



United Way  
of Greater Philadelphia  
and Southern New Jersey

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## **United Way, Subaru unveil new reading oasis at Forest Hill Elementary School in celebration of Read Across America Week**

Reading oasis containing more than 400 new books aims to move the needle on early literacy levels of local students

**Camden, N.J.** – United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey and Subaru of America, Inc. celebrated Read Across America Week on Tuesday, March 5, 2019, by unveiling a new reading oasis for students at Forest Hill Elementary School.

“At Subaru, ensuring that education is as accessible as possible for students everywhere is a pillar of our [Love Promise](#) philanthropic platform,” said Sandy Capell, Manager of Corporate Responsibility and Philanthropy, Subaru of America, Inc. “We are honored to partner with United Way to create a welcoming reading oasis at Forest Hill Elementary School and donate much-needed educational resources.”

Subaru volunteers built the reading oasis to increase students’ access to books and create a safe and nurturing environment that encourages students to develop a love for reading and build literacy skills. In addition to providing hundreds of new, age-, reading-level, and culturally-appropriate books, the reading oasis was outfitted with audio books to help set students on the path to success, both inside and outside the classroom.

“Reading is one of the most critical skills that a student learns in the classroom – in fact, reading proficiently is the number one indicator that a student will graduate from high school on time,” said Suzanne O’Connor, Partner, Education and Trauma for United Way. “Creating a comfortable, safe space for students to fall in love with reading and explore their interests sets them up for long-term success – something that ultimately helps break the cycle of poverty as they are exposed to new ideas and increased opportunity. We’re grateful for Subaru’s support in helping give these students and their families such a great resource.”

The reading oasis will help students achieve a critical academic milestone: reading proficiency. Students who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade – a pivotal time when children transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” – are four times more likely to drop out of high school than proficient readers. In Camden City alone – which has a 66% drop out rate – 76% of students do not read at grade level, putting their long-term academic success and lifelong achievement in jeopardy. The reading oasis will increase students’ exposure to books and create a positive learning environment to keep students on track for success.

The reading oasis at Forest Hill Elementary School is of three that Subaru and United Way will install in Camden City elementary schools. A similar space has been outfitted at the Riletta Twyne Cream Family School, and US Wiggins Elementary School will have a reading oasis installed later this month.

To learn more about United Way's early learning work, please visit <https://www.unitedforimpact.org/early-learning/>. For more information about Subaru and the automaker's Love Promise philanthropic platform, please visit <https://www.subaru.com/love-promise.html>.



Sandy Capell, Manager of Corporate Responsibility and Philanthropy, Subaru of America, Inc. (left), reads Dr. Seuss' *Oh The Places You'll Go* to Forest Hill Elementary School students during ribbon cutting celebration for new reading oasis on March 5, 2019. Installed in partnership with United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey and the Camden City School District, the reading oasis provides the school with 400+ new books in an inviting, comfortable space for students to enjoy.



Staff and volunteers from United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, Subaru, Forest Hill Elementary School and Camden County Police joined Forest Hill students at a ribbon cutting on March 5, 2019, to celebrate a new reading oasis and addition of more than 400 new books to the school's library. The reading oasis, which was installed by Subaru volunteers in partnership with United Way, was unveiled as part of United Way's Read Across America Week celebration.

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### **About United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey**

United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, serving communities in Pennsylvania's Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, and New Jersey's Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May and Cumberland counties, is part of a national network of more than 1,300 locally governed organizations that work to create lasting positive changes in communities and in people's lives. United Way fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community. In Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, United Way fights for youth success and family stability because we LIVE UNITED against intergenerational poverty. For more information about United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey visit [www.UnitedForImpact.org](http://www.UnitedForImpact.org).

### **About Subaru of America, Inc.**

[Subaru of America, Inc.](http://Subaru of America, Inc.) (SOA) is a wholly owned subsidiary of [Subaru Corporation](http://Subaru Corporation) of Japan. Headquartered at a zero-landfill office in Camden, N.J., the company markets and distributes Subaru vehicles, parts and accessories through a network of more than 630 retailers across the United States. All Subaru products are manufactured in zero-landfill production plants and [Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc.](http://Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc.) is the only U.S. automobile production plant to be designated a backyard wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. SOA is guided by the [Subaru Love Promise](http://Subaru Love Promise), which is the company's vision to show love and respect to everyone, and to support its communities and customers nationwide. Over the past 20 years, SOA has donated more than \$120 million to causes the Subaru family cares about, and its employees have logged more than 40,000 volunteer hours. As a company, Subaru believes it is important to do its part in making a positive impact in the world because it is the right thing to do. For additional information visit [media.subaru.com](http://media.subaru.com). Follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/subaruusa), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/subaruusa), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/subaruusa).