America 2017 in June, Sherry Marshall went on to represent Arkansas in the Ms. Senior America Pageant in Atlantic City, New Jersey, four months later. This national competition is judged in two phases: the Preliminary Round and the Finals. In the Preliminary Round, each contestant receives a score, from one to ten, in each of the four categories discussed above. Contestant interviews are held in advance, and the judges' scores for the Interview Category are submitted to the Chairperson and Tabulator. Judges provide scores in real-time as they judge contestants on stage. The four scores are then added together, and the ladies who receive the top ten scores are announced as Finalists. Finalists enter the stage for the Final Round with their scores from their Interviews and are judged a second time on their evening gown, 'philosophy of life,' and talent presentations.

While Ms. Marshall didn't win the national competition, she doesn't need another crown or title. Sherry Marshall shines like a star in jeans and boots. In her own words, "I have been an advocate for women's rights since I was a little girl. Refusing to wear anything but jeans and boots to school and defying my grandmother by wearing jeans and boots to church. I have the distinction of being the first married woman in my county to receive a library card in my own name and not my husband's name. As an unreasonably alienated grandparent, I am a strong advocate for grandparents' rights both locally and na-



tionally. I have worked closely with Arkansas Senators and Representatives to change the current grandparents' rights law in our state."

Ms. Marshall was also selected as a delegate to the Twentieth Biennial Arkansas 2016 Silver Haired Legislative Session, during which time she proposed, lobbied, and presented amendments to both the grandparents' rights law and the fluoride bill.

While she has Alport Syndrome, a rare genetic kidney disease, Sherry doesn't let that slow her down. She is currently part of an international study to help find a cure and stays active. An avid outdoorswoman,

she enjoys hunting, fishing and going four-wheeling. Ms. Marshall is also an accomplished archery hunter. When she isn't enjoying nature, she likes to do yoga, lift weights, sing, and dance. Fundamentally, she believes a healthy diet and physical exercise are essential to living a long, happy life!

A lifelong resident of Crawford County Arkansas, Ms. Marshall has always been active in her community. She currently serves as Page Administrator for fellow "Union-towners" on Facebook. She notes, "I keep residents up to date about community events, weather conditions and 'wild' donkeys and hogs that are on the highway."

# SPONSORS HELP US GROW: Become a part of West Central pride today



Growth is always positive, but growth also begets need. With a steady increase in the number of children participating in our programs each year, West Central Sports Complex needs the help of local residents and businesses more than ever before.

In 2011, it was recognized that existing facilities at the Rosedale Park did not meet service standards associated with modern parks or sports complexes and for this reason, would need to be rebuilt. These facilities included: 5 baseball fields (one of which doubles as a football field), a storage shed, a



concession stand, and a men's and women's restroom facility.

In order to meet the immediate and most pressing needs of the community, we successfully sought to fund and complete Phase 1, which includes a community center and new entry off John Barrow Road. Construction of the pool is proposed as Phase 2 and reconstruction of the Rosedale Softball/Baseball Complex is scheduled for Phase 3.

The City of Little Rock has agreed to sponsor Phase 2 but Phase 3 has not been funded. Phase 3



includes reconstruction of five existing baseball fields; a rebuild of the main concession/restroom facilities; and construction of batting cages, a storage facility (garage), a football field, a basketball center, and a new parking lot.

While we have made significant progress, remaining portions of the project can only be implemented as funds become available. For this reason, we are 'recruiting' local 'team players' wishing to donate and help us triumph in our latest fundraising campaign.



For more information about sponsorship opportunities, please visit [WestCentralSportsComplex.com](http://WestCentralSportsComplex.com) or contact Mr. John Eckhart, Director of Parks and Recreation at (501) 371-4436 or [jeckhart@littlerock.gov](mailto:jeckhart@littlerock.gov)

# A Real Community Gem: Ruby E. Dean

**M**et West Central Resource Officer Ruby E. Dean. Ruby began her work with Housing and Neighborhood Programs at the West Central Resource Center on John Barrow Road in June of 2017.

