



Message from President & CEO,

We are all aware of the research regarding early child literacy and its importance in overall child development. Engaging children and families to read together regularly affects us all as an educated, thoughtful, and engaged citizen is essential to our community not just surviving, but thriving.

The past year has been an exciting one for United Way of Greater Mercer County (“UWGMC”) as we have launched several new educational initiatives targeting early reading and mathematics, while engaging grade school children in the love of learning, reducing negative behaviors that derail educational trajectory, and learning how to make healthy choices. These programs increase social capital and resilience while preventing bullying and are designed and proven to deliver lifelong skills to the children that participate, as well as their families.

When each of you contribute your resources, whether it be volunteering your time, your expertise or financially, you enable UWGMC to implement proven, evidence-based programs that deliver measurable impact to both those we serve as well as our community as a whole. I invite you to read further about how we are collaborating with schools, businesses, and other non-profits to help children achieve their fullest potential.

Additionally, I want to keep you informed of the work we are doing in the community. Please be on the lookout for quarterly Social Impact Reports, such as this. Each report highlights one of our focus areas - Education, Income and Health.

Thank you for your continued interest and support of UWGMC.

Sincere Regards,

Herbert Klein III, President &CEO

# Did you know?



It's never too early to start a child on a path to becoming a strong reader. Learning to read is the most important predictor of a child's future success. Yet, many kids miss this important milestone. The single most impactful thing we can do for the future of our nation and our children is to teach them to read!

**If they can read, they will learn.**

**If they learn, they can succeed!**

## Reading Oasis/Club Connect

**United Way of Greater Mercer County is very excited to partner with the Rogers School in Hightstown, NJ creating the school's very first Reading Oasis**

A Reading Oasis/Club Connect is a safe and inviting location in a school where families and community partners can meet and enjoy reading together and learn how to make reading fun outside of the classroom. Each Reading Oasis includes access to hundreds of books year round and promotes reading to children 24/7/365 with online access to reading activities and resources.



*"The Rogers school is so excited about the installation of a Reading Oasis!*

*Books are what our students love. Our new Reading Oasis will give a special opportunity for children to enjoy literature in various ways. This special room will allow for younger and older students to connect. We can envision the enjoyment of new literacy experiences for all of our students as they build their passion for reading."*

*- Michael Tozzi -Fourth Grade Teacher, Grace N. Rogers School*

# Summer Slide Program



Summer is a time filled with long days and fun for many children, but it is also a time when they can fall behind and lose up to one-third of their grade level reading ability, especially in a neighborhood when they do not have access to many books. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has described summer learning loss as “devastating,” and advises that summer learning gaps

be addressed through the development of new summer programs. Research suggests that “high quality academic enrichment programs can decrease and perhaps eliminate summer learning loss for low income children.” Providing learning opportunities to children is typically viewed as the responsibility of school districts, but summer programs offered by traditionally non-academic organizations also appear poised to meet the challenge. If we can keep students engaged year-round especially in the summer months they will have a better chance to maintain their path to success.

**This summer, UWGMC supported two summer reading programs; one at the Trenton YMCA and the other at The Center for Child and Family Achievement (CCFA) for children in grades K-3.**

**CCFA also engaged parents and care-givers who were invited to the center while their children were engaged in the program; they also participated in a support group and worked together with their children. The results for these families included a stronger family connection and a greater family focus on reading and structure.**

# Literacy Kits

A Literacy Kit is designed to deepen a child's reading experience and help them build their libraries at home. Volunteers use their creativity along with arts and crafts to create and decorate a kit that contains an age appropriate book, a collection of related supplemental activities, and games designed to make reading interactive and enjoyable for young children. Contents of the Literacy Kits can help bring books to life and can be enjoyed over and over by children with their teachers and families.



**Special thanks to Johnson & Johnson and Educational Testing Service (ETS) who graciously helped us package Literacy Kits. We could not have done it without your help!**

## Whats New!



**Are you interested in spending more resources on your mission without raising 1 additional dollar?**

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At CollaborationCore we provide a cost-effective workplace solution where nonprofit organizations can concentrate on their mission.

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- Participate in cost-sharing and reduce overhead
- Focus more on mission critical issues
- Be seen as a good steward of donor funds.

CollaborationCore's flexible workplace model facilitates the reduction of operational costs while increasing capacity. Nonprofit members only pay for what they use with no long term commitment, unless they prefer one. Easily expand space needs in as little as one hour increments, providing part-time employees a robust infrastructure to make the most efficient use of staff time.



