



# THE LITERACY CHALLENGE

According to the United States
Department of Education, more
than 85% of America's Black
male 4th grade students are
not proficient in reading.

In an increasingly global and knowledge-based economy, poor reading skills among young Black boys today will produce Black men who are unprepared to compete in the workforce of tomorrow. Four key factors contribute to low reading proficiency among Black boys: (1) limited access to engaging reading material; (2) lack of Black men in Black boys' early reading experiences; (3) few culturally competent educators; and (4) educational systems that are unresponsive to Black boys' individual learning needs.



# LETTER FROM OUR CHIEF READING INSPIRER



Dear Friends.

Because of you, we experienced significant growth during the past year. It is my honor to share our 2017-2018 annual report with you.

The Barbershop Books program expanded into four new states in FY 2018 (California, Iowa, Maryland, Mississippi) and thirteen new cities. Support from individual donors, school districts, local governments, and library systems enabled us to partner with 133 barbershops, reaching an estimated 5,320 Black boys ages 4-8 per month.

Feedback from communities throughout the United States has been positive and encouraging. A quick glance of our social media feed reveals the smiling faces of boys, men, and families engrossed in fun titles from our curated book lists. We established a major goal this year of streamlining the implementation process of the Barbershop Books program, laying a solid foundation for growth and effectiveness.

We take the awesome responsibility of inspiring the next generation of readers seriously. Reading Holiday Project, Inc. and the Barbershop Books team work tirelessly to empower and equip communities with the resources and information they need to create early positive reading experiences in barbershops. Together, we can improve reading opportunities for Black boys and begin to change the narrative about boys and reading.

We couldn't do this work without the generous support of our donors, volunteers and community partners. I am humbled by your support and look forward to reaching more boys across the country.

Educationally,

Founder & Executive Director Reading Holiday Project, Inc.



# **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

## **Barbershop Books**

As of FY18, Reading Holiday Project's inaugural program, Barbershop Books had established reading spaces across the country and trained barbers in the basics of early literacy and how to communicate with kids about the books they are reading. By the end of FY18, the following had been established:

	FY18	FY17
Total reading spaces	133	110
Total states with reading spaces	20	<b>16</b>
Total cities with reading spaces	41	<b>26</b>
Total new barbers trained in early literacy	30	40
Approximate # of boys reached	5,320	4,400
(based on average of 40 boys/shop/year)		·

#### **QUOTES FROM BARBERS, PARENTS, SPONSORS, KIDS**

- 1. All 4 One Barbershop Victor Robinson "They love the 'David' books!"
- 2. The Hair Show Mr. Nance, owner. We're "very happy with the program. Kids really enjoy the books."
- 3. Sharp Images "Kids really love it. The program has been a great success."
- 4. Cut Above the Rest shop owner Mr Cofield, the "program is going awesome".
- 5. "Love the idea, mission and compassion. This will reap so many blessings!"- Selena Lee
- 6. "I wish more educators had such a passion for helping young boys read and followed their passion to do something about it. Mr. Irby you are the change we need in the world. Continue to be blessed and thank you for all your hard work!" Renee Folsom Mengistab

#### **2018 Summer Book Giveaway**

This year, we held our second annual Summer Book Giveaway in New York City. As a result of the generosity of various publishing houses and donors, we were able to give approximately 700 children over 2000 new books to keep. We partnered with the Boys Club of New York and were able to use their space for the children to shop for books, participate in "read alouds" and generally have a great time.

We'd like to thank our corporate partners who not only donated books and shopping bags, but also encouraged employees to volunteer throughout the event:

C.A.N.S. 4 Cuts
Children's Book Council
GAP, Inc. (donated bags)
Inkluded
Penguin Random House/Penguin Young Readers
Scholastic
Workman Publishing Company

Children from the following programs received books:

Boys Club of NY - Beacon Boys Club of NY - Gerry Boys Club of NY - Harriman DREAM East Harlem Tutorial Program Isaacs Center Mosaic Preparatory Academy

Susan Particof Head Start



#### 2017-2018 Board List

Akeem Oliver, Board Chair 7th Grade Special Education Teacher, NYC Department of Education

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Alvin Irby, Board Member RHP Founder & Executive Director

Financials (Unaudited)		
	FY18	FY17
Revenue	\$142,079	\$86,793
Expenses	\$127,532	\$75,597
Gain/Loss	\$14,547	\$11,196



#### **2018 COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Community Partners sponsor 10 or more reading spaces in barbershops in communities across the country.

Atlantic City Board of Education City of Columbia (South Carolina) County of Los Angeles Public Library Literacy Partners Inc.



### **DONORS**

#### \$1000 - \$5000

Alvin Irby
Anna & Nathan Flax Foundation
Facebook Community Outreach
Fidelity Charitable Trust
Glenn Barnett
New Madison Square Garden
New York Community Trust
New York Yankees
Penguin Random House
Social Equity Investment
Solutions LLC
US Charitable Gifts

#### \$500 - \$999

Aliya Tabani
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Easton Family Connection
Ellen Frankle
Lelia Weinstein
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Stark White Entertainment

#### \$100 - \$499

01 Comics Inc. 01 Inc. Adam Foote Adrianne Welt Alden Hall Alexandra Mace Allison Yarrow Alyssa Harris Amanda Hill **Andrew Nuckols Anthony Williams** Barbara Mouton Ben Maver Benevity Community Impact Fund **Bradley Treat** Brandi Capps Bre'shard Busby Brea Stevenson Brooke Bassett Bryan Berube Carrie Kissel Charlotte Knox Cheryle Custer Christina Matthews Cindy Mahoney Collen McQueen Cristen Hebrard Dana Zivarts David Hoffman Debra Roeder Demille J. James Eileen Dengler Eileen Herlihy Eileen Mackoff Eliot Bergson

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#### \$5 - \$99

Aaron Hoard Abigael Boucher Alison McKenna Alison Benjamin **Amy Cordones** Amy Kraft Amy Nylander Anastasia Smith Andrew Dagg-Murry Anethayan Rosalvo Angela Fagen Anna Hall Anna Pierdiluca Annabelle Pirraglia Annalese Duprey Barbara Jansen Barry Campbell Baxter Trautman **BB** Whimsies Benjamin Ertl Bernadette Fowler Bernice Speer Beth Ann Lacy Betty Pearsall BJ Skillman Bob Tilchin Brooke Basset Bryan Smith Carol Brendler Catherine Fryszczn Cedric Friday Chery Smigelski Cheryl Hankamer Chimene Cecato Christopher Albrecht Corrina Parry Crystal Givens Cynthia Reddrick Daniel Silverman Danielle Fox Danielle V. Sykes David Deans Deborah Aragon Deborah Lidl Delesia Pruitt Derek Wiback

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