Dear Friends:

Thank you for making 2018-19 another great year filled with bringing the joy and power of reading to kids throughout Oregon. At our core, SMART believes that reading matters. We know reading is an essential building block in a child’s life, forming the strong foundation for future learning and life experiences. And we know our vast community of volunteers, donors, educators, families and students agrees with us.

Thanks to your support, SMART served over 11,000 students with one-on-one reading and gave away over 127,000 books to Oregon kids this year. We think that is worth celebrating!

As I’ve come to learn in my eight years at SMART – and one of my favorite things about this organization and our incredible team – each year is filled with interesting and exciting new developments. This year, we launched 15 pilot programs through our new Out-of-School Time (OST) model, prioritized in our 2017-20 strategic plan. The OST model reaches more children who can benefit from our services by partnering with community organizations, after school programs and summer programs. SMART OST programs served nearly 300 children and gave away over 1,500 books in 2018-19. Next year, we aim to reach 400 students and will continue refining the model and evaluation mechanisms before rolling it out statewide.

You also may have heard that SMART is getting a new look through a rebranding effort. Later this year, you’ll see a new logo, language, and messaging as an updated reflection of who SMART is today and where we’re headed. Much more to come on this front in the fall – keep an eye out for SMART’s new look.

Thank you again for your continued partnership and support. Here’s to a great summer filled with warm, sunny days and an endless supply of good books!

Chris Otis
SMART Executive Director

2018-19 Statewide Impact

- 287 Sites
- 5,021 Volunteers
- 10,993 Students
- 145,546 Books Given
- 155,922 Volunteer Hours
- $3.5 million Donated Value of Volunteer Hours

2018-19 Local Impact

- 14 Sites
- 176 Volunteers
- 523 Students
- 7,124 Books Given

S is for SMART Raises Funds for Local Programs

SMART friends and supporters gathered on April 6 to celebrate our work and raise funds to support kids in SMART next year. This year’s event was a big success, raising over $13,000 to provide books and one-on-one reading time to kids in our community. With Les Engle as emcee, live music performed by the Young Bucks, and a special presentation by Ocean Crest Elementary Principal Becky Armistead, a great time was had by all. Thank you to all of our guests, and our sponsors.

Welcome New Area Administrator

This spring, we welcomed Kris Dellsite to our team as the new Area Administrator. Kris will provide administrative support to our programs along the South Coast and in Douglas County. She comes to SMART with extensive office management experience and can’t wait to get to know all our local programs. Welcome, Kris!

South Coast Area Volunteer of the Year

SMART Site Coordinator Dr. Elizabeth Hewitt was named the South Coast’s 2018-19 SMART Volunteer of the Year! Dr. Elizabeth coordinates the program at Ocean Crest Elementary in Bandon, which provides one-on-one reading support to nearly 50 kids each week. In addition to volunteering with SMART, she serves on her local school board. Congratulations, Dr. Elizabeth, and thank you for everything you do for kids in your community!

Thanks All Around!

SMART wouldn’t be possible without our incredible community of Site Coordinators, Readers, donors, educators, and advocates who partner with us to bring a love of reading and learning to local kids. Thank you for being a part of the SMART family!

Local Sponsors

Many thanks to these businesses and partners for helping us provide one-on-one reading support and books to kids in our community:

- Bandon Dunes
- Community Foundation
- Community Hospital
- Community Foundation
- Ponypath
- City of Bandon
- City of Coquille
- City of North Bend

Hugh & Jaci Pinkston

Gordon Elwood Foundation, West Family Foundation, City of Bandon, City of Coquille, and City of North Bend

SPRING/SUMMER 2019
SMART had a huge impact on my life. Even though my parents read with me regularly, SMART provided the extra practice and one-on-one time at school that helped me grow as a reader and catch up with my classmates. With the extra boost, I exceeded on the SATs and ACTs. I’m a very fast reader now and good at skimming, which has been really helpful to me in college.

– Mariza Rayfield, Tigard/Tualatin

SMART Staff Book Squad
SMART staff launched a book club this year to foster reading and learning together as a team. Our first book was Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, which members of our statewide team gathered to discuss over their lunch hour. Next up: Brown Girl Dreaming by Jacqueline Woodson.

In Their Own Words: SMART Alumni

“SMART had a huge impact on my life. Even though my parents read with me regularly, SMART provided the extra practice and one-on-one time at school that helped me grow as a reader and catch up with my classmates. With the extra boost, I exceeded on the SATs and ACTs. I’m a very fast reader now and good at skimming, which has been really helpful to me in college.”

– Mariza Rayfield, Tigard/Tualatin

“In the midst of all the hard work and stress that come with being a teenager, SMART was a place where I could relax. I love that reading is all about sparking the imagination.”

– Nini Bui, Beaverton

“Just for Fun

SMART’s Summer Reading List
With longer days filled with sunshine almost upon us, here’s a look at what SMART staff will be reading this summer:

Circe by Madeline Miller
- Stacy Goodwin, Metro Senior Program Manager

Small Beauty by Jia Qing-Wilson Yang
- Shannon Ross, South Valley Program Administrator

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens
- Stephanie Gates, Northwest and North Coast Development Officer

Celebrating SMART’s Statewide Volunteer of the Year
Congratulations to Karen Brkich, a SMART Site Coordinator in Central Point, who has been named SMART’s statewide Volunteer of the Year. Karen has been volunteering with SMART since the first program opened in the Rogue Valley in 1995, and was selected from among 10 regional winners because of her longstanding dedication to fostering a love of reading in local children. “Through all of life’s changes, Karen has made volunteering with SMART her number one priority,” says Julie Brimble, SMART Rogue Valley Area Manager. “She has recruited and trained volunteers, taken on challenging sites and helped them thrive, and is beloved by volunteers, school staff, and students alike. As one of her fellow volunteers said, ‘she is, quite simply, the best!’” Big thanks and kudos to you, Karen!

SMART’s Monthly Giving Society: The SMART Book Club
When you join the SMART Book Club by making monthly gifts to SMART, you join an exclusive group of dedicated people who are committed to ensuring students continue to receive one-on-one reading support with an engaged volunteer and books to keep. Members of SMART’s Book Club receive monthly emails recommending a children’s book from our program, as well as periodic updates and invitations to SMART events. To learn more, visit www.bit.ly SMARTBookClub.

SMART’s Annual statewide fundraiser, the Alphabet Ball, was held on Friday, Feb. 8 (amid rumors of snow that thankfully didn’t materialize). By all accounts, the event was a great success! Over 300 guests joined us at The Nines Hotel in downtown Portland, and collectively helped raise $502,000 to support SMART operations throughout the state. Thank you to our many supporters and sponsors, including our presenting sponsor, First Tech Federal Credit Union.

Volunteer of the Year Karen Brkich accepts her award from Executive Director Chris Otis at the SMART Alphabet Ball on Feb. 8.

SMART’s 2019 Alphabet Ball Raises Funds for SMART Statewide

SMART BOOK CLUB
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