

Sponsor Spotlight: Fred Meyer

A big thank-you to Fred Meyer stores across Oregon for their longtime, generous support of SMART. Over the past 20 years, Fred Meyer has invested more than \$350,000 to support SMART programs throughout the state. This year, Fred Meyer was a leader in our statewide celebration by becoming a presenting sponsor for SMART's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner and Auction.

"Fred Meyer and our Associates deeply value the great work that SMART does for children throughout the state of Oregon. Our Fred Meyer volunteers

have dedicated hundreds of hours of their own time reading to school children because they have seen the positive impact the SMART program has had on the youths' lives. We are honored to be partners with SMART and commend them for the necessary work they are doing to develop strong reading skills among our youth," commented Amanda Ip, Special Projects Coordinator for Fred Meyer.

SMART is tremendously appreciative of the continuing partnership with Fred Meyer, and we look forward to our future partnerships in support of Oregon's kids.



Ginger Pullen, SMART Reader and Corporate Paralegal with Fred Meyer, addresses the crowd at SMART's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner and Auction.

Thank you to SMART's statewide Board of Directors for your vision, leadership and commitment!

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SMART 20th Anniversary Gala: A Seussical Success

On Feb. 16, more than 500 supporters attended SMART's statewide 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner and Auction presented by Fred Meyer and Knowledge Universe at the Portland Art Museum.

Thanks to our generous supporters who attended the event, more than \$330,000 was raised to benefit SMART throughout Oregon!

Thank you to our sponsors:

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SMART Newsletter

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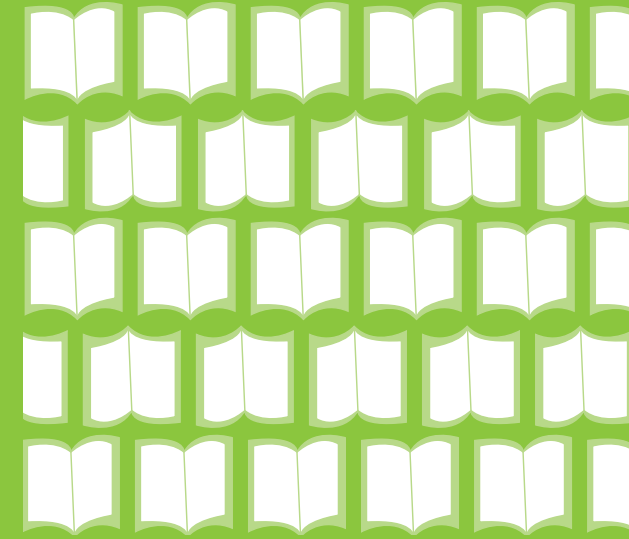
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SMART Finishes 20th Year Strong

Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Over the past year, hundreds of individuals have joined us in the effort to commemorate SMART's 20th anniversary with a truly inclusive statewide celebration.

We've honored our myriad partners, established and revitalized relationships, and collected remarkable stories about how SMART's work has changed lives for the better.

Most importantly, we ended the program year serving 8,548 children, exceeding our goal of 7,700 children. What a way to end our 20th year and launch into our third decade!

Driven by our three-year strategic plan, our growth this year has been the result of focused, deliberate efforts to maximize children served within existing programs, reopen former programs, and establish new partnerships where we can have maximum impact – specifically PreK and kindergarten.

This emphasis is based on prevailing research and our own experience, which tell us that the youngest years of life are where we can have the greatest impact on educational outcomes.

Our growth has been so tremendous this year that we've nearly reached our service goal for 2014, a full two years early. As we turn our focus to

the future, this early success provides us with an opportunity to pursue measured growth while we focus on strengthening our financial stability to support our thriving program.

The past 20 years are only just the beginning of what we can accomplish together. To ensure our next 20 years are even better than the last, we've launched our 20 to 20 Vision campaign, which you'll read more about in this newsletter. We need your support to ensure Oregon's children are meeting reading benchmarks and ready to rise to the educational and life challenges ahead.

