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[Home](#) > MAYOR BROWN KICKS-OFF 15TH ANNUAL SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

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MAYOR BROWN KICKS-OFF 15TH ANNUAL SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

City students, new and returning Reading Rules partners joined Mayor Brown to announce the start of

Mayor Byron Brown's Reading Rules! Kids Summer Reading Challenge

Applications can be downloaded at www.city-buffalo.com

Mayor Brown also put forth an executive proclamation to the Buffalo Common Council designating a portion of downtown Washington Street as a new 'Literary Corridor'

Buffalo – In a continued effort to encourage students to keep reading throughout the summer months, Mayor Byron Brown, joined today by city school children, Reading Rules partners, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System Director Mary Jean Jakubowski and Just Buffalo Literary Center Executive Director Laurie Dean Torrell, kicked-off the 15th annual Mayor Byron W. Brown's Reading Rules! Kids Summer Reading Challenge. The official kickoff appropriately took place along a stretch of downtown Washington Street, which has developed into a major hub of vibrant literary activity – including books and other reading materials available for all ages and free lifelong learning programs at the Central Library, literary classes, programs and author visits at Just Buffalo Literary Center, active print presses, and rare book collections and an independent bookstore. In recognition of the literary activity along downtown Washington Street, Mayor Brown announced today that he's putting forth an executive proclamation to the Buffalo Common Council, designating this portion of downtown Washington Street as a new 'Literary Corridor' in Buffalo.

"The City of Buffalo has an extraordinary literary history and legacy, is home to one of the country's top literary centers, and has an active and growing literary community," said Mayor Brown. "I'm pleased to support the shared goal of bringing our city's literary arts into full visibility by designating this section of downtown Washington Street as a Literary Corridor, fostering even more economic development and promoting Buffalo's continued legacy as a world class literary city. What better place to kickoff this year's 15th anniversary Reading Rules Challenge than in our newly designated Literary Corridor. I look forward to working with its founding members, including the Just Buffalo Literary Center, Plur-al-ity Press, and the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library."

Along with both Mark Twain and F. Scott Fitzgerald having lived in Buffalo, this city has been home to many historically significant poets, novelists, and playwrights including Lauren Belfer, Robert Creeley, Lucille Clifton, Ishmael Reed, Charles Olson, Emanuel Fried, Susan Howe, Charles Bernstein and Carl Dennis. The designation of a literary corridor along Washington Street will create a highly visible identity

for a core area which contains central literary assets such as Just Buffalo Literary Center, Plur-al-ity Press, the Western New York Book Arts Center and the hub of our great library system, the downtown Central Library

“We are so pleased to again team up with Mayor Brown and all of the partners today to promote literacy in our great community,” said Library System Director Mary Jean Jakubowski. “Summer Reading programs help children build their reading skills and prevent summer learning loss. Your public libraries are here to help by offering many free and fun programs, services and books for children of all ages. We hope you will visit your library to find the Mayor’s Reading Rules recommended books by grade level and checkout all of our summertime reading activities.”

“Just Buffalo Literary Center is a not-for-profit organization that believes in the love of reading, the art of writing, and the power of the literary arts to transform individual lives and communities. The love of literature, reading and writing, are passed from one generation to the next. In order to take root, it’s so important that these seeds get planted early which is why programs like this one are so crucial. We extend a personal invitation to young people 12-18 to check out our new Just Buffalo Writing Center at the corner of Washington & Mohawk where we now provide free writing workshops every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. We thank mayor Brown for all he is doing; and join him in urging Buffalo’s citizens of all ages and especially our young people to become enthusiastic readers and writers and to take advantage of the many ways to get involved.”

“Reading Rules!” began in 2001, when Mayor Brown served in the New York State Senate, as a way to address the literacy problem in New York State, specifically in Buffalo and Western New York. Mayor Brown started the literacy effort to encourage schoolchildren to read books throughout the summer, and submit written summaries of each book they had read. Mayor Brown remarked that, “Reading Rules! is one of our hallmark initiatives and it gets better and better as the years go on. Since 2001, approximately 11,211 champion readers have completed the program.

Children entering grades K-8 must read 7 books from the provided list over the course of the summer, write a brief summary of 8-10 sentences on each and then return the summaries to Mayor Brown in exchange for an invitation to a prize ceremony in early fall. Each student will receive a certificate of achievement and many great prizes donated by the program’s sponsors. High School students entering 9-12 must read at least 4 books to qualify.

Applications can be downloaded or submitted on the city of Buffalo’s home page, www.city-buffalo.com. Book summaries must be turned in via mail, email or fax by **August 26, 2016**. You can also drop off your summaries to room 2301 in City Hall. After you submit your summaries you will receive an invitation to the program’s final ceremony which will be held at the Buffalo Convention Center where you will be given a certificate of achievement, souvenir t-shirt, book bag and a chance to win many great prizes from our sponsors!

This year’s sponsors and partners include the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Police Athletic League, Buffalo Zoo, Buffalo Water operated by Veolia Water, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, AT&T, Buffalo Bills, Buffalo Sabres, Buffalo Metro Federal Credit Union, Buffalo Teachers Federation, Delaware North Companies, Dollar General, Dupont, Ferguson Electric, First Student, Frey Electric, Lamparelli Construction, M&T Bank, Mighty Taco, National Fuel, NFTA Metro Bus, R&P Oak Hill, Spot Coffee, Tops Markets, UPS, West Herr.

In addition, Mayor Brown mentioned that as part of its continued partnership with the city, the Albright-Knox Art is offering free admission to the Gallery – which includes admission to the Shade: Clyfford Still/Mark Bradford Exhibit - to each Reading Rules participant and one guardian from July 1-August 31, 2016. Pick up your free admission coupon at any local library.

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