



MAYOR BYRON W. BROWN



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Lorey Schultz / 716.851.5545

MAYOR BROWN CALLS ON CITY SENIORS TO TAKE PART IN AARP EXPERIENCE CORPS LITERACY PROGRAM

Program being administered by Read to Succeed Buffalo

Buffalo, NY – Mayor Byron W. Brown is calling on city senior volunteers, ages 50 and up, to sign up immediately to participate in the AARP Foundation’s Experience Corps Literacy Program, an award-winning national literacy program that helps struggling students become better readers by pairing them with well trained, mature volunteer literacy tutors.

In May 2016, Read to Succeed Buffalo (RTSB) received a \$200,000 Reading Intervention Grant from AARP Foundation in collaboration with the Corporation for National and Community Service Social Innovation Fund to implement the program with the goal of helping increase literacy skills among children in three targeted Buffalo Public Schools, serving 950 students K-3rd Grade. The program is set to launch at the start of the school year at West Hertel Academy, Waterfront Elementary and the Dr. Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence. Buffalo was one of five communities in the United States to receive an Intervention Grant from AARP.

In addition, Mayor Brown committed \$40,000 to this literacy initiative, continuing his support for educational programs that increase the literacy rate among students in Buffalo. His popular summer reading program, called Reading Rules! Mayor Brown’s Summer Reading Challenge, continues going strong and grows in size every year, attracting over 12,000 champion readers since its inception in 2001.

“In my travels across the City, I hear on a daily basis from our citizens how they want to help make our community an even better place to live, especially for our children,” said Mayor Brown. “As a Volunteer Literacy Tutor in the AARP Experience Corps Literacy Program, this is your chance to make it happen by helping some of our most at-risk children become better readers.”

The goal of the AARP Experience Corps Literacy Program is to recruit 40 senior volunteers to participate in the program. Volunteers go through a robust pre-service training based on a national model and will work closely with a Read to Succeed Buffalo staff person who has been assigned in each school as a result of the AARP grant. Volunteers must be willing to tutor in their assigned school two times a week for a minimum total of four hours per week, for the entire school year.

“We are very grateful to Mayor Brown for committing this financial support to help with our Experience Corps Volunteer Tutor recruitment and retention efforts,” said Anne Ryan, executive director of Read to Succeed Buffalo. “Those who volunteer will provide the personal touch that will make a real difference in the life of a child who may be struggling to read.”

Read to Succeed Buffalo is hosting an Experience Corps Tutoring Program information session on August 23, 2016 at the Frank E. Merriweather, Jr Library, located at 1324 Jefferson Ave, 14208 from 12:00 to 2:00 PM. Anyone interested in more information or applying to become a tutor is urged to attend. In addition, a media campaign has been launched across Buffalo to assist with the recruitment effort.

Interested volunteers can also visit readtosucceedbuffalo.org or call (716) 843-8895 to learn more about the program.

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ABOUT AARP FOUNDATION

AARP Foundation is working to win back opportunity for struggling Americans 50+ by being a force for change on the most serious issues they face today: housing, hunger, income and isolation. By coordinating responses to these issues on all four fronts at once, and supporting them with vigorous legal advocacy, the Foundation serves the unique needs of those 50+ while working with local organizations nationwide to reach more people, strengthen communities, work more efficiently and make resources go further. AARP Foundation is AARP's affiliated charity. Learn more at www.aarpfoundation.org.

ABOUT THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND

The Social Innovation Fund is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.

ABOUT READ TO SUCCEED BUFFALO

Read to Succeed Buffalo, Inc. (RTSB) began in 2007 in response to the staggering literacy deficits among the citizens of Buffalo. Today, RTSB sharpens its focus where it can have the most impact – increasing early childhood literacy and third grade reading scores by preparing children for Kindergarten and the early grades through improved exposure to developmentally appropriate, literacy-rich environments wherever they are, including child care, Head Start, public school, or home with a parent or caregiver. The non-profit organization works to develop models for improving literacy that create systemic change in how the Buffalo community prepares children for success in school and supports them once they enter public school. A funding collaborative that includes the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, The Margaret L. Wendt Foundation and The John R. Oishei Foundation supports the organization. For more information, visit www.readtosucceedbuffalo.org.

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