
WilmerHale, Dayton Early College Academy Develop New Community Partnership

FEBRUARY 8, 2017

WilmerHale and [Dayton Early College Academy](#) (DECA) are pleased to announce a two-year philanthropic partnership through which the law firm will provide DECA—an early college program that offers Dayton Public School K-12 students the opportunity to excel academically and graduate—with financial support, volunteer service, in-kind donations and pro bono legal representation. WilmerHale has already begun working with DECA to make a lasting impact on students and the Dayton community.

[Recently recognized by Ohio Governor John Kasich for leading the way in innovation](#), DECA serves more than 1,100 students who are eagerly working towards a bright future. The organization continues to grow and is currently accepting new [applications for enrollment](#) through March 2017. More than 80% of DECA students are the first in their family to go to college and 75% are living below the poverty line. WilmerHale's support will help DECA continue to immerse students in a culture of achievement and personal responsibility.

"It's crucial for these students to get the mentoring and other assistance needed to succeed in higher education," says Dr. Judy Hennessey, DECA CEO and superintendent. "By increasing our volunteers and resources, WilmerHale is allowing DECA more bandwidth to support our current and future students. The firm has rolled up their sleeves and is already engaged with students. This has great impact in our community."

Through the partnership, DECA will receive \$25,000 annually for two years, as well as in-kind and volunteer support during DECA events and activities throughout the year, including mock trial practices and individual reading and editing assistance for all grade levels.

"The firm is proud to serve local students through DECA," says WilmerHale Managing Director Donna Smith. "I'm confident that our Dayton team of more than 250 highly educated and talented individuals specializing in business services and discovery solutions will serve as an outstanding support system and example for the organization and students. This partnership with DECA reinforces our goal in supporting the community through philanthropic work and will help DECA in

their goal to help more students attain higher education.”

Individuals in the firm's Dayton office are critical to WilmerHale's business needs, including finance, human resources, information services, operations, document review and management, and practice management, and will provide students with mentors from numerous backgrounds in the legal industry.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of WilmerHale's firmwide innovative Community Partnership Model, offering the power of attorneys and staff to make a decisive impact on issues facing local communities. Through this focused model, the firm concentrates resources on a [group of organizations](#) for multi-year cycles, with an eye toward long-term relationship and capacity building.

About Dayton Early College Academy

After more than a dozen years, the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) has built a K-12 school district, focused on instilling within our students a passion not only for attending college, but graduating with the perseverance of career readiness. What sets DECA apart from other school are the high expectations set for students. From community service and jobs shadows, to extensive “Gateways” that prepare and apply students into college courses, DECA provides opportunities for our students to gain the experience and exposure they need to be successful in college and beyond. As a public charter, DECA depends on private support to close the gap between public funding and the cost of educating our students. For more information, please visit www.daytonearlycollege.org or visit the [admissions page](#) directly.