



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BankRI Grant to Reach Out and Read Rhode Island will Support Early Childhood Literacy Efforts on Aquidneck Island**

*Funding will assist organization expand reach of incorporating books and literacy gains into pediatric care*

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** – Coming on the heels of its recently launched book drive in recognition of National Reading Month, **Bank Rhode Island (BankRI)** is continuing its support of helping to improve childhood literacy with a grant to Reach Out and Read Rhode Island. The Bank recently awarded the organization \$2,500 in charitable funding to support its early childhood literacy efforts on Aquidneck Island.

Established locally in 1989, Reach and Read Rhode Island works to prepare the state’s youngest children to succeed in school by partnering with doctors to ‘prescribe’ books at an early age and encourage families to read together. While the organization works with all children, it has a particular focus on targeting youth who live below the Federal Poverty Level, children with developmental delays, and those living in non-English-speaking families. Reach Out and Read’s partnerships with doctors, nurse practitioners and other medical professionals allow its evidence-based model of literacy outreach to be incorporated into regular pediatric checkups.

The program begins at a child’s 6-month checkup and continues through age 5. In addition to physicians speaking with parents about the importance of reading aloud to their children each day, they provide each child with a brand-new, linguistically and developmentally-appropriate book to take home and keep. The organization’s pediatric literacy serves more than 30,000 Rhode Island children annually, with its four sites in the Newport and Portsmouth area reaching more than 2,500 children each year.

“The result of Reach Out and Read’s work speaks for itself and we are proud to support the efforts of an organization and its partners that are making such a tremendous impact,” said Patricia O’Donnell-Saracino, Vice President of Community Relations for BankRI. “When parents feel more empowered to read to their children, and their children have more books available to them, they’re able to enter kindergarten better prepared to achieve their potential—and that is exactly what Reach Out and Read makes possible.”

### **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](http://www.bankri.com). You can also find BankRI on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland](https://www.Facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland).

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