



Media Release

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**ARKANSAS SERVICE COMMISSION LEARN AND SERVE PROGRAM
EXPANDS WITH GRANT FROM LIONS CLUB INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION**

Little Rock, Ark.— Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) has awarded \$100,000 to Arkansas Lions clubs to expand Lions Quest in Learn and Serve classrooms throughout the state. Expansion of Lions Quest, a K-12 life skills and youth development program, will ensure nearly 3,000 students in middle and high schools in Arkansas benefit from the values of social and emotional learning.

The Lions Quest program will complement the skills teachers are providing children as part of the Learn and Serve program, which is designed to foster civic responsibility while enhancing academic curriculum. The Department of Human Services Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support's Arkansas Service Commission administers the Learn and Serve program that is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Lions Quest program encourages students to be self-aware, to regulate their emotions, to recognize and appreciate individual and group similarities and differences, to seek out and appropriately use family, school, and community resources, to develop good relationship skills and to demonstrate responsible decision-making at school, at home and in the community.

“It is the goal of the Service Commission to provide Lions Quest training throughout the state,” Arkansas Service Commission Executive Director Mary Bea Gross said. “We want to ensure this learning takes place in varying grade and student achievement levels and in different regions of Arkansas. The Lions Quest training is an ideal opportunity to engage in collaborative learning activities with organizations and individuals to expand service learning.”

Arkansas Lions clubs secured grant funding from LCIF to promote the Lions Quest program in the state. The clubs also provided funding for the program and are working closely with local schools. Club members will join students in service learning projects in their communities.

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“Arkansas Lions are excited to support the Service Commission and the statewide effort to provide youth with life skills and a commitment to service,” Lions Quest Chairperson Toni Shockey said. “In addition to teacher workshops and funds to sustain the program in the future, we look forward to continuing our efforts in the community and working with young people on a variety of service projects.”

The current Learn and Serve grant cycle includes nine sites. Training workshops were held in Fayetteville and Hot Springs in June and July respectively, to prepare teachers to implement Lions Quest programs in their classrooms. Participants received training and materials supported by the LCIF grant and local Lions clubs.

One teacher who has completed the training said it best: “I would highly recommend it for the Learn and Serve Program participants. I plan on using as much of the curriculum that I received as I am able to use. I would definitely use it all if I had the time to do so. Thanks for the information on this workshop!”

Schools that will begin Lions Quest this school year include: Fayetteville High School, Forrest City High School, Central High School in Little Rock, Quitman Elementary School, Paris Middle School and Paris High School BAM, Shirley Alternative School, Valley View Elementary School and Vilonia Middle School.

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About Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF)

LCIF supports the large-scale humanitarian initiatives of members of Lions Clubs International, the world’s largest service club organization with 1.35 million members in 206 countries and regions. LCIF has been named the #1 NGO with which to partner, according to a Financial Times survey. Serving youth has been a longstanding mission of LCIF. LCIF has awarded more than 200 grants for a cumulative total of more than US\$13 million to expand or establish Lions Quest programs across 65 countries around the world, impacting more than 12 million youths. To learn more visit www.lionsquest.org.

About the Arkansas Service Commission (ASC)

ASC administers the Learn and Serve program funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), and is a unit of the Department of Human Services Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support. ASC’s mission is to improve communities in Arkansas through service and volunteering. Connect to Arkansas AmeriCorps on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/AmeriCorpsArkansas>.