

**Corporation for National and Community Service CEO Patrick Corvington
Hands Out the One Millionth Book in
Reach Out and Read “Summer of a Million Books” Campaign
*School readiness initiative achieves goal one week ahead of schedule***

(New Orleans, LA) August 27, 2010 – The nationwide school readiness initiative Reach Out and Read kicked off the summer by announcing its goal of distributing one million books to children nationwide before Labor Day. Today, more than one week before the deadline, the Corporation for National and Community Service CEO Patrick Corvington joined Reach Out and Read CEO Earl Martin Phalen to hand out the one millionth book, “Clifford the Big Red Dog,” to a child at the Tulane Pediatric Clinic at the Covenant House, a homeless shelter in New Orleans, LA.

Reach Out and Read developed the *Summer of a Million Books* in conjunction with the United We Serve: *Let’s Read. Let’s Move.* initiative, which aims to promote community service and combat illiteracy and childhood obesity. Reach Out and Read is a national partner of *Let’s Read. Let’s Move.*, an Administration-wide effort led by First Lady Michelle Obama, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and five federal agencies.

“United We Serve and Reach Out and Read provide a powerful example of using service as a solution to address childhood illiteracy,” said Corporation CEO Patrick Corvington. “The Summer of a Million Books campaign is proof positive of the problems we can tackle when we come together and focus efforts toward real, measurable results.”

“This is an incredible achievement for Reach Out and Read’s 30,000 doctors, nurses, and volunteers nationwide,” said Earl Martin Phalen, Chief Executive Officer of Reach Out and Read. “Together, they have helped to put one million more children on the path to school success by providing parents with the guidance and the tools they need. We stand united in the dream that one day, every child in America will benefit from the Reach Out and Read program.”

Reach Out and Read targets children who are at greatest risk for school failure and illiteracy, and provides them with high quality children’s books and their parents with reading tips and guidance on the importance of reading aloud. Fourteen research studies confirm that Reach Out and Read works – families served by the program read together more often, and their children enter kindergarten better prepared to succeed, with larger vocabularies, stronger language skills, and a six-month developmental age over their peers.

The key to Reach Out and Read’s success is the messenger: pediatricians and family physicians. Participating doctors and nurse practitioners incorporate the Reach Out and Read model into every regular checkup for children between 6 months of age and the time they enter kindergarten. Because 96% of U.S. children see their doctor at least once a year and because of the trust that parents have in their child’s doctor, the pediatric checkup is the ideal opportunity to promote early literacy and school readiness. Last year, Reach Out and Read’s 26,500 participating medical providers served 3.9 million children and families at 4,500 hospitals, clinics, and pediatric practices nationwide.

At the event, Phalen also announced that Scholastic Book Clubs would donate an additional 500,000 children’s books to Reach Out and Read through the ClassroomsCare program, in honor of the

Summer of a Million Books campaign. ClassroomsCare is a philanthropy-based literacy program that teaches schoolchildren the joy of reading and giving.

“We are absolutely overwhelmed by the generosity of Scholastic Inc. CEO Dick Robinson, Scholastic Books Clubs, and the hundreds of thousands of children nationwide who participate in ClassroomsCare,” said Phalen. “These students are helping to ensure that every child in America grows up with books and parents who understand the transformational power of reading aloud.”

Phalen added that there’s still time for all Americans to join the “Summer of a Million Books” campaign and help ensure that every child arrives at kindergarten ready to read and prepared to excel.

How can you help?

1. Donate a book or sponsor a child online through Reach Out and Read's [Virtual Book Drive](#).
2. [Organize a book drive](#) for the Reach Out and Read Program in your community.
3. Most importantly, [read to the children](#) in your life every day.

Learn more about the *Summer of a Million Books* campaign here:

<http://www.reachoutandread.org/summer/>

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About United We Serve: *Let's Read. Let's Move.*

Summer is a time for fun - but it is also the time when many youth lose what they learned during the school year and gain unhealthy eating habits. United We Serve: *Let's Read. Let's Move.* is an administration wide effort led by the Corporation for National and Community Service in collaboration with First Lady Michelle Obama and five federal agencies - U.S. Department of Education, Department of Interior, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture, and Institute of Museums and Libraries. For more information on volunteer opportunities nationwide, visit www.serve.gov.