



Media Invited

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Leaders are Readers School Honored

*Project Flight, New York State Office of the Governor and Public Libraries Present
Books to Winning School - Tapestry Charter School in Buffalo*

WHAT: On Friday, February 16, 2024, New York State and Project Flight's Martin Luther King, Jr. Literacy Initiative, *Leaders Are Readers*, will present the *2024 Award for Literacy* to the Tapestry Charter School in Buffalo.

WHERE: Tapestry Charter School, 111 Great Arrow Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14216

WHEN: 9:00 a.m., ample media parking in front of the school

ABOUT: The "*Leaders Are Readers*" Martin Luther King, Jr. Literacy Initiative

In an effort to promote literacy for New York children, Project Flight, in partnership with the Governor's Office, the Office of Children and Family Services, the Office of MWBE and Community Relations of the New York State Office of General Services, established the Martin Luther King, Jr. Literacy Initiative entitled "Leaders Are Readers." The program, which began in the Buffalo area in 2004, was held in New York City, Albany, and Buffalo. The Library System became a partner in 2014.

For 30 years, Project Flight, a not-for-profit literacy organization, has worked to promote literacy in Western New York and across the world through school and family literacy initiatives. Project Flight's mission is to have every child have a book of their own and to read it at grade level, that children will live in a literate environment whether at home or at school, that literacy is an entree out of poverty, and that literacy is a social justice issue. To date, **176,371 books and materials**, worth approximately **\$1,494,449.40**, have been donated to 38 schools.

Buffalo has one of the highest child poverty rates in the country. This year, **5,900 books and learning materials will be awarded to one school in need in Western New York - Tapestry Charter School!** Along with the promise to promote literacy in school and at home, Tapestry Charter School must provide a specific program that promotes Dr. King's vision of equality and justice through literacy, and develop a relationship between the school and its local public library.

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"There is no doubt how education uplifts the power to fulfill dreams. We believe that the legacy of literacy is democracy and freedom," said Project Flight Co-Director Dr. Betty Cappella.

"Our vision at Project Flight is to make sure all children will increase their aptitude in literacy to gain a wealth of knowledge which will spread throughout their lives and families," added Project Flight Co-Director Dr. Geraldine Bard.

"The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library is proud to partner with Project Flight on this and other programs that help to get reading materials in the hands of our local children. Today, more than ever, children should be encouraged to read; and by giving them books of their own, we are opening the door to their future filled with creativity, learning and discovery," said Library Director John Spears.

The 2024 Selected Recipient:

Tapestry Charter School, Lower grade school at 111 Great Arrow Avenue, Buffalo.
Principals: Melissa Rivera, K-4, Lindsay Lee, 5-8, Sara Hilligas, High School

Since 2001, Tapestry Charter School has provided an innovative educational experience in Buffalo, New York. Tapestry provides a challenging and rigorous public education for students K-12, an environment that emphasizes diversity, compassion, collaboration, community, creativity, and leadership. Students are academically and socially prepared to meet the demands of further education, while maturing into productive and caring adults with a lifelong passion for learning.

Put simply, Tapestry Charter School is a vibrant community of learners and leaders. Students and teachers alike enjoy the freedom to pursue excellence through meaningful, active learning. Engagement inspires success.

Tapestry Charter School serves a total of **1,097 students** from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The school is known for its commitment to student engagement, innovative faculty and administration, and active parent involvement. Here are some key details about the school.

- **Student Population:** **51% female** students and **49% male** students.
- **Diversity:** Approximately **79%** of the students are from minority backgrounds.
- **Economic Disadvantage:** **75%** of the students are economically disadvantaged.
- **Student-Teacher Ratio:** The school maintains a student-teacher ratio of 11:1 which aligns with the district average.

This donation of books will help the students' progression of learning in their literary endeavors and help instill a lifelong love of reading.

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