



West End Center and the Rotary Club of Roanoke-Downtown to Tackle Obesity Epidemic

The Rotary Club of Roanoke-Downtown has awarded an \$8,000 grant to support health and nutrition programming.

The WEC serves approximately 150 children each year, most live in poverty, and nearly all are African American. Research shows that obesity rates are highest for those living in poverty, and in Virginia, African Americans have the highest rates of obesity, clearly illuminating the need for prevention programming such as that provided by the WEC.

With this grant, much needed improvements to the playground will take place, giving the kids a renewed, safe space for physical activity and outdoor play. Rotarians will be hands on in the project and have already delivered and spread mulch and replaced railroad ties.

The project also establishes a raised-bed garden, including fencing, labor, raised beds, garden tools, and seeds and soil for the initial planting. Children, with help from staff and volunteers, will maintain the garden, providing a rich educational experience as well as another opportunity for physical activity.

The Rotary Club of Roanoke-Downtown is a not-for-profit organization that supports youth organizations and other worthwhile causes in our region as well as Rotary International programs to achieve world understanding and peace, which makes supporting the West End Center's work a natural fit. Dedicated to the motto *Service Above Self*, Rotarians impact global change at the local level.

Those interested in joining the Rotary Club of Roanoke-Downtown, should visit roanokedowntown.org for more information.

Those interested in learning more about the WEC can visit westendcenter.org or call the office, at (540)342-0902.

