

AAUW Poughkeepsie Branch, Inc.  
Leading to Reading Community Initiative  
Annual Report June 2015

Leading to Reading was started in 2004 and its scope has continued to grow. With an enthusiastic group of AAUW volunteers, the project completed a very successful year. The goal is to support literacy programs in our area and provide books to children from low and moderate income families.

**Community Partners:** We have provided books and family reading kits to Astor Preschool Programs, Community Family Development Center, Tubman Terrace Afterschool Program, Rural and Migrant Ministry, Catharine Street Community Center, Abilities First, Agribusiness Child Development Center, Book Buddies, AAUW Healthcare Initiative, House of Hope, Vassar Brothers Medical Center, and Hudson River Lodging.

**Donors:** Funding was received from the AAUW Writers' Tea, AAUW-NYS Program Grant, Arlington Teachers' Association, Little Kindness Fund, Central Hudson, TEG Federal Credit Union, Hyde Park Rotary, Stewart's Holiday Match, and the McCann Foundation, Inc. In-kind services were provided by Adams Fairacre Farms, Books For America, Books for Kids, Manor at Woodside, United Way of Dutchess/Orange Region, and Macy's/RIF (Reading is Fundamental) and the Friends of the Poughkeepsie Public Library. Additional grant applications have been submitted to local businesses and foundations.

**Activities:** Throughout the year, work sessions were held to assemble family reading kits and prepare books for giveaways. Community readers provided reading activities monthly in 4 pre-school centers. Gift wrapping was held at Hudson River Lodging, and workshops involved students at the Poughkeepsie Day School and Anderson School. The newest outreach, Books for Babies, started in January 2015 and provided a book for every newborn at Vassar Brothers Medical Center. A Book Week Celebration was held at the Community Family Development Center, an Open House to celebrate our 10 years of service was held at the Manor at Woodside, and monthly articles about the project were placed in The Branch. A presentation was made to the Hyde Park Rotary and contacts were made with other organizations. Members volunteered at the Friends of the Poughkeepsie Public Library book sales and as the registrars at the Writers' Tea.

Over the course of the project, over 18,000 books have been provided to children from low and moderate income families in our region. Leading to Reading has continued to serve as a membership and visibility tool.

Betty Harrel  
Project Director