

Another Year of the Book Opens



A Year of the Book kickoff event at White River School in White River Junction, VT.

With schools easing up on visitor restrictions, and Zoom events no longer the default, our talented CLiF presenters were back on the road this fall, leading in-person events at the 10 schools across New Hampshire and Vermont that received CLiF's flagship Year of the Book grant for 2022-23.

The "CLiFmobile," CLiF Executive Director Duncan McDougall's red Prius, customized with a CLiF logo and colorful book decals, was repeatedly loaded to capacity with boxes of brand-new books for students at each school to choose and keep. Even Yoshi, CLiF's resident Golden Retriever, got in on the action, joining her master, Duncan, for a kickoff event in Pownal, VT.

Valued at \$25,000 and awarded each year to qualifying schools in New Hampshire and Vermont, the Year of the Book grant provides literacy resources such as writing workshops: author and storyteller visits; support for school staff and families; new children's books for the school and town libraries; and 10 new books for each child. This year, an 11th school, Beech Street

School in Manchester, New Hampshire, was awarded a modified version of the grant.

Each kickoff event features a beautiful display of hundreds of brand-new, diverse books, carefully chosen to appeal to a wide variety of readers. Our CLiF presenters are highly skilled at inspiring children to get excited about reading and writing, and to appreciate the magical power of stories.

"This program made an otherwise challenging year so much better! Our students were really excited for each of the monthly events. They loved the author visits and the book giveaways. It gave us something to look forward to all year long."

—Year of the Book grantee, 2021-22

Since beginning the Year of the Book program, CLiF has awarded 100 sponsorships across the Twin States, and served roughly 20,000 students. It is always an honor to bring joy to these students and school communities, and even more so, after the challenges faced by schools over the past couple of years.

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Your Legacy with CLiF

Can you imagine what your life would be like if your childhood lacked books and opportunities to read and write?

If children's literacy is among your priorities, please consider including CLiF in your planned giving. Your lasting support will help uplift thousands of young readers and writers for decades to come.

To learn more about planned giving opportunities, contact us at 802-244-0944 or clif@clifonline.org.

Thank you!



Contact

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Until Spring 2023

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Duncan Is Turning a Page

In March, 2023 I'll be stepping down as CLiF's Executive Director after serving for 25 years.

I'll still give storytelling presentations to kids – the best part of my job! – but before I pass the reins to a new leader, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who helped make CLiF the organization it is today.

Over the past quarter-century:

- **80+ CLiF Directors and Advisors** served on our two Boards and helped set CLiF's vision.
- **30 staff members** turned that vision into reality through innovative programs, efficient systems, and lasting relationships with our partner organizations.
- **1,000+ schools, libraries, shelters, childcare centers, prisons, refugee and migrant programs, out-of-school time programs, and others** partnered with CLiF, enabling us to serve under-resourced children and families.
- **75+ professional authors, illustrators, poets, and storytellers** traveled to every corner of NH and VT spreading their love of literacy in person with young readers and writers.
- **30+ dedicated volunteers** spent untold hours stickering, shelving, and shipping new children's books.
- **Thousands of parents, educators, and librarians** attended free CLiF workshops and conferences to learn the best ways to inspire young readers and writers.
- **Thousands of donors** – individuals, foundations, businesses, and organizations – were the fuel for CLiF's engine.

Thanks to this large and big-hearted family, CLiF is an award-winning nonprofit that has inspired more than 350,000 under-resourced young readers and writers in 430 communities across NH and VT, and given away more than \$10 million in new, high-quality children's books to those kids who have the greatest needs. *I hope you're as excited as I am to see what CLiF will accomplish over its next 25 years. Onward, together!*



Duncan McDougall
CLiF Executive Director

Consider an IRA Rollover

Did you know that individuals 70 ½ years or older who hold IRA accounts can take advantage of [a simple way to benefit CLiF and receive tax benefits in return](#)? Each year, you can transfer up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to a qualified organization such as CLiF without having to pay income taxes on the money.