She has served nonprofit organizations for more than 25 years through her assistance with scholarship implementation, grant writing, food pantries, and housing. For the past 36 years, she has also worked with the State of Arkansas to maintain safe and affordable housing for low-to moderate-income individuals through HOME funds, CDBG funds, tax-exempt bonds, and low income housing tax credits.

Mrs. Dean's credentials include a Master's in Business Administration, license in Real Estate, and a certification in Public Management with the State of Arkansas. A testament to the dedication she has for community outreach, Ruby served as Chairman of the Delta Presents Outreach Foundation from 2011 – 2015 and Chairman of the New Hope Community Outreach Foundation from 1999 - 2009. In both of these roles, she helped to raise the bar in fundraising efforts, food pantries, daycare centers, scholarships, housing and community development.

As West Central Resource Officer, Mrs. Dean places a high value on community partnerships, saying, "Collaborating with the many organizations, businesses, and churches in our area helps us build a stronger, safer community. When that happens, we all win."



# Spotlight on Community Partnerships

## The R.E.N.E.W. Project

The R.E.N.E.W. (Removing Every Negative Emotion & Word) project is designed for inner city youth grades 7-12 and focuses on students who are at risk, have not been successful in traditional environments, or have excessive personal/social issues.

The R.E.N.E.W. initiative is broken down into 30 weekly sessions, which will run from November 2017 - June 2018. Participants will meet weekly at the Delta Presents Outreach Community Based Counseling



Center. The R.E.N.E.W. initiative seeks to reduce teen pregnancies, gang affiliation, low self-esteem, and the high school drop-out rate while boosting the confidence and morale of students in the community.

R.E.N.E.W. serves a five-fold purpose:

- Promote ways to increase self-image deficiencies in middle and high school students. The ACT Engage Assessment will be used as a motivation assessment at the beginning, middle, and end of the program and will measure the effectiveness of the weekly R.E.N.E.W. sessions.
- Educate middle and high school students about the importance of discussing historical events. The students will spend time understanding how past events are directly connected to present day issues.
- Assist parents, educators, and students in developing skills to help close or reduce the communication gap between generations. Parents and students will participate in in four joint sessions to close the gap.
- Combat the dropout rates among middle and high school students. Students who successfully com-

plete the 30-week program will celebrate their accomplishments during a formal ceremony.

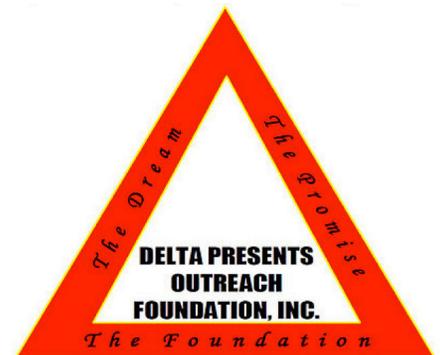
- Provide practical advice on how to identify, work toward, and achieve solutions that lead to greater academic, personal/social, and career opportunities in life.

R.E.N.E.W., in partnership with City Director Doris Wright (Ward 6) and the West Central Sports Complex, supports the recruitment of students and families from Section 8 Apartments in Ward 6 who can benefit from its services.



## Delta Presents Outreach Foundation, Inc. Community Based Counseling Center

The Delta Presents Outreach Foundation (DPOF) is a community-based organization that provides youth with services that can be adapted to their individual academic mentoring and counseling support needs. The goal is to provide parents and students with access to information materials, guidance, and technological resources that they need to support their educational and vocational education pursuits. The DPOF Community Based Counseling Center houses individual, group, and family activities designed to help individuals needing assistance with navigating their paths to a successful educational and vocational future.



The DPOF Community Counseling Center possesses an all-volunteer staff consisting of one or more licensed school teachers, educational administrators, certified school counselors, board certified/licensed mental health counselors, technology specialists, and nonprofit managers. Volunteers are the life-blood of the Counseling Center, the majority of who are from the Little Rock Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. The Counseling Center also receives support from the Delta Presents Alumni Association, five decades all male, African American, Delta Presents Honorees. These members are being mobilized to serve as volunteer mentors to youth enrolled in the counseling program.

