



For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***SCBWI's 2nd Annual Literacy Initiative Gives Books and Builds Dreams
With Donations of Books to Readers In Need***

*Children's Book Creators Join Forces to Provide High Quality Books
For The Literacy Alliance, Oviedo, Florida*

Los Angeles, October 11, 2018--

Members of the *Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators* join forces again as part of the organization's 2nd Annual **SCBWI Books For Readers** book drive to collect, curate, and donate new books created by its members to one of its two 2018 recipients: **The Literacy Alliance in Oviedo, Florida**. (The other is the Indian Education Program in Fargo, North Dakota.)

The **SCBWI Books for Readers** book drive is the organization's annual literacy initiative that grew out of the desire to combine its individual regional efforts to make a greater impact in increasing book access nationwide.

"In the U.S., many low-income and underserved communities have as few as 1 book per 300 children," said Lin Oliver, Executive Director of SCBWI, "Our members are committed to changing this by advancing our organization's mission as children's book creators *and* literacy advocates, and to increase access to books for kids in desperate need of them--one book donation at a time!"

SCBWI's donation of nearly 1,000 of its members' books will go to **The Literacy Alliance** in Oviedo, Florida run by Diane Keyes, its founder/president, and a Seminole County Librarian plus a core of 30 highly dedicated literacy volunteers. Since 2003, The Literacy Alliance has been creating life-long readers with its "on-demand" literacy programs, diverse educational resources, programs, and mentoring and training opportunities for its underserved, at-risk populations. It also has big plans for these books.

Keyes will be inviting children and families from the 21st Century Community Learning Center, a Title 1 after school program in Sanford, FL, to take part in the **SCBWI BFR and The Literacy Alliance's Distribution Celebration on November 1, 2018, 6-8 p.m., at the Westside Community Center**, also in Sanford. At the time, each child in attendance will receive a book of his/her own. The remaining books will go to other readers that The Literacy Alliance serves in schools, hospitals, homeless shelters, and juvenile detention centers, among others.

"Receiving books of their very own will mean a great deal to these children, and their families," Keyes said with a smile in her voice, "because by having books of their own; they can read them over and over again, see themselves in these stories, grow as readers, and discover that there is a world outside of them—one where they can learn to follow their dreams. Books have the magic to do this!"

In addition to receiving the books at the evening's celebration, the children and their families will enjoy a literacy line up of local SCBWI author and illustrators, celebration stations featuring interactive story times, art demonstrations, book-plate-making, photo memories, refreshments, and more. The book distribution, however, is sure to be the highlight of the night for everyone involved.

"Getting books into children's hands is why we create books—to help build dreams, said Oliver, "And, getting our books into hands of readers in need...is a dream come true!"

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About Society of Children's Writers and Illustrators

Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization, which is one of the largest existing organizations for writers and illustrators. It is the only professional organization specifically for those individuals writing and illustrating for children and young adults in the fields of children's literature, magazines, film, television and multimedia. The SCBWI acts as a network for the exchange of knowledge between writers, illustrators, editors, publishers, agents, librarians, educators, booksellers and others involved with literature for young people.

About the Literacy Alliance

The Literacy Alliance's mission is to encourage Central Florida residents to reach their highest potential by increasing literacy through diverse educational resources, programs, and training opportunities. Its programs are designed for a variety of audiences to bring books to life, to show that books are interesting and enjoyable, and to build life-long readers vital to success in education and in life.

Led by a qualified, enthusiastic core of dedicated volunteers, the Literacy Alliance's programs integrate storytelling, puppetry techniques, and STEM/STEAM curriculum. Last year alone, Keyes and her 30 volunteers presented 50-60 programs to over 1800 readers in need at schools, homeless shelters, detention centers, hospitals, and other venues serving underserved and at-risk populations. For more information, visit www.theitalliance.org.

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