

A Legacy of Literacy

RIF was recently honored to receive a generous bequest gift of more than \$2M from Martha and Arthur Goldsmith of Clarksville, Tennessee.

Martha earned her Master of Library Science degree from Columbia University and flourished in her career as a children's librarian, including a stint on a traveling bookmobile where she delivered books and read-aloud story time to neighborhood children. Art served in the U.S. Army, graduated from Cornell University, and retired from Austin Peay State University in Tennessee where he was also a librarian. Martha was celebrated in 2001 as the Tennessee Volunteer of the Year for her long-term commitment as a volunteer literacy tutor. Art was instrumental in starting the Reading Is Fundamental program through the Clarksville Downtown Kiwanis Club. Together they invested countless hours helping others reach their own greatest potential through reading.



The Goldsmiths lived their lives committed to advancing literacy and it is no coincidence that they wanted to establish a meaningful legacy that went beyond their own lives. Their transformative gift to RIF will help fund their passion for children's literacy.

30 Years of Community Support

Members of the RIF team recently attended a remarkable RIF Books for Ownership event at the Saint Peter Indian Mission School within the Gila River Indian Community near Phoenix, Arizona.

The community is home to members of the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and the Pee-Posh (Maricopa) tribes. The book celebration was organized by dedicated literacy advocates who have been supporting children's literacy in this community for 30 years! More than 300 elementary and middle school students gathered to share their heritage and legends through song and dance while dozens of volunteers led activities to encourage young readers.



The Impact of Literacy in Communities Across the Country

The Gift of Literacy

Philanthropy comes in all shapes and sizes. RIF is the proud recipient of gifts from remarkable people who are genuinely committed to ensuring that all children have the opportunities that literacy provides. This winter, we were honored to be notified by LeVar Burton Kids that the company was donating their digital literacy product, Skybrary, to Reading Is Fundamental. Skybrary is a digital literacy subscription service that gives children ages 2-10 access to over 900 digital eBooks in a user-friendly, child-oriented environment. A child can explore the digital library of books, which are organized into thematic collections, and can add up to five books in a digital “backpack” allowing them to read both online and offline. Each book includes audio (with some titles available in English and Spanish), along with additional games, videos, and other activities that support the book. This product supports a child’s reading development at home and at school.



This remarkable gift is a wonderful opportunity to reach today’s children, digital natives, through an engaging digital platform and provides significant strategic alignment with RIF’s work. We thank LeVar Burton and LeVar Burton Kids for their belief in the power of reading and their confidence in Reading Is Fundamental to carry on their legacy!

RIF and Macy’s Join Forces to Support Children Nationwide

For 16 years, Macy’s has provided invaluable support for children’s literacy, helping RIF provide books and supporting literacy resources to 23 million children in more than 850 communities, coast to coast. RIF is one of the six select charities that participate in the Macy’s Thanks for Sharing program which contributes \$15 million per year to charitable causes. In 2018, book celebration events funded by Macy’s supported more than 1,000 children in nine states across the country. Each child who attended a Macy’s and RIF book celebration event selected three books to spark a love of reading and encourage reading outside of the school.



With Macy’s support, RIF also created the Be Your Best You digital book collection, an online selection of reading games and literacy resources connected to classic and popular children’s books to promote social-emotional learning, in and out of the classroom. Macy’s also supports RIF’s efforts to build capacity for the communities we serve, giving local sites the tools they need to help create a culture of literacy for children everywhere.