



S M A R T
START MAKING A READER TODAY™

SMART NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2018

Inspire a child's next chapter.

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Hello, Friends:

As summer begins, we close the book on SMART's 26th year of connecting kids with reading support and books. Over 10,800 students across Oregon spent 100,000 hours reading with their SMART volunteers this year, making cherished memories and forming an enduring love of reading.

This work happened thanks to a family of nearly 5,000 volunteers in over 280 sites statewide, and to thousands of individuals, corporations and foundations who provided critical funding. This cadre of devoted volunteers and donors is supported by a small and mighty team of 38 staff members in eight regional offices.

I'm proud of the breadth, depth and quality of SMART's reach – and others have taken notice of our work. In response to a growing number of inquiries over the past three years, our team has consulted with groups in California, Pennsylvania, Michigan and North Carolina on creating early literacy programs modeled after SMART. The demand for our consultation services is a testament to SMART's effectiveness, and fuels our financial sustainability.

I look forward to more important work ahead as we continue SMART's proven model, and test new adaptations focused on reaching students outside of school; pilot programs in 2018-19 will provide valuable data and experience as we prepare to expand our reach. We're also doubling down on the importance of print-rich environments for kids.

Thank you for your support of SMART; I'm awed by what we're accomplishing together. I hope you enjoy reading about what's happening at SMART across Oregon. My best wishes for a wonderful summer filled with fun, family and most of all – great books!



Your friend,

Chris Otis
SMART Executive Director

2017-2018 Statewide Impact



281 sites



4,908 volunteers



10,820 students served



124,013 books given



142,683 volunteer hours



\$3.5 million donated value of volunteer hours

SMART Leads Regional Equity Trainings for Local Volunteers

Thanks to a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF), SMART led a series of trainings focused on diversity and inclusion in Klamath Falls, Roseburg, Medford, Hood River and Coos Bay. These trainings were led by Alexis James, SMART's Director of Program Operations and Personnel, and gave SMART's local leadership volunteers the opportunity to experience the equity work that SMART has been engaged in for the past several years.

Participants engaged in conversation about their personal racial identities; their personal, family and community values; and the role equity plays at SMART, and how leadership volunteers can support the organization's mission and goals.

In addition to regional trainings for SMART volunteers, the grant from OCF will support staff trainings on equity and inclusion with a focus on rural issues and poverty. It will also support the creation of additional volunteer training around understanding rural student needs.

We look forward to continuing the conversation and learning about how SMART can best serve our diverse communities across the state.

"The more of this type of training we can get, the better suited we are to help our organization and communities 'move the needle.' We can all use more tools to help reverse the discrimination that has plagued our country for so long. It is great to see SMART take a leading role in the equity battle."

– Ray Holliday, SMART Statewide Board of Directors, Klamath Falls

Jenny Roderick Named SMART Statewide Volunteer of the Year



Jenny Roderick, an 18-year SMART volunteer and the Site Coordinator at Patrick Elementary in Gold Hill, was chosen among nominated candidates from all over the state as our Outstanding Volunteer of the Year. Jenny's innovation and commitment go above and beyond,

with initiatives like transforming an old school shower room into a beautiful hobbit library, a welcoming place for children and volunteers to discover the wonders of reading together. As one of her nominators said, "She never stops giving of herself." Congratulations, Jenny, and thank you for everything you do for SMART!

A Legacy of Literacy

The Legacy Society recognizes contributors who include a provision for SMART in their estate plans. Sometimes called "planned" or "legacy" giving, this type of philanthropy simply means a donor makes plans today for a gift to be received by the charity later, usually at the donor's death. A bequest provision in a will, living trust, life insurance policy or retirement plan all qualify the donor for membership in the Legacy Society as well as life income gifts such as charitable trusts and charitable gift annuities naming SMART the beneficiary. By becoming a member of the SMART Legacy Society, you invest in the lifelong wellbeing of our youngest residents and communities throughout Oregon with the gift of reading.

To inquire about SMART's Legacy Society, please contact Sharon Benson at 971-634-1620 or sbenson@getsmartoregon.org.

Alphabet Ball Raises Statewide Support for SMART

Thanks to the generosity of over 600 SMART donors and supporters, SMART's Alphabet Ball, held in Portland on Feb. 9, raised over \$500,000 to support our statewide programs. We are grateful to our event sponsors, attendees and volunteers who came together to make it all possible!

Thanks to our co-presenting sponsors, The Standard and First Tech.





In Their Own Words: SMARTies share what they love about books, reading and SMART.

“You get to read lots and lots – piles and stacks and castles of books.”

– Student



“I like the *Elephant & Piggie* books because they’re funny and they’re kinda short, so I can read a lot of them.”

– Student

“By investing in SMART you are investing in the greatest resource in the world – the ability to read.”

– Donor



“The energy of the kids buoys my spirits for the rest of the day. I leave each SMART session with a huge smile on my face.”

– Volunteer

“This is a program that makes total sense. I love having the community come in and care for our students.”

– Principal



“I’m going to miss SMART. Do you know how I am going to remember it? I’m going to look at the books that I got all year and remember SMART every day!”

– Student



SMART Volunteer Revisits His Roots

David Smith finished fifth grade at Cummings Elementary in Keizer in 1974 and never expected that years later, he’d walk the halls of his former elementary school as a SMART volunteer. “I walk by the classrooms and it brings back memories of my time there,” he says. “I love telling the kids I read with in SMART that I learned to read right here, too.”

David heard about SMART through his employer, First Tech Federal Credit Union, where he is a branch manager. “First Tech is very supportive of SMART, and of volunteering,” he says. At the end of his second year of volunteering, he’s hooked. “What keeps me coming back is connecting with the kids and seeing them improve throughout the year.”





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Thank You, Book Giveaway Day Sponsors

Every school year, SMART hosts 14 Book Giveaway Days so that historically underserved children can experience book ownership and build their personal libraries. This year, two families sponsored statewide Book Giveaway Days, underwriting the cost

of over 10,800 books for children participating in SMART. Our sincere thanks to Glenn Dahl and Linda Illig, and Mary and Tim Boyle for their generous support!

By sponsoring a Book Giveaway Day, you provide high-interest, age-appropriate, and culturally relevant softbound books for Oregon children to choose, write their names in, and call their own. For more information about sponsorships, please reach out to Sharon Benson at sbenson@getsmartoregon.org or 971-634-1620.

Shopping SMART

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Link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to SMART! Go to the Fred Meyer website and search for us by name or 91652. Fred Meyer will make a donation to SMART every time you shop and use your card.

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Shop at smile.amazon.com and select SMART (listed as Oregon Children's Foundation) as your charity of choice. We'll receive 0.5% of your purchase price on eligible products.

Powell's

Thanks to a new partnership with Powell's Books, SMART fans can purchase books for our program and have them shipped directly to SMART.

Visit www.bit.ly/PowellsBookshelf to view a rich and diverse collection of children's books we welcome in SMART.

