



For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCBWI's First-Ever 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 to Two Worthy Organizations

Los Angeles, October 16, 2017 -- Members of the [Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators](#) have joined forces as part of the organization's *SCBWI Books For Readers* book drive to collect, curate, and donate new books that they have created to two worthy organizations. Chosen from over 300 nominations by a sub-committee of the SCBWI Board of Advisors, this year's recipients are [Kinship House](#) in Portland, Oregon, and the [Refugee Dream Center](#) in Providence, Rhode Island.

SCBWI Books for Readers book drive is the organization's first literacy initiative that grew out of the desire to join its regions' individual efforts to make an even greater impact in increasing book access nationwide.

"In the U.S., many low-income communities have as few as 1 book per 300 children. We as an organization would like to help change this," said Lin Oliver, Executive Director of SCBWI. "With our initiative, we can advance our organization's mission as children's book creators and literacy advocates, and help increase access to books for kids in desperate need of them. It's a natural fit!"

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

"Unlike most book-to-reader relationships, these books will be the first books that our children will read in their new language, that will assist them with their English mastery, and that will help them become part of their new culture—and feel part of it, too!" said Kara Skaling, Program Coordinator of the Refugee Dream Center.

As for Kinship House which provides outpatient mental health services to foster and adopted children and their families. the books will give a boost to Kinship's lending library and offer hopeful and healing resources to the children they serve.

"Many of our children have lived lives most of us can't imagine. These books will bring light, restore a piece of their childhood, and offer them the joy many families take for granted!" said Melissa Smith-Hohnstein, LCSW and Clinical Director of Kinship House.

The SCBWI Books for Readers book drive will have two "distribution celebrations" and take place November 4, 2017 in Portland, Oregon, and December 11, 2017 in Providence, Rhode Island. Festivities will include SCBWI author and illustrator appearances, interactive readings and story times, art demonstrations, crafts, refreshments, music, and of course, the book distributions. Local SCBWI members will be on hand to assist with the distributing and celebrating.

During the book distributions, books will be presented to the organizations' lending libraries, and one book will be given to each and every child they serve to take home. In many cases, these books will be the first books these children will own.

"We cannot wait to get these books into these children's hands!" said Oliver, "It's why we create books. We hope that by giving books to these children we can help build their dreams. Every child deserves books and dreams!"

###

For more information contact:

Tammy Brown
Director, Community Marketing and Engagement, SCBWI
PH: [\(323\) 782-1010](tel:3237821010)
tammybrown@scbwi.org

Patricia J. Murphy
Children's Author
Literacy Initiative Creative Consultant, SCBWI
PH: [\(847\) 917-4963](tel:8479174963)
patriciajmurphy33@gmail.com

Kinship House
Dennise M. Kowalczyk
Development & Communications Director
[\(503\) 460-2796 ext. 205](tel:5034602796ext.205)
dennise.k@kinshiphouse.org

Refugee Dream Center
Kara Skaling
Program Coordinator
[\(401\) 300-0544](tel:4013000544)
kara.refugeedreamcenter@gmail.com

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 Kinship House

Kinship House provides outpatient mental health services to foster and adopted children and their families. It specializes in championing children and families with target interventions during all stages of foster care, reunification, and adoption. Founded in 1996, it is a locally accessible facility based in the Lloyd District on the eastside of Portland, Oregon.

About Refugee Dream Center

Refugee Dream Center is a post resettlement refugee agency. It offers services targeting gaps within the refugee community by ensuring continuation of services in their efforts towards self-sufficiency and integration. The Refugee Dream Center does referrals, social level assistance, and skills development such as English language education for adults, health promotion and cultural orientation, youth mentoring, and case management. In addition, the Refugee Dream Center is a strong advocacy agency for the rights of refugees. It is located in Providence, Rhode Island.