



Navient Foundation supports local library's literacy development programs

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Contributions will support virtual early literacy programs

WILKES-BARRE, Pa., Sept. 10, 2020 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Navient Foundation donated \$10,000 to support Osterhout Free Library's children literacy development programs. Since 2001, the company's philanthropic arm has supported the library and its literacy initiatives.

"The Navient Foundation donation is greatly appreciated as it provides the library funds to purchase books for children," said Amber Loomis, director of development and community relations, Osterhout Free Library. "The book donations encourage them to start their own library at home, thereby instilling a love of books and reading at a very early age. Hopefully, this love of reading will continue throughout their lives."

While the coronavirus pandemic caused the library to pause in-person literacy programs this summer, it offered virtual reading clubs for children and other signature storytime events including Science Saturday, Fairy Tale Fun and Book Bites. Participants of the online programs received donated books and other incentive prizes from the library. This fall, the library will continue to offer Science Saturdays, preschool and toddler storytimes online.

Since 1977, Osterhout Free Library has offered Wilkes-Barre residents a variety of early literacy development programs including Read to a Dog, an initiative that helps children overcome reading and speech difficulties by reading to a canine companion, and Mommy & Me, a program that supports mothers reading to their children.

"While in high school, my wife and I utilized the library for research projects," said Navient employee John Zemetra. "When our daughters were younger, they participated in the Books and Babies program offered by the Osterhout Free Library. Now, in high school, our daughters use the library for their research projects. I'm pleased the Navient Foundation is helping to ensure the community can turn to the library in the future."

The Foundation's donations will help purchase books, toys, craft and literature materials to support the library's early literacy programs. The purchases will help library employees develop and implement interactive presentations and themed storytimes.

Learn more about the [Osterhout Free Library](#).

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