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Dear SMART Friends,

As we near the end of fiscal year 2011 – and with a yearlong 20th anniversary celebration glimmering on the horizon in fiscal year 2012 – we pause to think about where we've been and where we're headed.

SMART has helped inspire a love of reading in children throughout Oregon for two decades, empowering them for brighter and more successful futures. Over the course of SMART's history, we've impacted the lives of more than 144,000 children and given away nearly 2 million books.

Our 20-year history certainly hasn't been without its challenges, and the organization has weathered a number of transitions, particularly in recent years.

However, despite these challenges, the integrity of our services has been constant and our program outcomes positive. We are proud to report that, as of April, we have exceeded our service goal for the year and are serving more than 7,300 children in 223 sites across Oregon. We're able to do this thanks to the incredible support and commitment from almost 5,000 volunteer Readers and 319 volunteer Site Coordinators statewide.

And, throughout the years, we've held steadfast to our commitment of fiscal responsibility, with 82 cents of every dollar we spend going to program costs.

I joined the organization in December 2010, coming from a 20-year background in nonprofit leadership, including the past five years devoted to improving early childhood outcomes. I'm proud to

partner with a talented and committed board, an energized executive team and a dedicated staff to work together to improve children's literacy in our state.

With an eye to SMART's future, we've embarked on a strategic planning process with our board, and together, we're charting a sensible and deliberate path for our future. As we look into the next several years and beyond, we're focusing in on four key pillars that will guide our efforts:

### Program Relevancy

- Ensuring the SMART program remains relevant and responsive to the needs of today's educational climate is critical and we remain committed first and foremost to an effective and adaptable program.

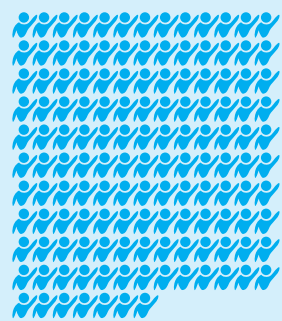
### Program Evaluation

- Evaluation and articulation of SMART program outcomes is critical. We're operating in an increasingly data-driven environment and there is a need for us to define and articulate the quantifiable outcomes of the program.

### Public Policy and Advocacy

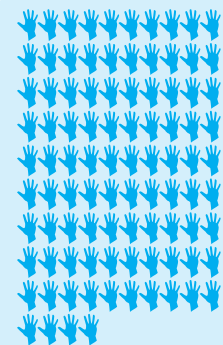
- As decision-makers and public policy experts craft an education agenda and make determinations about what public education should look like in Oregon, SMART should be a part of that conversation. With two decades of experience engaging a vast network of volunteers to provide support to the public schools, SMART can be part of the solution on how to deliver educational services and support with declining resources.

## SMART FACTS



**144,000**  
 CHILDREN SERVED

👤 = 1,000 Children Served



**99,000**  
 VOLUNTEERS

DONATE MORE THAN  
 3 MILLION HOURS  
 TO READ WITH KIDS

👤 = 1,000 Volunteers

**1.9+**  
 MILLION  
 BOOKS GIVEN AWAY



Fifth graders who participated in SMART are

**60%**

more likely to reach state reading benchmarks





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1-877-598-4633

### 2010-2011

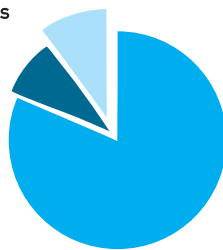
#### Program Successes:

- 7,337 children served
- 223 partner sites
- 27 Oregon counties served
- 325 Site Coordinators
- 4,836 volunteer Readers

#### SMART Expenses

Where the Money Goes  
2009 - 2010

- 82% SMART Program
- 10% Fundraising
- 8% Management and general



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### Message from the Executive Director, Cont'd

#### Organizational Sustainability

The key to achieving long-term sustainability is two-pronged:

- Raising awareness – On an ongoing basis, we must refine our ability to tell our story to a continually expanding audience. We must be diligent in knowing our audiences and in sharing with them the importance of our mission and the details of our work.
- Growing support – This means adding to our resource base: the people who work with us (our volunteer corps) and the individuals and organizations who financially invest in our work. Where and how we find the right volunteers, who we partner with to make this happen, and how well we engage volunteers in the work are essential pieces to this puzzle.

There's no lack of work to be done, but, I'm confident we're up to the task. We are poised to lead SMART into the future with purpose, clarity and an

unwavering commitment to the very same mission that was at SMART's core when it was founded nearly two decades ago.

We thank you for your ongoing support, and look forward to working together to make the next 20 years of SMART, the best 20 years of SMART.

Sincerely,

Chris Otis  
Executive Director



### Business Partnerships Key to SMART Success

SMART was founded by a group of business leaders who came together to address the troublesome reality that Oregon's children were routinely reading below grade level. Businesses have a real stake in our state's literacy rates, as Oregon's economy cannot thrive without an educated, well-prepared work force.

Businesses have been an integral part of our organization throughout our history, and their support of SMART is more important today than ever.

