

**Headline: Children's Book Creators Join Forces to Provide High Quality Books to Two Worthy Organizations (For Huffington Post) (DEC '17)**

By *Lin Oliver, Executive Director of SCBWI*

With over 25,000 members strong, SCBWI, the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, is the largest professional organization of children's book writers and illustrators. We have always cared about getting books into children's hands because we know that books given to them can change their lives-- allow them to see themselves, to feel empathy towards others, and to open their eyes to what can be. But, how about the children who don't get our books—the children in families who can only afford only basic necessities? We have thought about what we could do for them, too.

Over the years, our members have held regional book drives sprinkled across the U.S., and have donated many titles to organizations and causes. But, it was not enough. With as few as 1 book per 300 children in low-income communities in the U.S., we knew that we needed to do more. That's why we have decided to join forces by combining our regions' individual efforts to make an even greater impact in increasing book access nationwide. The result? It is our first literacy initiative: *SCBWI Books for Readers* book drive.

With this literacy initiative, we can advance our organization's mission as children's book creators and passionate literacy advocates, and help increase book access by collecting, curating, and donating our books to worthy organizations with readers in great need. We are truly delighted and excited about this. You could even say that we are over the "The Goodnight Moon" [alt: we are like the cow that jumped over the moon] about it, and so are our recipients.

Chosen from over 300 nominations by a committee of SCBWI Board of Advisors, this year's recipients are *Kinship House* in Portland, Oregon, and the *Refugee Dream Center* in Providence, Rhode Island.

At Kinship House, that offers outpatient mental health services to foster and adopted children and their families, the books will give a boost to its lending library and offer hopeful and healing resources to the children they serve.

As for the Refugee Dream Center, the book donation will outfit a classroom library for its ESL program and promote the center's goal to help refugees work towards self-sufficiency and integration.

To "make way" for the books and deliver them in our "Clifford-sized", SCBWI style, we have planned two "distribution celebrations" for November 4, 2017 in Portland, Oregon, and December 11, 2017 in Providence, Rhode Island. Local SCBWI authors, illustrators, and members will be on hand for interactive readings and story times, art demonstrations, crafts, refreshments, and, of course, the book distributions. Each child will receive a book of his/her very own to take home.

Needless to say, we cannot wait to get these books into these children's hands. It's why we create books. We hope that by giving books to these children, and our future recipients, (We plan on making this an annual event!) we can help build their dreams. Every child deserves books and dreams!

*To learn more about SCBWI Books for Readers and SCBWI, please visit our website: [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org). To join us in increasing book access for kids in the U.S., reach out to your local literacy organization and/or First Book at [www.firstbook.org](http://www.firstbook.org). Together, we can all give books, build dreams, and increase book access to readers in need!*