A partnership with City Director Doris Wright (Ward 6) and the West Central Sports Complex will help to facilitate the recruitment of students and families from Section 8 Apartments in Ward 6 in need of services. In return, the DPOF supports Director Wright's initiative of a 7 – 10 year old girl's mentoring program. The Initiative also provides opportunity for early recogni-



tion of athletic talent, which could lead to recruitment of youth aspiring to be professional athletes. Their parents are also educated about how to help student athletes understand NCAA Eligibility.

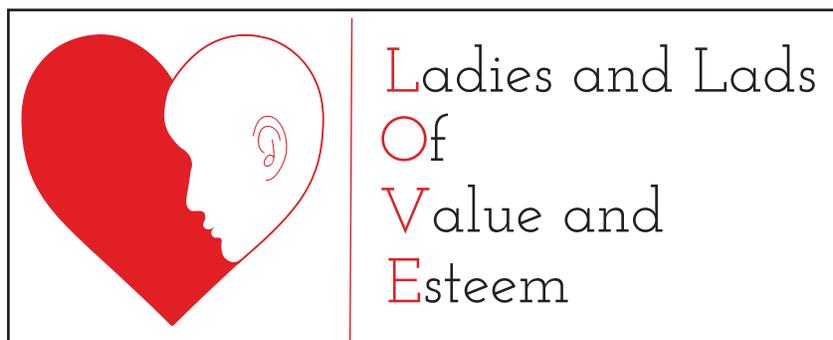
## Ladies and Lads of Value and Esteem (LOVE)

Ladies and Lads of Value and Esteem (LOVE) is the brain child of City Director Doris Wright. She met with the Delta Presents Outreach Foundation to request our help in the formation of a partnership to redirect and empower young females in the West Central Community of Little Rock, AR. She shared data with the foundation related to the decline of the academic success in school, teen pregnancy, misogyny, sexual and physical abuse, lack of self-esteem and a lack of positive role models in the community.

Ladies of value and esteem will focus on reimagining the current stereotypes that shapes the images of Arkansas and American females in the West Central quandary. The heart of the LOVE program's curriculum will inspire the girls in the program to rise above their current state.

We will address the following areas of social concern:

- Branding
- Social skills
- Conflict resolution
- Academic success
- Decision making
- Self-empowerment





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HISTORY REPORT.

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# REMAKE LEARNING PROJECT



## **When:**

From June 11-15, 2018, something BIG is planned for the City of Little Rock's new West Central Community Center – it will be turned into a tech center where children will learn to use technology to express their creativity, solve real-world problems, and build job-ready skills. The Youth Art Contest will take place in April 23-28, 2018; The Media Arts Project (Sports Broadcasting) will take place May 21-26, 2018. Interested participants may register for the programs by contacting the West Central Community Center staff.

## **How will it work?**

In June the REC2TEC project will be implemented by the Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub. Each afternoon the Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub will host hands-on activities at the West Central Community Center during which children will learn new skills in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics). Each session will also include a physical activity plus a healthy snack and dinner.

## **Who can participate?**

Children age 7–12 are eligible. West Central Rec2Tech will be completely free and open to the public.

## **Partners**

Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub, Comcast Universal, Entergy and City of Little Rock.

# Team Spirit





# On the field & on the court



# Officially Fun



- It takes a time commitment to become a top official. There is more involved than reading a rule book. Top officials attend meetings, stay updated on changes in the sport, and attend clinics to improve.

- Through it all, officials are able to have fun doing their job, confident that they have put in the time to give their best effort.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Any player or coach who has put time and effort into a sport appreciates the same type of effort from the officials who oversee the games.

- WCSC officials are expected to maintain strong character and unquestionable integrity.

- In working with young people, officials are expected to contribute to the development and educational experience of the competitors.

## PAID TO HAVE FUN

Officials will work as independent contractors. Pay varies based on the sport and the level but it typically is on a per-game basis in the ballpark of \$12.50 to \$25 a game. Pay also can go up for postseason games, opportunities that typically are awarded to top officials.

