

SCAGPO READING CHAIN Final Report

As the year's final Charitable Project, SCAGPO set forth to lead member communities in a statewide literacy initiative. Regional Directors were asked to gather members from their respective regions as volunteer planners for local school districts. To assist in the responsibility, Regional Directors were provided with a list of School District Procurement agents in their regions. Planners were responsible for organizing a 1-2 hour long sessions with Guest readers coming in to read in classrooms, media centers, etc. To assist with the Planner responsibilities, a "Reading Chain Toolkit" was added to the website. Included in the toolkit were a press release, schedule template, and request & follow-up letters to principals and volunteers. The following is a brief overview of the Day:

Clarissa Clark spearheaded the effort in the Holly Hill area. She planned for two elementary schools: Holly Hill Elementary and Vance-Providence Elementary School. Participating as guest readers were representatives from Orangeburg County Sheriff's Office, the town mayor, the County Councilmen, retired teachers, local Pastors, and a local community group. All were excited about reading to the children. Holly Hill Elementary school provided cafeteria school lunches for all volunteers. As a result of this effort, three volunteers went directly to the District Office to apply to serve as substitute teachers; and two committed to returning to the school as a regular volunteer.

One hour was allocated to each of the schools. The teachers provided a choice of books for the guest readers. The Student Council members acted as greeters and escorts on that day.

Margaret Woodson served as planner for the Early Childhood Center at York Technical College.

Stacy Gregg planned the Reading Chain for Richland County School District's One's E.E. Taylor Elementary School. She served as a greeter and photographer. **Clarissa Belton** made signs and served as a photographer and greeter. **Jo Marie Brown** served as a photographer and greeter. All three served as guest readers. The school's principal, Debbie Hunter was very supportive in the effort. She and the school secretary, Tracy Gregg, provided refreshments for volunteers. They also planned for the day by distributing the schedule to each teacher and making signs. Each teacher chose books for volunteers to read to their class. Other SCAGPO participants included, **Margaret Woodson, LaShonda Outing, Wayne Tesh, Sandra Wright,** and **Michele Robinson**. Volunteers from Richland County School District One included Assistant Hearing Officer, *Andre Thompson*; Director of Instructional Technology Services, *Ida Thompson*; and *Dr. Traci Young-Cooper*, Director of Extended Day Services and former South Carolina Teacher of the year. Volunteering to read were also community leaders Shannon Chandler and her assistant Jackie Matthews both of the Law Office of Shannon D. Matthews. Every class in the school received a visit from a guest reader. Throughout the day, students and teachers honored their guest readers with special presentations, books, gifts, and certificates for their commitment to literacy.

As a result of the day, two of the guest readers have committed to becoming regular volunteers at the school. In honor of SCAGPO's literacy effort, RCSD1's office of Title One gifted a book to every child in the school. Books were placed in the school's Media Center where each child was able to visit and choose the book they wanted to take home.

Submitted by Clarissa Belton & Stacy Gregg

SCAGPO READING CHAIN

Continued

The following is feedback received regarding the day:

Dr. Traci Young Cooper:

Special thanks to you all for allowing me to participate in the Reading Initiative. I love the photos with the students!!! Looking forward to SCAGOP 2012!! Special thanks to Ms. Brown for taking the photos. It was a pleasure meeting her also.

Jo Marie Brown:

I had a wonderful time reading to the K5's as well as listening to others read and photographing the event. The children from all classes were very well mannered and you could see in their faces the willingness and excitement to learn. It was a well spent couple of hours outside of the office to visit our future doctors, lawyers and maybe even government employees like ourselves.

Margaret Woodson:

I enjoyed the opportunity to read to the pre-schoolers at Edward Taylor Elementary. They were surprisingly knowledgeable about insects and lizards. This was a great idea, I will make it a habit to read at least once a month to the children. Great job everyone, thank you for the opportunity to participate!

Ida Thompson:

Thank you so much! I had a really good time.

Debbie R. Hunter:

The children and staff enjoyed the readers. Everyone was excited about the opportunity to get a book. Thanks to each one of you for taking out of your busy day to offer a wonderful opportunity to our school.

Sandra Wright:

Yes, I really enjoyed spending time with Ms. Blackmon's class. What a wonderful experience and I think I enjoyed it as much as the students. Thanks for coordinating this literacy awareness initiative!

Andre Thompson

That was fun. I really enjoyed the kids...

Submitted by Clarissa Belton & Stacy Gregg