We hope you'll join us in the charge to make the next 20 years of SMART, the best 20 years of SMART.

Sincerely,

Chris Otis



Program Spotlight: PreK Model Provides Critical Early Intervention and Reading Support



What is PreK SMART?

PreK SMART is a modified SMART program that serves an entire PreK classroom. PreK SMART's oral reading focus aligns with the literacy development stage of PreK students. Volunteers model reading and foster an enjoyment of books, exposing PreK students to print and literature. PreK SMART students also choose two books per month to take home.

How does PreK differ from the Standard SMART model?

Students are divided into three or four groups and rotate every 15-20 minutes. As one group reads one-on-one with SMART volunteers, the other groups are engaged in classroom activities.

Why did SMART develop the PreK program?

Educators agree that reading aloud with PreK students helps them build pre-reading skills and reinforces

emerging reading and language skills. SMART developed the PreK program to provide important exposure to books and reading during this critical stage in literacy development.

Do students get one-on-one support in the PreK model?

PreK SMART volunteers spend 15-20 minutes reading one-on-one with each student, while volunteers in Standard SMART read for 30-minute sessions.

How do PreK students benefit from reading support?

It takes 1,000 hours of one-on-one reading activities for a child to be ready to learn to read. Many of Oregon's most at-risk children are not exposed to books and reading before they enter school; SMART volunteers make a significant impact on preparing these students for kindergarten and beyond by reading aloud and providing books to take home.

How do we know PreK SMART is effective?

Children take their first steps toward learning to read very early in life, long before they cross the threshold into school. According to a *Review of Educational Research* study, reading aloud to children is the most important activity for building skills essential for reading success. The strongest predictors of early literacy skills are the availability of books in the home and shared book reading; SMART provides both.

What portion of SMART programs are currently PreK?

We have 31 PreK SMART programs, comprising 13 percent of all SMART programs. This figure is right in line with SMART's strategic goal to grow PreK programs to account for 10-20 percent of all programs by 2014.



SMART 2011-2012 Program Snapshot

Head Start and SMART: A Good Fit



Shawn Lybarger, UCAN Head Start Child Development Services Manager, Roseburg

When it comes to SMART's work with PreK students, Head Start programs across the state have proven to be invaluable partners.

According to Shawn Lybarger, UCAN Head Start Child Development Services Manager in Roseburg, the partnership has provided 120 children at the Roseburg Head Start site with weekly one-on-one reading opportunities with SMART volunteers. Shawn feels that the SMART program directly correlates with Head Start's school readiness goals of increasing literacy skills.

In addition to reading readiness skills, the SMART program also helps students meet Head Start's readiness goals in the social emotional areas, Shawn says. The one-on-one time children spend with SMART

volunteers is invaluable in increasing their self-esteem and relationship building skills, she says.

"The students truly enjoy their time spent reading with volunteers. They even come in from outdoor time without complaint to participate!" Shawn says. "The largest benefit we see is that almost every single child has increased his or her interest in literacy and reading."

The partnership has been extremely beneficial to the students in Roseburg, and Shawn hopes to expand the partnership with SMART to the other eight Head Start sites in Douglas County.

