



**ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL, INC. OF DALLAS TEXAS**

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY WITH LITERACY AT THE  
LETOT JUVENILE CENTER**

**Nomination for the Letha H. Brown Literacy Award**

**May 21, 2008**

**ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL, INC. OF DALLAS TEXAS  
District Nine  
Club Year 2007-2008  
P.O. BOX 671033  
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USA**



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**LETHA H. BROWN LITERACY AWARD**

**ENTRY FORM**

**District:** Nine

**Name of Club:** Altrusa International, Inc., of Dallas, Texas

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**Club Membership  
(as of entry date):** 42

**Project Title:** MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY WITH LITERACY AT THE  
LETOT JUVENILLE CENTER

The Letot Center, a facility of the Dallas County Juvenile Department, has been an ongoing service recipient of our Club since 1989, and have been working with Letot longer than any other service organization. Letot serves as a short-term co-educational residential facility for runaway youths. With the capacity for 40 children at a time, they provide assessment, crisis intervention, emergency shelter care, foster care, non-residential counseling and referral services. Programming is designed to reunite runaways with their families whenever possible and to prevent youth from committing criminal offenses or from entering the Juvenile Justice System.

Focusing on literacy and continuing to support a highly recognized facility within our community, we selected refurbishing and restocking the Library at the Letot Center as our Make a Difference Project 2007. This project was carried out over two consecutive Saturdays. We discarded the worn-out books, and categorized the remaining ones into fiction, non-fiction and enhancement, and reshelfed in alphabetical order; we collected over 700 additional books which we categorized, alphabetized, and shelved, plus donated over 100 CDs, and monetary donations from members purchased reading chairs, a table and fixtures, plus we were able to purchase and replace the art and craft supplies.

This year's effort started when we invited Letot residential caseworkers to speak at a regular club meeting and after discussing the needs of the Center, our project chair coordinated the details and put together an action plan. The plan was divided in several categories including staffing needs, logistics, scheduling, supplies to be purchased and/or donated and was disseminated by the chair at club meetings and through e-mails and member participants signed up for their chosen responsibility(ies).

Our MADD/Literacy project was a success by any measure. We worked in both the art room and the library. First we cleaned the art room, discarded old art supplies, and then

organized the new supplies we purchased for them. In the library we discarded the worn-out tired books, and categorized the remaining books in fiction, non-fiction, and self-help section and re-shelved the books in alphabetical order working with the Letot residents.

On Make a Difference Day, six (6) club members and six (6) members of the Letot staff met at a Half Price Books Donation Center at 7AM and we left a few hours later each with two boxes of donated books, all age and category appropriate for the Letot children. We returned to the Letot library, and further categorized, alphabetized and shelved over 700 additional books into and with the library, again with the help of the Letot residents. We also provided the Library with two recliner chairs, 6 CD/MP 3 players, a table and a lamp to enhance the reading experience. At the end, the kids had a well-organized library with a comfortable place to read, plus we ended each day with a pizza lunch and our traditional Halloween party.

This project cut to the heart of one of the most important needs of our children. Our work in restocking and organizing the Library enhances reading skills and open the mind to new ideas. The Superintendent of the Letot Center applauded our efforts. As for us, to have a successful project focusing on Literacy and Letot is a very rewarding experience for us plus this project gave us the opportunity to work and talk with the kids one-on-one. We will continue to restock the library shelves with donated books from the Half Price Book Donation Center on a as need basis since we presume that the kids will be taking home books for reading.

With our goals more than attained, at the end of our Literacy/Make a Difference Day Project, the numbers speak for themselves:

Altrusa service hours – 120 hours

Letot Staff Member Participants – 10

Letot resident helpers – 25

Donated Books – 700

Donated CDs - 100

Donated CD/MPS Players – 6

Arts and Craft Supplies