

UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS CONTACT:

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## **Give a #SlamDunkBook to a Child in Need on #GivingTuesday**

**On #GivingTuesday, an online giving movement happening today, Nov. 27, United Way of the Midlands (UWM) is asking individuals to support its Book Trust initiative.**

In some low-income neighborhoods, there is just one book for every 300 children. These children may never get the opportunity to find their #SlamDunkBook, an engaging story that will turn them into lifelong readers. To address this, UWM is facilitating a #GivingTuesday fundraising campaign to benefit “Book Trust,” a program that provides books to students within ten Title I schools across the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro. This effort is led by UWM’s Emerging Leaders affinity group.

As part of their #GivingTuesday promotion, UWM and the Emerging Leaders will present a special surprise to approximately 50 students in the Book Trust program on Nov. 28. At different points throughout #GivingTuesday, UWM and the Emerging Leaders will hint at the surprise on social media to garner donors’ interest and support for the initiative.

Individuals can make a contribution to Book Trust at [www.unitedwaymidlands.org/giving-tuesday](http://www.unitedwaymidlands.org/giving-tuesday) or by texting ‘SLAMDUNKBOOK’ to 71777.

Book Trust provides K-3rd grade students who are enrolled in the program with \$7 once a month to choose and buy their own books from a Scholastic Reading Club. At the end of the school year, each student will own approximately 20-30 books to encourage family engagement in reading. This literacy work is important because a child is four times more likely to drop out of high school if they are not reading at grade level by the end of third grade, and six times more likely if they also live in poverty.

“For many of our students these books are the only ones they have at home. These books are helping to get the kids excited about reading,” said Stacey Stoffel, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Mockingbird Elementary, Ralston Public Schools.

### **UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL NOVEMBER 27, 2018 AT 6:00 p.m.**

As part of UWM’s efforts to raise money for Book Trust and give students #SlamDunkBooks, approximately 50 students enrolled in the program have been invited to the Creighton Bluejays men’s basketball game on Nov. 28, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. Creighton University generously donated 100 game tickets to UWM to make this possible.

Several of these students will be participating in a half-time promotion for Book Trust sponsored by Cobalt Credit Union. These students will have the opportunity to shoot baskets during the promotion, and Cobalt Credit Union has generously agreed to donate \$2,500 to match the baskets the students make. More details about this event will be released tomorrow morning in a media alert.

**PLEASE NOTE: Contact Rob Anderson, sports information director at Creighton University, at (402) 280-5544 or [randerson@creighton.edu](mailto:randerson@creighton.edu) before Wednesday, Nov. 28 at 12:00 p.m. to receive a press pass and entry instructions for the game.**

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**United Way  
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**About United Way of the Midlands**

Thanks to donors, volunteers and community partners, United Way of the Midlands (UWM) is not only focused on addressing our community's human needs today; it is focused on what can be and what should be. It is building on today's strong partnerships to create even more comprehensive human service efforts tomorrow, so our community can solve some of the root causes of poverty. UWM is community-based, community-focused. Thanks to those who share their strength, UWM is COMMUNITY STRONG. Please visit [UnitedWayMidlands.org](http://UnitedWayMidlands.org) for more information.

**About Cobalt Credit Union**

Headquartered in Papillion, Neb., Cobalt Credit Union is locally owned by its members and recognized for its community involvement. Motivated by member service rather than profit, Cobalt's focus is on providing safety, soundness and convenience to its members. Cobalt Credit Union is a financial partner for life, helping members with better banking, financial planning, home buying investing, education and retirement planning, commercial banking services and more. Cobalt serves more than 110,000 members in fourteen counties in Iowa and Nebraska. Never Settle. Bank Better with Cobalt.

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