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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Way Announces Read Across Kenosha: A Community Literacy Event

February 23, 2022 (Kenosha, WI) — United Way of Kenosha County (UWKC), mobilizing the caring power of our community, announces Read Across Kenosha: A Community Literacy Event taking place on Wednesday, March 2. Read Across Kenosha engages local leaders with more than 260 kindergarten through third grade classrooms in a one-day reading event.

Community members might recognize Read Across Kenosha as the annual Readers Are Leaders Event. Previously, this event mobilized hundreds of volunteers in a one-day celebration of reading. In partnership with Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD), this year's event is reimaged to be just as exciting and as safe as possible.

UWKC invited local leaders, businesses and organizations to participate in the event via prerecorded or live virtual readings. Guest readers include Mayor Antaramian, Yolanda Adams: KUSD school board president, Bryan Albrecht: president of Gateway Technical College, Debbie Ford: chancellor of University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Beth Heidorn: executive director of Racine Zoo, students from Kenosha Literacy Council, and more, as well as special guests from Kenosha Kingfish and Culver's.

The book selection is also different, featuring diverse authors and titles, guided by National Education Association's recommendations for [Read Across America](#), that encompass a wide range of everyday lessons and heart-warming stories. Titles include Families Belong by Dan Saks, Saturday by Oge Mora, Change Sings by Amanda Gorman and many more. Each classroom will get one copy of a book being read and will be able to tune into the virtual readings via YouTube and Zoom.

"Like many organizations in the past two years, we've been challenged with finding out of the box ways to present our programs and special events while still making a positive impact on our community," says Carolyn Friesch, chief executive officer at UWKC. "We're excited to reintroduce this reading initiative and look forward to developing even more ways our community can collaborate, and read, together."

In addition to Read Across Kenosha, UWKC also works closely with KUSD for the Readers are Leaders tutoring program, where roughly 40 volunteers tutor across three elementary schools.

"We are extremely grateful for the partnership and efforts of the United Way of Kenosha County that ensure caring community volunteers have the opportunity to help our staff and students enjoy a fun day focused on reading," says Bethany Ormseth, interim superintendent at KUSD. "The more we expose our students to reading in new and adventurous ways, the more likely we will instill in them a love of reading."

United Way would like to thank the 2022 Read Across Kenosha sponsors: Gateway Technical College, University of Wisconsin-Parkside and LMI Packaging. Thank you for your support of this community literacy initiative. United Way also thanks Blue House Books, for their assistance in securing 260 new children's books for KUSD classrooms.

"At Blue House Books, community involvement is extremely important," says Sam Jacquest, owner of Blue House Books. "We wouldn't be here if we didn't have a community that supported us, so we like to give back however we can. We are thrilled to be able to help get books into the hands of children in our community as part of the Read Across Kenosha event and by partnering with United Way of Kenosha County."

A complete list of readers and books is available upon request.

To donate and help provide books to the more than 260 KUSD classrooms, visit: [United Way of Kenosha County on Facebook](#). For more information and questions, contact Marisa Markowski at (262) 671-2208.

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About UWKC

United Way of Kenosha County fights for the health, education, and financial stability of every person. For almost 100 years, UWKC has created positive change throughout Kenosha County by mobilizing the caring power of the community, improving lives, and striving for lasting, positive transformation. Through partnerships and collaborations, UWKC both supports local initiatives with an annual community investment process and manages programs such as Readers are Leaders, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, SingleCare Prescription Discounts and more.



Mobilizing the caring power of our community since 1923.