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WEINBERG FOUNDATION BEGINS 3RD ANNUAL BOOK DRIVE BENEFITTING BALTIMORE LIBRARY PROJECT

Expanded online focus aims to fill renovated school libraries with new books

BALTIMORE (March 3, 2014) -- The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, together with the Heart of America Foundation, a national nonprofit focused on providing children with the tools to read, succeed, and make a difference, today launched a community-wide Book Drive which runs throughout the month of March.

New books collected – either at dozens of drop-off locations or through online donations - will be placed in Baltimore City school libraries renovated as part of the Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project.

The Baltimore Library Project is a multi-year, $10 million collaborative effort to design, build, equip, and staff new or renovated elementary/middle school libraries in high-poverty neighborhoods where many students face academic challenges. This year, the Library Project opens four new school libraries in addition to the five spaces already transformed over the past two years. More than 4,000 students and their families have been touched by this initiative since 2012.

As in past years, donated books will be collected in bins located at more than 50 Baltimore-area businesses, schools/universities, and other organizations. But this year, the Weinberg Foundation is making it easier to donate online. For example, all print promotional materials will include a QR code that can be scanned and will link directly to the donation page at www.baltimorelibraryproject.org. Every $7 donated puts one book on the shelf of one of these new libraries.

"While transforming libraries is the goal of this project, without new books the students will miss out on the opportunity to explore the fun of reading," said Rachel Garbow Monroe, Weinberg Foundation President and Chief Executive Officer. In partnership with The Heart of America Foundation, this event has collected more than 27,000 books, valued roughly at $150,000, at more than 100 sites across the Baltimore-metropolitan area in the last two years. With this year’s new online donation tools and focus, we expect an even greater response."

The Weinberg Foundation looks forward to publicizing wonderful stories of individuals and organizations supporting this year’s Book Drive in unique and powerful ways. For example, students who attend current Library Project schools are taking part in a “Penny Challenge” – passing along the gift of reading which they received. This friendly fundraising competition between school sites proves that even spare change can create meaningful change.

For more information on the Library Project Book Drive including a listing of drop-off locations, as well as the Library Project itself, please visit www.baltimorelibraryproject.org and follow on Twitter at #libraryproject.

About The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private charitable foundations in the United States, provides approximately $100 million in annual grants to nonprofits that provide direct services to low-income and vulnerable individuals and families, primarily in the U.S. and Israel. Grants are focused on meeting basic needs and enhancing an individual's ability to meet those needs with emphasis on older adults, the Jewish community, and our hometown communities of Maryland, Northeastern Pennsylvania, and Hawaii. The trustees, some of whom also serve as executive officers of the Foundation, are Donn Weinberg, Barry I. Schloss, Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Alvin Awaya, and Chair Ellen M. Heller. Rachel Garbow Monroe serves as the Weinberg Foundation's President and Chief Executive Officer. For more information please go to www.hjweinbergfoundation.org.