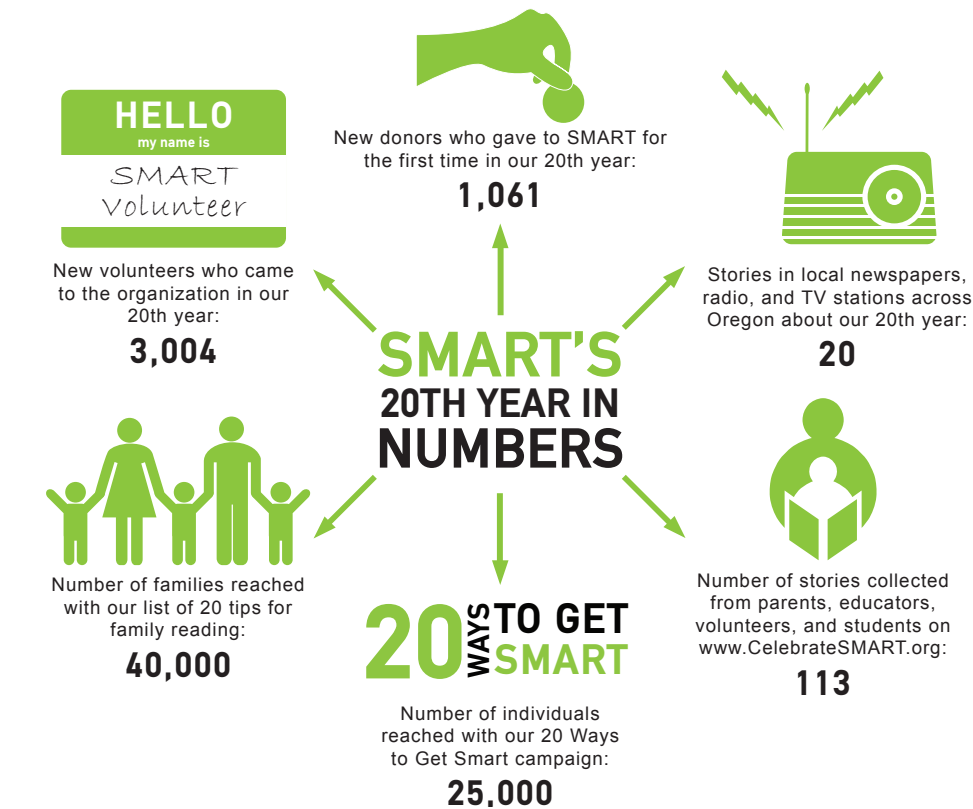
SMART's 20th Anniversary Efforts Reach Far and Wide



Thanks to support from Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon through its Community Partner Organization program, SMART was able to reach thousands of individuals in our 20th year with information about our program and the critical importance of children's literacy.

Check out the graphic below to see the impact we were able to have as a result of those efforts.

A special thank you to Regence for making it possible to reach new audiences in different ways this year!



SMART Partnerships

SMART has a new partnership with the **Oregon State University Alumni Association**. With this joint venture, the OSU Alumni Association will promote the opportunity for SMART volunteerism among its Oregon members. We're thrilled to join forces with an organization that shares our commitment to volunteerism and the pursuit of education.

If you're an OSU alum and a SMART Reader, send us an email at SMART@getsmartoregon.org and let us know!

SMART has partnered with **Zipcar** to give volunteers the use of Zipcars to get to their reading sessions. And now, Zipcar is also offering all of our supporters a one-of-a-kind membership special to enjoy the convenience of Zipcars all the time - not just for SMART reading!

Join Zipcar at www.zipcar.com/smartpersonal for just \$25 (a \$60 savings), plus use the promotional code "SMART" by June 30 to receive \$25 of free driving. What's more, you'll get discounted driving on weekdays!

SMART 20 to 20 Vision

20-to-20 VISION

The activities and support generated over the past year have made our 20th year a great success – and we want to continue that success right up until the very end of our fiscal year. To accomplish that, we've launched the 20 to 20 Vision campaign!

Thanks to our generous supporters, we've been able to **open 24 new sites and serve 1,234 more children** compared to 2011. We've leveraged the contributions of our donors to reach as many children as possible with vital reading support, preparing them for brighter futures.

But, our tremendous growth this year also means that we need more financial support to maintain current service levels and program quality. We

are asking for your help in achieving our **goal of raising \$300,000 by June 30**. Please join us in the 20 to 20 Vision campaign to make the next 20 years of SMART, the best 20 years of SMART.

To make a donation, you can include a contribution in the enclosed envelope, visit www.getSMARToregon.org, or call our office toll free at 800-457-1875.

Thank you for your support!