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## **Major Literacy Initiative Announced for the Northern Willamette Valley**

**Salem, OR** –The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) today announced a three year, \$1 million initiative to improve literacy in the Northern Willamette Valley region. OCF will partner with the Marion County Children and Families Commission and the Polk and Yamhill County Commissions on Children and Families to expand a literacy model called *Reading for all!*

*Reading for all!* (RFA) was developed three years ago by the Marion County Children and Families Commission to support student success. RFA is a community mobilization strategy designed to be inclusive; it involves all community members including individuals, families, organizations and systems in an effort to improve both children's and family literacy.

With funding from OCF, three facilitators will be hired, one in each county, to coordinate "*Reading for all!*" They will work with local commissions and community volunteers to implement OCF's *Reading for all* Initiative.

"We would love to see all children enroll in kindergarten ready to learn and all parents understand the central role of literacy and vocabulary in early child," said, Sue Miller, OCF board member from the NWV Region. "*Reading for all* encourages the entire community to become involved in this goal."

The decision to focus on literacy in general, and Reading for All in particular, was made by OCF's volunteer Northern Willamette Valley Leadership Council as a way to address a pressing problem in the region.

"OCF asked us to identify an issue in our region that we thought we could positively affect. Literacy quickly rose to the top of the list. We're very excited to be able to implement *Reading for all*, a proven program, throughout the Northern Willamette valley," said Mike Blanchard, a member of the Leadership Council from Dallas.

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*The mission of The Oregon Community Foundation is to improve life in Oregon and promote effective philanthropy. OCF works with individuals, families, businesses and organizations to create charitable funds to support the community causes they care about. Through these funds OCF awards more than \$60 million annually in grants and scholarships.*