

UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS CONTACT:

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United Way of the Midlands Receives Grant from Wells Fargo

United Way of the Midlands (UWM) is proud to announce it has been awarded a grant of \$5,000 from Wells Fargo. The grant will support the partnership between UWM and the Book Trust program.

In some low-income neighborhoods, there is as little as one book for every 300 children.¹ Children are less likely to read proficiently by third grade, a key predictor of future academic success, when there is a lack of books and reading materials in the home. In fact, more than 5,500 third grade students were not reading at grade level in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro during the 2016-17 academic year.

Through UWM's partnership with Book Trust, a national literacy program, nearly 2,200 K-3rd graders in ten Title 1 schools across six school districts will receive books throughout the academic year. Because choice leads to increased motivation and interest, each child in the program is given a monthly budget of \$7 that they can use to select two or three books from the Scholastic Reading Club. At the end of the school year, every child will own nearly 20-30 books to add to their home library.

By investing in this joint initiative, Wells Fargo is improving access to reading materials, empowering teachers to create a classroom culture of literacy and inspiring students to read across the metro.

"Wells Fargo is a phenomenal supporter of United Way and our efforts to help those living in poverty," said Shawna Forsberg, president and CEO at UWM. "This grant will allow us to put more books in the hands of students and keep kids from low-income backgrounds on the path to success."

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 for more information.

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¹Neuman, Susan B. and David K. Dickinson, ed. Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Vol. 2. New York, NY: 2006, p. 31
www.serve.gov/toolkits/book-drive/index.asp

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