To put more formal shape to this effort, we launched a statewide Business Partners Campaign this winter to begin a systematic process to engage businesses and identify mutually beneficial opportunities for partnership.

As a sterling example, we've begun a new relationship with Regence as one of its two recently announced Community Partner Organizations. This three-year, statewide project incorporates marketing and volunteerism to

implement plans at the local community level. This partnership provides opportunities to work together to strengthen the lives of Oregonians, and is a perfect illustration of a relationship that meets the needs and goals of both parties.

"Regence understands SMART's strong ties in communities throughout Oregon and is eager to bring a group of energetic and talented volunteers into our existing committees for program and events," said Stephanie Stoller, SMART Development Director. "We are delighted to work with Regence to support pre-K through third grade literacy and healthy lifestyles in Oregon."

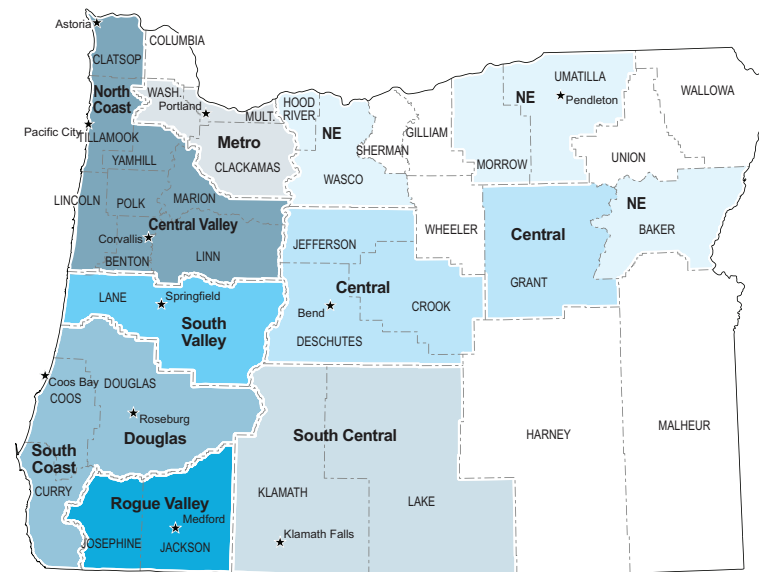


### Feedback From Educators Spells Good Things for SMART

SMART's program staff is continually striving to refine and improve our program in order to meet the changing needs of schools and educators, and ultimately, to ensure we're improving reading outcomes for SMART children.

To that end, SMART staff engaged in a series of meetings with educators around the state last fall to garner input and feedback on how the SMART program is working within their school communities. The process was incredibly valuable and we engaged in creative dialogue with our school partners on how we can best support their needs. Overwhelmingly, the feedback we received was positive and a powerful validation that the SMART model is a viable long-term support for the students. The principals and teachers told us that what they value most about SMART is the one-on-one time that community volunteers spend with students. This is yet another testament that our volunteers are making a significant impact on the lives of young children in their local community.

Thanks to each of the educators who helped us with conversations and feedback for our program, we appreciate your willingness to participate. We also offer our thanks for consistent ongoing support. We look forward to reviewing our year-end 2010-11 program evaluations from principals, teachers and parents as one important way for SMART to continuously fine tune the program based on the current needs of the communities we serve.



★ SMART Office Locations



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### Where Are They Now?



SAMUEL FREEMAN BENEDICT

#### Sam Benedict Shares SMART Program Benefits Through Recipient's Eyes

Like far too many children throughout Oregon, poverty and hardship struck Sam's life from a young age. He was raised by a single mother struggling to support six children, working

long hours and patching things together financially by taking advantage of much-needed state services.

With their mother's limited time and resources, Sam and his siblings primarily relied on the public school system almost exclusively – not only for their education, but also for structure and adult interaction. And there within public school was where Sam had his first experience with SMART.

"The picture is still quite clear in my mind," Sam recalls. "The big empty classroom, seemingly overflowing with dozens of wonderfully bright colored books; an infinite library all for my own dissecting."

To Sam's amazement, his SMART reader gave him reign over this infinite library, allowing him to pick any book he wanted. When he admitted to her that he couldn't read, she said she'd help him – and what's more, that she'd be back, week after week, to keep helping. When she gave him a brand new book from SMART to take home (he'd get many through the course of the school year) and he was incredulous that it was actually his for the keeping, she reassured him that it was indeed his to take home and keep forever.

Sam was in the SMART program for three years, and in that time, he learned how to read with the support of his teachers and his SMART volunteers. Today, he still carries with him gratitude for the generosity and kindness of these individuals.

As Sam prepares to graduate from Western Oregon University this spring, he credits his participation in the SMART program with contributing to his interest in higher education and insatiable thirst for knowledge.

"Had it not been for the early intervention with the SMART program, I have no doubt in my mind that I would not be where I am today," Sam says. "My reader cared enough to help this strange little red-headed, freckle-faced boy learn how to read. And how to enjoy learning how to read. To not be made to feel dumb because I was behind everyone else's skill level, but to feel special because I got to get out of class and go meet my friend so that we could share stories together. What a gift. How can you ever repay that?"