



**For IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***SCBWI's 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Indian  
Education Program of Fargo and West Fargo Public Schools*

**Los Angeles, September 19, 2018--** Members of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators join forces again as part of the organization's 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Indian Education Program of the Fargo and West Fargo Public Schools. (The other is the Literacy Alliance in Oviedo, FL.)

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 need...one book donation at a time!"

SCBWI's donation of nearly 1,000 members' books will go to the Indian Education Program of the Fargo and West Fargo Public Schools in Fargo, North Dakota. Acting as advocates for school success for its Native American students from over 30 area tribes, the program provides cultural opportunities and connections for both students and families.

The donation of books will take place on the Fargo and West Fargo Public Schools' Indigenous Peoples' Day, October 8<sup>th</sup> during its Pow Wow at 6:30 p.m.

"We are thrilled to receive this generous donation of books. Many of our families do not have the luxury of having books in their homes," said Melody Staebner, the Fargo and West Fargo Public Schools' Indian Education Coordinator and an enrolled member in the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. "With this donation during our Indigenous Peoples' Day, we can reinforce the importance of reading at school and at home!"

Staebner is especially pleased about the donation's variety of genres and age groups to help their students read to succeed.

"We know that if kids are excited about reading, and are competent readers by the third grade," Staebner continued, "they will have a better chance of graduating high school—one of our program's goals, as well as following their dreams!"

"Dreams" seem to be the guiding theme for the literacy initiative, the book donation recipients--and the books' creators donating the books.

"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 Indian Education Program**

The Indian Education Program of Fargo and West Fargo Public Schools advocates for Native American students' school success while providing cultural opportunity connections for students and families. Its primary goals are to increase graduation rates, school attendance, and knowledge of cultural identity and awareness. For more information, visit: [www.fargo.k12.nd.us/IndianEducation](http://www.fargo.k12.nd.us/IndianEducation).