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Reach Out and Read of Greater Cleveland Honored with Literacy Award

The nonprofit will be recognized and presented with a \$20,000 check during celebration with Ohio First Lady as keynote speaker

CLEVELAND, Ohio (April 10, 2023) – Nonprofit, Reach Out and Read (ROR), is proud to announce the Greater Cleveland affiliate has been honored with the second Kurt Karakul Literacy Award. The organization will be recognized at an upcoming celebration, where Ohio First Lady, Fran DeWine, will serve as the keynote speaker. In addition to the recognition, Reach Out and Read of Greater Cleveland will receive a \$20,000 check to support its mission.

“This is a very exciting honor for us,” said Marty Martinez, Chief Executive Officer of Reach Out and Read. “We are committed to our mission of supporting early childhood literacy as well as strengthening the parent-child bond through reading out loud. This award and accompanying grant help raise awareness for our research-based model that begins in the offices of dozens of pediatric and family practice physicians across Cleveland who we are so proud to partner with.”

ROR was selected for the award based on its nomination by Pre4Cle, a collective impact initiative working to expand access to all three- and four-year-olds in the city of Cleveland so that every child enters kindergarten ready to succeed. The award is named for literacy hero, Kurt Karakul, and was established by The Literacy Cooperative with a gift from the Third Federal Foundation to recognize and encourage future “Kurts” for generations to come.

The Literacy Cooperative will honor the nonprofit at the Read Across America Celebration at the Tri-C Jerry Sue Thornton Center located at 2500 E 22nd St. in Cleveland on April 20. Ohio First Lady, Fran DeWine, is the keynote speaker and has been a champion for early literacy after seeing the impact books had on her own family.

“This comes at an incredible time for Reach Out and Read in Ohio,” said Executive Director of Reach Out and Read Greater Cleveland, Lynn Foran. “We are embarking on a statewide expansion of the program. Children and families in Greater Cleveland and beyond will have access to the resources and support they need.”

ROR's program turns children's regular check-ups into springboards to healthy family relationships. During well-visits, physicians speak with parents about the benefits of reading aloud and sharing meaningful moments with their young children beginning at birth. Physicians show caregivers how to incorporate books to best engage their children and how to interact with the text and images to help the children follow along. In addition, ROR's program provides opportunities for physicians to share advice about how to talk about stories with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers helping to promote early relational health and creating memorable moments between a child and caregiver. The program allows for families to gain a deeper understanding of why they should make reading a daily habit, and leave inspired to cuddle up with their young one and a book. ROR Greater Cleveland supports literacy promotion in 35,000 well child visits each year at 38 program sites.

For more information about Reach Out and Reach visit our website at www.reachoutandread.org.

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About Reach Out and Read: Founded in 1989 at Boston Medical Center, Reach Out and Read is an evidence-based, national, nonprofit organization that gives young children a foundation for success by incorporating books into pediatric care and encouraging families to read aloud together promoting early relational health and creating memorable moments between child and caregiver. Nationally, Reach Out and Read's 40,000 pediatric clinicians served 4.2 million children and shared 6.4 million books at 6,100 program sites around the country over the last year. Learn more at www.reachoutandread.org; follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Reach Out and Read is a registered 501c3.