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Library of Congress Awards Reach Out and Read Highest Literacy Award

National pediatric literacy nonprofit wins first-time David M. Rubenstein Prize for its groundbreaking work

Boston, MA (September 22, 2013) – In recognition of its groundbreaking advancement of literacy, Reach Out and Read has won the prestigious new David M. Rubenstein Prize, the top honor among the 2013 Library of Congress Literacy Awards.

The award, which comes with a \$150,000 prize, was presented today in Washington, D.C. to Reach Out and Read Executive Director Anne-Marie Fitzgerald. Reach Out and Read was chosen for the prize from a pool of more than 185 applicants, both literacy-related organizations and individuals.

“On behalf of our 12,000 pediatricians and the millions of children we serve nationwide, I am incredibly thrilled and honored to accept a 2013 Library of Congress Literacy Award, the prestigious David M. Rubenstein Prize,” said Fitzgerald. “This recognition is a testament to Reach Out and Read’s innovative, efficient model and its enormous impact on improving the lives and futures of children in every state. And now, thanks to the generosity of David Rubenstein, we will be able to spread the opportunity that comes with books in the home and engaged parents to thousands more children.”

The Library of Congress Literacy Awards were first announced in January 2013 as a program to help support organizations working to alleviate the problems of illiteracy and aliteracy (a lack of interest in reading) both in the United States and worldwide. The awards, originated and sponsored by philanthropist David M. Rubenstein, seek to reward organizations that have been doing exemplary, innovative and easily replicable work over a sustained period of time and to encourage new groups, organizations and individuals to become involved.

“Literacy opens doors to life’s great opportunities,” said Rubenstein, a co-founder of The Carlyle Group and a major donor to the Library of Congress National Book Festival. “I am pleased to support the work of these outstanding literacy organizations that are making a profound difference in the lives of so many individuals.”

Founded in 1989, Reach Out and Read’s model includes providing a new, age-appropriate book for each child to take home at every checkup from 6 months through 5 years. Along with the free book for every child, doctors and nurses offer guidance to parents about the importance of reading aloud with their children every day.

Nationwide, Reach Out and Read doctors and nurses serve 4 million children and their families annually at nearly 5,000 pediatric practices, hospitals, clinics, and health centers in all 50 states, with a focus on health centers that serve low-income communities.

Reach Out and Read is a proven intervention, supported by 15 independent, published research studies. During the preschool years, children served by Reach Out and Read score three to six months ahead of their non-Reach Out and Read peers on vocabulary tests, preparing them to start school on target.

In the past, Reach Out and Read has been honored for its impact on literacy by organizations including the American Hospital Association and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

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The Library of Congress Literacy Awards Advisory Board, which comprises a broad range of experts in the field of literacy and reading promotion, provided recommendations to Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, who made the final awards selections. The [Center for the Book in the Library of Congress](#) administers the awards, and John Y. Cole, the center’s director, also serves as the chair of the Literacy Awards program.

The Library of Congress, the nation’s oldest federal cultural institution, is producing a publication that highlights the best practices in a number of categories as exemplified by the top applicants.

Other winners of the [Library of Congress Literacy Awards](#) include the literacy organizations 826 National (The American Prize) and PlanetRead (The International Prize.)

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