## GETTING STARTED

If you think you have what it takes to be a Sports Official, the next step is to apply. Applicants who meet the qualifications will attend classes offered by the WCSC. Once they complete the class they must become AAA certified. New officials will have a trial period to see how they react under pressure. They will start out in the lower age leagues and as they gain experience they will work their way up the older leagues.

Opportunities are available in baseball, softball, T-ball, football, basketball, and volley ball. Not every official has played the sport they work, but they do put in the effort to understand the rules and how to apply them within the flow of the game.

Our moto is “PLAY HARD”, and if you think you have what it takes, you are invited to apply!

## Join our sports official program

Players aren't the only all-stars—those who help to uphold the rules of the game are just as important as those who must play by them. Established in March 2013, the Youth Sports Officials Program is designed to allow Little Rock citizens 18 years of age and older, the opportunity to become paid officials of youth sports.

These individuals play a critical role to the success of the West Central Sports Complex because, as participation in WCSC programs has grown each year, so too has the need for qualified officials. Our Youth Sports Officials lead players by example, applying their ability and a sense of fairness to split-second decisions, conflict resolution, and high-pressure scenarios — and manage to have fun too!

### ARE YOU RIGHT FOR THE JOB?

The Arkansas Athletics Association (AAA) suggests considering these factors before becoming an official:

- Sports officials are placed in highly charged situations. They need to keep their cool, even if others around them lose perspective and control.



## AT&T grant will help fund hospitality industry career training program at Community Center

West Central Community Center is the proud recipient of a \$10,000 grant from AT&T that will allow the center to provide training for jobs in the hospitality industry.

A broad, multibillion dollar field, this industry includes jobs in lodging, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise line and other areas. Hospitality is listed as the fastest growing industry in Arkansas.

The West Central Community Center, with the help of hospitality partners, is committed to providing entry level to mid-career and professional level hospitality training to 50 high school students and young adults. The purpose of the training

program is to equip individuals with practical skills that enhance their job opportunities, with an additional goal of building the hospitality workforce in Little Rock.

The training will become part of the Community Center's ongoing programming. In Little Rock, there are great employment opportunities in the hospitality and tourism sector. In Ward 6 Shackleford Crossing and the surrounding areas have seen continued growth in the industry with the addition of several restaurants and hotels.

In addition to hospitality training, the program will also include:

- Development of participants' resumes and job application

completion

- Regular assessments, presentations, hands-on training in a specialized department, certification.
- Trainee tracking and regularly informing participants of opportunities available in the hospitality sector.
- Participants' assessment during this short but intensive training will include; quizzes, presentations, and testing.
- Upon program completion, and before entry into the hospitality industry trainees will once again be interviewed by a panel, including managers and leaders in the hospitality industry to better prepare for real-world work experience.

# YOUTH ART PROJECT

The West Central Arts and Culture Council Youth Art Project seeks to engage youth primarily between the ages of 14 and 17 from all parts of the city in developing original artwork for display in the new West Central Community Center.

Including young people as meaningful contributors in the social and economic aspects of community building must not be overlooked and cannot be left to schools and parents alone. The WCSC YAP seeks to stimulate the creative juices of its youth in shaping and uplifting their community's self-image.



Engaging youth has a dual benefit: it also brings more adults into the picture. Research in civic engagement by the League of Women Voters indicates that the factor most likely to get people more involved in community affairs is helping to improve conditions for youth.

The Youth Art Project will be a part of the REMAKE Learning Project and will take place in April. In addition to the Youth Art Contest, we will offer youth an opportunity to express themselves and show their love of community by participating in the **Community Art Project**. This project will involve the painting of murals on the retaining walls along 28th street and at the corner of 32nd and Barrow Road. The Arkansas Regional Innovation Hub will coordinate this project along with youth participating in our RENEW and LOVE programs.



## CONTEST GUIDELINES

**Qualifications:** Any student that is currently enrolled in high school between the 9th grade and the 12th grade can enter the contest.

