

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CAPITAL AREA UNITED WAY ANNOUNCES TRANSITION OF DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY TO VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA GREATER BATON ROUGE

Baton Rouge, La. (March 1, 2021) – After 10 years of serving as the local affiliate for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Capital Area United Way (CAUW) will be transitioning the affiliate to long-time partners at Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge (VOAGBR). In 2010, CAUW made a 10-year commitment to early childhood education. Over the past decade, 80,377 books have been mailed directly to the homes of children aged 0-5 in the Louisiana Capital Area, serving 3,171 children.

"Capital Area United Way has been happy to host this program and grow its presence in the community," said George Bell, President and CEO of Capital Area United Way. "We are proud of our success with the program, and we look forward to passing the torch to a valuable partner like VOAGBR. We know they will continue to grow the program's success for years to come."

Starting March 2021, Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge, will officially take over the Imagination Library affiliates for the 10-parish Louisiana Capital Area. VOA will take the next few months to assess targeted areas for enrollment. Questions about future child enrollment may be directed to Effie Toliver, Training Program Manager, Partnerships in Child Care at etoliver@voagbr.org or 225-926.8005.

Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge's Partnerships in Child Care division (PICC) is proud to be a part of this amazing program. Since 1996, PICC has provided support for child care providers and parents of children from birth to age five. Director Angell Floyd adds, "we are the designated Resource and Referral agency for 24 parishes in South Louisiana and work continuously with more than 350 preschools, childcare centers, and family child care providers ensuring quality early education is a priority. As early childhood educators, we know that when children develop strong reading skills, they are more self-confident and more successful in school. The partnership with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library gives us an opportunity to broaden our outreach and continue to support early literacy development."

President and CEO David K. Kneipp said "this is a perfect fit for our Partnerships in Child Care program and we are excited to be able to seamlessly transition it from the Capital Area United Way to Volunteers of America Greater Baton Rouge. "CAUW has done a remarkable job fostering this program over the past 10 years and we are uniquely positioned to continue their work to provide reading opportunities to the young people in our community through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library."

VOAGBR is very thankful to local businesses who donated through the LA School Readiness Tax Credit program in 2020 and to The Rotary Club of Baton Rouge Foundation Grant for their initial funding of this new partnership. VOAGBR is looking forward to bringing additional corporate sponsors and individuals to help expand coverage in the region and provide books to as many children as possible throughout Southwest Louisiana. For information on how to become a sponsor, contact Shannon Abney, Director of Corporate Giving, at sabney@voagbr.org or 225-408-3794.

Imagination Library was founded in 1995 by the legendary Dolly Parton in her hometown of Sevier County, Tennessee. The program grew quickly and has been replicated across the United States and into Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland. In 2020, the program mailed its 150 millionth book.

For more information, please visit www.voagbr.org/imaginationlibrary.

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Capital Area United Way

For more than 96 years, Capital Area United Way has touched thousands of lives in our 10-parish area. We envision a community where everyone is empowered to reach their full potential. Our mission is to solve our community's toughest challenges by leveraging partnerships to advance the common good in education, income stability, and healthy living. To learn more visit www.cauw.org.