



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 28, 2018

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BankRI Awards \$5,500 in Grants to two Nonprofits Committed to Improving Childhood Literacy and Access to College for Underserved Students

Reach Out and Read RI receives \$2,500 to support Pediatric Literacy Program on Aquidneck Island, Read to Succeed awarded \$3,000 to help fund Summer Literacy College Scholarship Program

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – Continuing its deep commitment to education and support of lifelong learning, **Bank Rhode Island (BankRI)** has awarded \$5,500 in charitable grants to two local nonprofits dedicated to improving early childhood literacy and access to college for underserved students.

Reach Out and Read RI received \$2,500 to support its Pediatric Literacy Program on Aquidneck Island, and Read to Succeed was awarded \$3,000 to help fund its Summer Literacy College Scholarship Program.

An evidence-based early literacy organization, Reach Out and Read RI provides children with a foundation for future success by incorporating books into their pediatric care. The program partners with doctors to ‘prescribe’ books to children at an early age, beginning at their 6-month checkup and continuing through age 5. Physicians also engage parents in their child’s literacy development by stressing the importance of reading aloud daily and through offering guidance for encouraging reading behaviors at home. And, following each pediatric care visit, children are given a brand-new, linguistically- and developmentally-appropriate book to take home and keep. Last year, on Aquidneck Island alone, the program reached 2,644 children and gave out more than 5,200 books across four healthcare locations in Newport and Portsmouth.

Read to Succeed’s grant will support its innovative Summer Literacy College Scholarship Program. Understanding that nearly all students lose as much as two months of literacy skills during the summer by not reading, the organization works to change this trend by giving students free books and a powerful incentive to read during summer vacation. Working with students from three South Providence schools, those who participate in the program, complete six books and an online comprehension test, earn a \$1,000 scholarship deposit in their name into the Rhode Island College *Boundfund*. Students may participate in the program for up to five consecutive summers to earn \$5,000 towards their college education.

“Literacy is the single most important factor affecting a child’s success in school and a significant indicator of success in life as an adult,” said Bob Ricci, VP, Regional Manager, BankRI and a member of the Read to Succeed Board of Directors. “Education is a major focus of BankRI’s philanthropy and we are excited about funding the innovative work of these two organizations, which impacts young children as well as those preparing for their academic career beyond high school.”

About Bank Rhode Island

Bank Rhode Island, a wholly owned subsidiary of Brookline Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ:BRKL), is a full-service, FDIC-insured financial institution headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island. The bank operates 20 branches and more than 55 ATMs throughout Providence, Kent, Newport and Washington Counties. For more information, visit www.bankri.com. You can also find BankRI on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland.

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