Submit letter of intent to enter by February 2, 2018

**Type of art:** Two-dimensional art creations of water color, acrylic, oil, charcoal, etc., are welcome. Digital computer art and photography are also allowed.

- The dimensions of the art should be no more than 20" x 24" and no less than 8.5" x 11".
- The art submitted needs to be mounted on a mat of paper material but must not be hard-framed.
- The official submission form needs to be filled out and sent in along with the art to the community center by the deadline.
- Only one entry per artist.

## JUDGING

The winning artworks will be selected by 3 to 5 judges consisting of Arkansas Arts Center staff, college professors of the UALR Art Department and well-known artists. The criteria of judging includes creativity, color, the techniques of the drawing, and how related the content is to the themes of the contest.

## AWARDS

The following are the awards to be granted to the cho-



sen winners of the competition: a first, second, and third place award, and several City Director's awards. In addition, the winning artworks will be displayed in West Central Community Center.

First place will receive \$300, a certificate and a trophy. Second place will receive \$200, a certificate and a trophy. Third place will receive \$100, a certificate and a trophy. City Director's Award winners will each receive a certificate.



Help Pave the Way  
to the Future!

## Buy a Brick Campaign

### Be Our Partner

Become a part of the West Central legacy by adding your name, or the name of someone you want to honor, to our sports complex. Proceeds will fund the new sports complex and community center, and our programs and activities.

### Building for the Future.

When you purchase a brick, you will help our community provide programs and activities for our youth, and help to ensure their future success.

### Why Purchase a Brick?

- Your brick purchase will build our community center and expose our youth to unique events and programs.
- You, your family and loved ones will be a permanent part of West Central and the community's history.



Bricks are \$100 for individuals and \$250 for businesses. Simply complete the below information by entering the message you would like to display and submitting your payment. Or, if you prefer, you can [download the form](#) and mail to: Attn: City Parks Conservancy P.O. Box 7329 Little Rock, AR 72217.

*Order online at West Central Sports Complex Buy a Brick Campaign*



# Talking Public Safety with Captain Heath Helton



A 21-year veteran with the Little Rock Police Department, Captain Heath Helton is the new commander of the Northwest Patrol Division, which is comprised of eight patrol districts and encompasses the area west of University Avenue and north of Rock Creek/Colonel Glenn Road. Throughout his career, Captain Helton has gained extensive experience working in Training, Patrol, Financial Crimes, S.W.A.T., Special Response Unit, Helicopter Unit, and the River Market Unit. He has served not only as a Supervisor in the Patrol Division, River Market Unit, Recruit Training Unit, and S.W.A.T. Unit, but also as the Staff Adjutant for the Northwest and Special Operations Divisions.

Over the course of his career, Captain Helton has received numerous civilian and supervisor commendations, three Life-saving awards, three Police Commendation awards, the Civic Achievement award and the Chief Lawrence Johnson Leadership Award. He is also the co-director for the Arkansas Law Enforcement Torch Run benefiting Special Olympics, sits on the Board of Directors for Special Olympics Arkansas, and serves as Region VI Coordinator for the International Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics International.

In addition to his current responsibilities for the Northwest Precinct, Captain Helton is pursuing a Bachelor's of Science degree in Organizational Management from Central Baptist College. He is a 2017 graduate of the F.B.I. National Academy-Session 268, the F.B.I., and Criminal Justice Institute-Arkansas Leader Session XXIV. Captain Helton also holds a Senior Certificate and Professional Police Instructor Certifications from the Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training.

When asked to share his thoughts about what some primary public safety challenges are and what can be done to overcome them, Captain Helton observes, "Recent incidents nationwide have highlighted commu-



nity concerns and conversations about public safety priorities are often tense. In order to overcome strained relationships between the community and the police, I think it is important that we begin to listen and understand one another. To accomplish this, we must first recognize the areas that we need to improve on."

Captain Helton feels strongly that his relationship with the community is vital. He tries to seize every opportunity to build new relationships with those who live and work alongside him in the community. Captain Helton believes that positive daily interactions with community members allows officers to make themselves known to the community and create a culture of mutual trust and respect.

