

Benton Harbor Schools Receive Donation of Books

Andrews University chapter of Phi Kappa Phi sponsors book drive

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By: Hannah Gallant

On Wednesday, September 20, 2017, the Benton Harbor Area Schools received a considerable donation of books due to the sponsoring efforts of Andrews University's local chapter of Phi Kappa Phi.

Phi Kappa Phi is the nation's oldest interdisciplinary honors society and Andrews University is the only Adventist university with a chapter. John Nay is the current president, Ann Gibson, professor emerita of accounting, serves as treasurer, Curt Vanderwaal, chair of the Department of Social Work, is the president-elect and Marianne Kordas, music librarian, is the secretary. Additional officer positions are in transition. Their annual book drive is one way that Andrews' local chapter connects academic excellence with the importance of reading for a community.

Amanda Scott from the Benton Harbor Schools Administration office received the books. She commented, "It was very nice of them because we are always in need of new materials, and it will definitely add to our library."

The books were a set of beginner non-fiction books covering many animals and habitats that will primarily be useful for children in Grades 1-4. The set cost close to \$250 and consisted of over 40 different titles.

“We can use them in the libraries, but also as nice materials for the classrooms as well. The bright colors and descriptions on the books can impact the children’s learning and reading abilities. Hopefully it will make them readers,” says Scott.

The purchase of this brand-new set of books was made possible due to \$150 raised during the spring Phi Kappa Phi Usborne book drive, which was part of the annual PKP book drive. The funds that PKP raised were then matched by a 50% matching funds program called “Literacy for a Lifetime” offered by the Educational Development Corporation (EDC).

EDC is based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It publishes children’s books and provides a business plan for Independent Educational Consultants to offer free books to schools and organizations. The company’s mission is to increase literacy and change the lives of children “one book at a time.”

In addition to the “Literacy for a Lifetime” 50% Grant Program, EDC also enables their educational consultants to offer Reading Incentive programs. These programs supply the school and children with free books as well as full-service book fairs providing classrooms and libraries with a generous 50% of sales amount in free books. The programs are also available to community libraries.

Debi Robertson, an experienced elementary teacher with a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction from Andrews University, provides this service to the community as an EDC independent educational consultant.

For more information about Phi Kappa Phi’s annual book drive efforts contact John Nay at nayjr@andrews.edu. To learn more about the EDC or get in touch with Debi Robertson, email debirob@earthlink.net.

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