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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Parks and Rec Staff Earns Georgia Bright From the Start License

Stonecrest, GA – The city’s Parks and Recreation Department recently earned a Georgia Bright From the Start license for the Browns Mill Recreation Center. The team, led by Parks and Recreation Director Sean DePalma, will reinstate the Stonecrest Afterschool Program on February 3, 2020, offering youth programs with higher standards and a more well-rounded curriculum which will include science, arts and crafts, and technology classes.

The staff worked in conjunction with the South DeKalb YMCA staff and Dr. Sheila Lewis, a consultant with Creating Connections in developing a new after-school program and obtaining the license. In addition to the curriculum upgrades, the staff had to upgrade the recreation center to include new HVAC improvements, electrical upgrades, and the installation of fencing to secure outdoor play areas.

The license ensures youth programs with a high service standard and will allow parents to participate in the Childcare and Parents Services (CAPS) program which subsidizes after-school care cost, according to DePalma. Without this license, lower-income families would be ineligible for this subsidy and would be forced to pay the full amount for after-school care. As a part of the Bright From the Start licensing process, each staff member had to submit to a fingerprint and background check.

“This entire process ensures the safety of our children as well as a higher level of education. Generally, government recreation centers don’t seek to obtain this license; however, we sought it out to bring a more structured curriculum for our after-school program that we hope will increase Stonecrest students’ future academic achievements,” DePalma said.

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