"I think the community should know the men and women of the Little Rock Police Department are working hard to improve trust and realize the challenges that we must overcome in order to accomplish this task. It is important to this agency that we continue to discuss and listen to concerns from the community and work towards mutual partnerships that can hopefully improve the quality of life for all our citizens."

# Work in Progress: John Barrow Streetscape

## OVERVIEW

John Barrow Road (JBR) is currently classified as a minor arterial on the City of Little Rock Master Street Plan. It serves as a north-south connection from I-630 to Colonel Glenn Road. JBR traffic counts include 28,000 vehicles per day from I-630 to Kanis Road, 24,000 per day from Kanis Road to Labette Drive, and from 36th Street south to Colonel Glenn Road at 14,000 vehicles per day.

Schools and churches in the neighborhood include Parkview Arts Science Magnet High School with approximately 1,050 students; Romine Elementary School with approximately 365 students and Second Baptist Church with 5,000+ members. There are also several medical facilities mixed with some residential.

West Central Sports Complex on the south end of the project is a recreational destination that anchors the project. This park is undergoing approximately \$7 million in improvements that include the West Central Community Center.

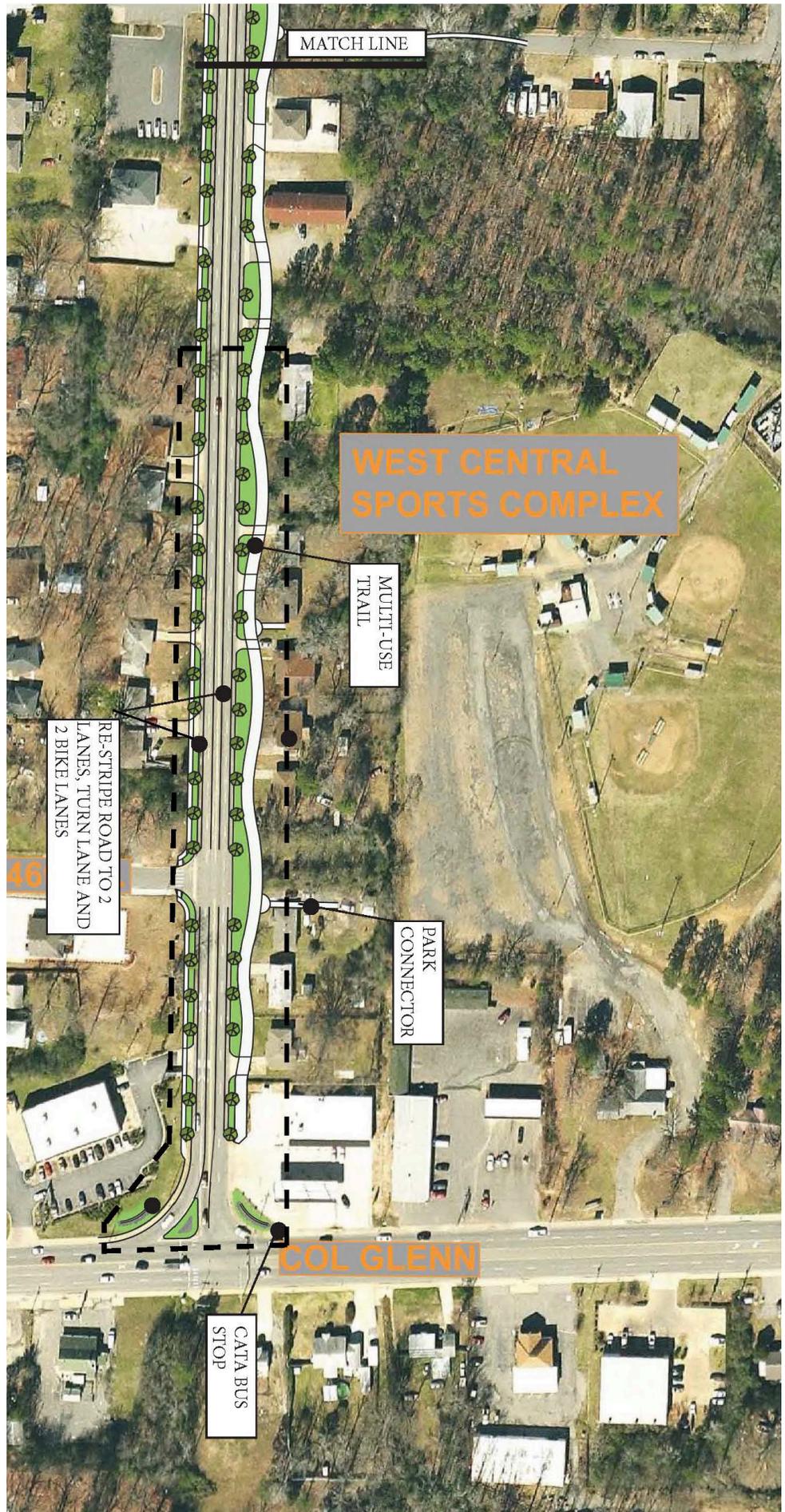
## VISION:

