

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YOUTH-LED NONPROFIT DONATES 2,000 BOOKS TO LAUSD SCHOOL

Los Angeles, Calif., (4/1/2023) – Code Read is delighted to announce its upcoming donation of 2,000 new books to students at Canterbury Avenue Elementary on April 3.

Founded by Mackenzie Krestul in 2016, Code Read has been dedicated to providing access to literature for underserved youth in Los Angeles County, having already contributed over 50,000 new books. Code Read stands as a steadfast advocate for youth literacy, aiming to level the academic playing field by distributing complimentary books to children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Research underscores the stark contrast in book access between economically disadvantaged areas, where there is only one age-appropriate book for every 300 children, and more affluent households, which boast an average of 13 books per home (Handbook of Early Literacy Research). Despite these challenges, there remains hope for equitable education. According to Reading is Fundamental, children raised in homes with 100 books have a 90% probability of completing 9th grade, compared to just 30% in bookless homes. Code Read acknowledges the significance of empowering children to select their own reading material, recognizing that self-selected books foster greater engagement and enjoyment in reading.

"Every individual deserves to have books in their own home—books that resonate with them, igniting a passion for reading," expressed Mackenzie Krestul, the visionary behind Code Read. "This is particularly crucial for children, as access to books not only enhances literacy skills and academic success but also provides a nurturing environment for creativity and imaginative exploration."

In anticipation of this donation, students at Canterbury Ave Elementary have dedicated themselves to earning a free shopping trip at a book fair hosted by Code Read on April 3rd. Each student will have the opportunity to select two new books and will also receive a book bag along with other goodies.

Research demonstrates that increasing access to books and empowering children to choose their reading material significantly elevate literacy levels, bridge socio-economic disparities, and cultivate positive attitudes toward learning.

With the unwavering support of her siblings—Jordan, a graduate student at UCLA, and Maddy, a sophomore at Canyon High—as well as her mother, Amanda, Mackenzie has spearheaded the donation of over 50,000 new books. Code Read has received grants from various organizations, including The Nora Roberts Foundation, We Benefit Children, the Walmart Foundation, the Lawrence Foundation, and Kars4Kids.

Code Read has launched a capital campaign to raise funds for a custom Bookmobile. This mobile bookstore, equipped with book carts capable of storing up to 2,000 books, will enable Code Read to expand its outreach, visiting Head Start centers, children's hospitals, juvenile detention centers, and senior centers. Donations toward this initiative can be made at www.coderead.org.

Mackenzie and Maddy will be available for interviews at the book fair.

About Code Read:

Founded in 2016 by Mackenzie Krestul, Code Read is committed to providing recreational books to elementary school children in low-income communities. By offering books to children who may not otherwise afford them, Code Read seeks to promote literacy and instill a lifelong love of reading.

About LAUSD:

As the second-largest school district in the nation, the Los Angeles Unified School District enrolls more than 429,000 students in transitional kindergarten through 12th grade. Covering 710 square miles, the district includes Los Angeles as well as all or parts of 25 smaller municipalities, along with several unincorporated sections of Los Angeles County.

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