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REACH OUT AND READ NAMES COLORADO SENATORS TO INAUGURAL HONOR ROLL CLASS

The award recognizes corporate and public policy partners whose meaningful support helps the national nonprofit and its Affiliates serve children nationwide

DENVER (July 9, 2024) – National nonprofit [Reach Out and Read](#) announces its first Honor Roll class, recognizing corporate and public policy partners from all across the country, including Senators Jeff Bridges and Barbara Kirkmeyer in Colorado.

Reach Out and Read, which focuses on strengthening family bonds and early literacy through daily shared reading, created the Honor Roll to highlight partners whose support has helped the nonprofit reach millions of children nationwide. The 35-year-old nonprofit serves 4.4 million children between birth and age 5, including 125,918 in Colorado. In 2023, Reach Out and Read Colorado provided 295,473 books to children through 327,388 well-child visits.

“Our new Honor Roll gives us a chance to celebrate those individuals and organizations whose contributions – financial, expertise, or otherwise – have been vital in helping us build a world where every child has the relationships essential to learn and thrive,” said Marty Martinez, CEO of Reach Out and Read. “Each of these honorees has helped our National office or an Affiliate better serve children and families nationwide. We thank them for standing with us to create a foundation of support for those who need it most.”

Each of the 16 Honor Roll members was nominated by staff or medical leadership at a Reach Out and Read Affiliate or in the National office before going through a selection process. Winners include both entire organizations and individual policymakers.

Senators Bridges and Kirkmeyer have advocated for Reach Out and Read Colorado’s early literacy program as a way to ensure every child in Colorado has the resources and foundation to succeed. Their bipartisan legislation has not only led to funding – it sends a message about incorporating early literacy in the state’s broader education and health services.

“The collaborative approach of Senators Bridges and Kirkmeyer goes beyond political boundaries,” said Amy Malik, Director of Development, Reach Out and Read Colorado. “Their bipartisan legislation, which covers a portion of our book purchases, has catalyzed transformative outcomes that enhance our reach and effectiveness. Their support enabled us

to bring on new clinics, diversify and enrich our selection of books, and expand our network of providers.”

Reach Out and Read’s **corporate partners** are vital to the local communities it serves. Many of them provide funding through donations, sponsorships, or in-kind gifts; offer expertise through governing boards or working committees; represent and elevate Reach Out and Read’s brand; and/or offer ways for employees to engage, like book drives.

The inaugural corporate Honor Roll includes: All About Books; Boise Paper; CareSource Georgia; Elevance Health; HealthPartners (Minnesota), Permanente Medicine-Mid Atlantic Permanente Medical Group; Roots and Wings Foundation (Washington, Wisconsin); Scholastic; Target Circle; and Vanguard Strong Start for Kids (Pennsylvania).

Reach Out and Read’s **public policy advocates** help Affiliates or National secure public investment, create government partnerships, or aid with writing or passing legislation. These policymakers understand the comprehensive care Reach Out and Read implements and are allies in creating public health solutions that fit their geographies.

The inaugural public policy Honor Roll includes: Colorado State Sens. Jeff Bridges and Barbara Kirkmeyer; Minnesota State Rep. Dave Pinto; New Jersey State Sen. M. Teresa Ruiz; Oklahoma Health Care Authority; and Wisconsin State Sen. Joan Bellweg

CEO Martinez commends both Honor Roll categories.

“The unwavering support of these partners has been instrumental in advancing our mission of promoting early literacy and healthy early relationships,” Martinez said. “Their dedication helps to ensure that every family, regardless of background, has access to resources that set their young children on a strong start to life. By recognizing these contributions by the public and private sectors, Reach Out and Read hopes to inspire others to commit to fostering educational equity and creating brighter futures.”

More than two-thirds of the children served by Reach Out and Read and its Affiliates are from low-income families. Recent research in a [peer-reviewed study published in Academic Pediatrics](#) confirms the program’s effectiveness in increasing the frequency of parental reading, which builds skills critical to success in school and beyond. To learn more about Reach Out and Read and the programs offered, visit ReachOutAndRead.org.

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About Reach Out and Read: As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, Reach Out and Read leverages the near-universal reach of the pediatric well-child visit to support caregivers in fostering healthy relationships with their young children through shared reading. The only national pediatric literacy model endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reach Out and Read serves 4.4 million children across every state across the U.S., through 6,200 clinics and the expertise of 36,000 clinicians. Discover more at reachoutandread.org.