- Provide guidance for future development of streetscape
- Accentuate specific locations/nodes
- Provide community identity
- Provide visual connectivity
- Enhance the pedestrian's, cyclist's, and motorist's experience and safety

## GOALS

The following goals have been established to be considered throughout the development of the streetscape where applicable:

- Establish gateways
- Provide boulevard ambiance
- Include historic connection



# West Central Pride and Progress

Come see what we have to offer; learn what's to come

Now entering its 13th season, the West Central Sports Complex is a place where all West Central Little Rock residents can enjoy sports and other recreational activities.

The addition of the West Central Community Center further enhances the opportunities for youth, young adults and seniors. The park also includes KWCP Radio (West Central Pride) and will eventually include a pool and a football field. A variety of offerings are already available:

## HIGH SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

WCSC sports also include the High School Development League. This league will emphasize academic excellence and further development of athletic abilities to maximize student eligibility to play at the high school level for grades 9-12.

## SUMMER CAMPS

Basketball  
Baseball  
Softball  
Football  
Volleyball  
Soccer  
Cheer  
Dance  
Swim



## MENTORING PROGRAMS

Tomorrow Youth Prevention (after school program for boys)  
Sorority Mentorship Program (after school program for girls)

## ANNUAL TOURNAMENTS

Girls Basketball (Fall 2017)  
Pre-season Basketball (Nov. 2018)  
Basketball (Dec. 2018)  
Girls Softball (Spring 2018)  
Annual Cheer-off (Nov. 2018)

## CLINICS

Skills and Drills for Baseball and Basketball  
Sports Officiating for Umpires and Referees (Baseball, Softball, Football)

## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

After School Care

After School Tutoring  
After School Meal Program

## SUMMER PROGRAMS

Summer Feeding Program  
Summer Employment Job Site

## UNIQUE PROGRAMS

Play Hard! Sports Radio (Features local high schools and a player of the week during basketball, baseball, and football seasons)  
Youth Radio Project (ages 8-19)  
Radio Internships

## ADULT PROGRAMS

Health and Wellness Classes  
Spade Club  
Chess Club  
Sports Leagues (Kickball, Flag Football, Pickle Ball)  
Semi-Pro Football Game Site  
Radio Show

## SENIOR CITIZEN PROGRAMS

Reading Club  
Gardening Club  
Bean Bag Baseball League  
Arts & Crafts  
Scrapbooking  
Cooking  
Sewing/Quilting  
Radio Show

# Connect with your city on the go



Download Little Rock's 311 app

## **JUST A QUICK CLICK AWAY\***

Enter non-emergency requests ranging from reporting abandoned vehicles, stray dogs and missed garbage pick-up to potholes, vandalism and out street lights.

Receive real-time status updates.

No smartphone?  
Call us. Operators are standing by.

**\*For Apple and Android devices**

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in your app store

**littlerock.gov**