

## The McDuffie Progress

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### Walmart gives out grants

By JUSTIN SCHUVER  
 Editor

Thomson's Walmart made \$1,000 grants to four separate agencies Thursday morning, helping out a variety of good causes ranging from medical needs to the Special Olympics.

Store manager Georgia Pressley said the store was

happy to give the grants, which included Special Olympics, the "Angel Flight" program, the Y-130 Center and Family Y, and the Thomson-McDuffie Chamber of Commerce's "Drugs Don't Work" program. The funding came from the national retailer's Walmart Foundation.

"As a company, we try to give several donations that

can help people in need in our communities," Pressley said. "We are just happy to be given this opportunity."

Bo Bowman, the branch manager of Angel Flight, said the program was appreciative of Walmart's contribution. Angel Flight is a non-profit organiza-

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Shown are (L-R): Georgia Pressley, Walmart store manager; Bo Bowman, branch manager of Angel Flight; Corie Johnson, Y-130 branch manager; Carolyn Gilbert, executive director of the Thomson-McDuffie Chamber of Commerce; and Cindy Nelson, Walmart assistant manager.

Photo by Justin Schuver

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tion that provides transportation services to those who cannot afford trips to far-away medical care facilities.

"Basically, it's a collection of pilots who own their own aircraft and are willing to donate their time to the cause," Bowman said. "For some people, they can't afford traveling great distances to have cancer treatments, or chemotherapy, or things like that. What we do is provide them a flight to that destination — we don't pay for the medical costs, but we do provide the transportation, which is often a huge need."

Bowman said Angel Flight helped 2,542 people last year, and that each "flight mission" costs approximately \$500.

"I feel very lucky to be a part of this program, because it takes something I love — flying — and lets me combine it with helping people in need," he said.

Bowman said the program gets referrals from patients' doctors, hospitals and other sources. For more information, visit online at

[www.angelflightsoars.org](http://www.angelflightsoars.org).

Y-130 Branch Manager Corie Johnson said the donation would help the Family Y's "Strong Kids" scholarship program, as well as activities throughout the year.

"Strong Kids is our program that provides financial aid to individuals who may not otherwise be able to take advantage of our programs," she said. "We don't want to turn anyone away, and this money will help us fund those scholarships."

"Drugs Don't Work" is a statewide program whose purpose is to assist local businesses with establishing drug-free workplaces. Businesses that establish drug-free workplaces can take advantage of credits on workers' comp insurance.

Last year, in the U.S., Walmart and the Walmart Foundation gave more than \$467 million in cash and in-kind gifts — an \$89 million increase over the previous year, according to the company's Web site. For more information, visit online at [walmart-stores.com/CommunityGiving/203.aspx](http://walmart-stores.com/CommunityGiving/203.aspx).