



**READING IS GRAND!
CELEBRATING GRAND-FAMILIES
TELLING OUR STORIES
@ YOUR LIBRARY**

A Family Literacy Project of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Inc.

PRESS RELEASE

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American Library Association Black Caucus unveils Reading is Grand! Celebrating Grand-Families Telling Our Stories @ Your Library grant winners

SAN FRANCISCO – During the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference and Exhibition, June 25 – June 30, Kevin Watson, president of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA), announced four libraries will receive the 2015 *Reading Is Grand! Celebrating Grand-Families Telling Our Stories @ Your Library* grant. Reading Is Grand! is a celebration of the important role African American grandparents and older adults play in the lives of children. It is through their infinite wisdom and experience that children learn the unique cultural and familial values that help them grow into valuable contributors to the community.

The grant-winning libraries — Wayne County Public Library, Goldsboro, NC; Allen Parish Libraries, Oberlin Branch, Oberlin, LA; Durham County Library, Main Branch, Durham, NC.; Boston Public Library, Dudley Branch, Boston, MA — were selected based on the level of creativity and originality of program criteria, action plans, level of involvement of grandparents in the activities, and impact of the program on the community.

The four winning library programs are as follows:

Wayne County Public Library, in Goldsboro, NC.

The focus of their Reading Is Grand! Project is to work with a group of middle school girls from Dillard Middle School to teach them the skills to interview their grandmothers and to record their stories in both written video formats. The girls will meet every Tuesday beginning in July for seven weeks learning a variety of skills including: how to develop questions and conducting interviews; videography techniques; and printing news articles. The project will culminate with a reveal party where the girls will present to their grandmothers with a keepsake box of printed and recorded interviews. All class sessions and the final presentation will take place at the Goldsboro Library. The intent of the project is to connect girls with their grandmothers and/or older adults in order to present to them positive role models and teach them the unique culture values that they have gleaned from their stories to help the girls to grow into valuable contributors in the community.

Allen Parish Libraries, Oberlin Headquarters Branch, in Oberlin, LA.

The purpose of Grand Stories Station, Allen Parish Libraries' Reading Is Grand! Project, is to build generational ties between African American grandparents, great aunts and uncles and the children in their families through various literary and cultural activities set up as depots at the GRAND STORIES STATION. Each family will be given a "ticket book to ride the rails." After leaving the introductory storyteller at Grand Central Station, participants will travel to a variety of depots where families will search archival newspapers on microfiche for articles about life in the area when the grandparents were children. Another depot will explore family histories using Acestor.com. At the Breaking

Bread station, participants will bake corn muffins. Baking time will allow for stories about meal time when the grandparents were young. Finally, at the Recap station, staff members will assist the participants in assembling their memories of the afternoon.

Durham County Library, Main Branch, in Durham, NC.

Celebrate Grandparents' Day @ Your Library, Durham County Library's Main Branch's Reading Is Grand! Project, will be an opportunity to promote family literacy tips and ideas and will highlight the importance of knowing one's family history as a way of understanding the community and society in which they live. Storyteller Willa Brigham will share several family oriented stories meant to connect generations and inspire participants. They will then work together to create craft projects which will be presented to the grandparents at the conclusion of the project. While working on the crafts, the grandparents will be encouraged to share stories of their own childhood experiences as a form of intergenerational sharing. A list of culturally appropriate and relevant titles of children's books and information on family literacy will be provided by library staff.

Boston Public Library, Dudley Branch, in Boston MA.

The purpose of their Reading is Grand! Project is to celebrate grandparent-headed families in the Boston area and encourage families in ethnically diverse communities to read and learn from one another. Librarians have notice a trend of more grandparents parenting young children when visiting the library. Special guest storyteller and author, Irene Smalls, will share stories and read from her books about grandparents. At the conclusion of the program, children will receive an autographed copy of one of her books.

Each grant-winning library will receive \$500, which will be used to supplement their Reading Is Grand! Program. Funds may be used to purchase books, supplies and/or activities for their program based upon their use of creativity and originality.

The Reading Is Grand! Project is supported by the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA). It was developed as part of 2009 – 2010 American Library Association President Camila Alire's Family Literacy Focus Initiative, an initiative to encourage families in ethnically diverse communities to read and learn together.

The 2015 *Reading is Grand! Celebrating Grand-Families @ Your Library* selection committee includes Chair Dr. Claudette S. McLinn, executive director, Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature, Inglewood, CA; Kevin Watson, president, BCALA; Carolyn Ganes, library consultant, Atlanta, GA; Sujin Huggins, assistant professor of education, Graduate School of Library Science, Dominican University, River Forest, IL.

About BCALA

The Black Caucus of the American Library Association serves as an advocate for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services and resources to the nation's African American community; and provides leadership for the recruitment and professional development of African American librarians.

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