This popular gift option known as the **IRA charitable rollover**, or qualified charitable distribution (QCD), is an easy way to support CLiF and the thousands of under-resourced children we serve.

If you are interested in donating to CLiF via an IRA charitable rollover, please speak to your financial advisor for additional information, or contact Duncan at [802-244-0944](tel:802-244-0944), or clif@clifonline.com. *Many thanks!*



Duncan captivates a young audience with one of his signature literacy presentations.



CLiF presenter Terry Farish and a student at a family literacy event.





Engrossed in the book she chose for herself.

One for the Books

Last summer, CLiF was surprised and honored to receive a generous donation from high school students Aryana Saedi and Natalia Dandrea, both juniors at the Allendale Columbia School in Rochester, NY.

As sophomores, Aryana and Natalia were the recipients of their school's Farnham Award for Community Service. They used the funds they received to create and lead a free summer writing program called Wolfie's Writing Workshop for 11 young children in Rochester, which they described in a note as "an awesome experience for everyone!"

With their remaining funds, Aryana and Natalia decided to make a charitable donation to an organization that shared their appreciation for early literacy. A fortuitous Internet search led them to CLiF, and they subsequently sent our organization \$821 "to continue to spread the love of literature to more children."

We are so impressed by these amazing young women's work to inspire young writers in their community, and grateful for their generosity. A poem by one of their campers follows.

The Sound of Rain

The rain goes tipity-tap and boom
boom boom

On the rocky roof.

At first, it sounds like a creek quickly
moving along.

Then it turns into ten-foot ocean swells
crashing into walls

Like an elephant joining a stampede
Or a thick stretch of clouds beginning to cry.
The rain stops and makes a misty fog rise
from the asphalt.

Summer Reading Rocked!

This summer, CLiF hit the ground running before the start of school vacation with school-wide storytelling events to build momentum around summer reading before that final bell. We sent thousands of kids home with free books to kickstart their summer reading!

Once summer officially arrived, our fabulous CLiF presenters hit the road throughout June, July, and August, bringing storytelling presentations and free books to every corner of Vermont and New Hampshire. In all, CLiF presenters hosted 108 storytelling presentations and book giveaways for children at 90 different programs in Vermont and NH. CLiF gave away 18,000 free books to more than 9,000 eager young summer readers.

After facing numerous challenges in recent years, our program partners enthusiastically embraced summer reading and the



No wrong choices at a CLiF book giveaway!

opportunity to share stories and books. And our amazing CLiF presenters loved the return to a busy in-person summer program schedule. CLiF poet and storyteller Marv Klassen-Landis shared, "I'm so enjoying being on the road for CLiF and being with the kids again." It was a summer filled with connections made possible by a shared love of storytelling, books, and reading among our presenters, program partners, and thousands of excited young children across the two states.



(L-R) Dr. Blanche Podhajski, Zach Haggerty, and Michele Gravelle.

Changes to CLiF's Board

CLiF is very fortunate to be led by a highly experienced and dedicated Board of Directors.

Dr. Blanche Podhajski and Zach Haggerty are the latest additions to this exceptional team.

Blanche was the founder and Executive Director of the Stern Center for Language and Learning in Williston, VT, a widely-respected organization she ran for 38 years until her recent retirement. Blanche served on CLiF's board from 2001-2007, and we're honored to have her back with us.

Zach is a native Vermonter and Middlebury College graduate who works for Fidelity in Boston. In October 2022, he organized his 3rd Annual CLiF 5K Run in Stowe, VT, an event that has now raised more than \$25,000 for CLiF's programs.

And we recently bid a fond farewell to CLiF Director Michele Gravelle, a leadership consultant and loyal CLiF supporter from Epsom, NH who brought enthusiasm, humor, and many valuable ideas to the Board. Thank you so much for your service, Michele. We'll miss you!



Inspiring Family Literacy

Engaging the entire family with books and literacy is critical to helping children build strong early reading skills. This past spring, CLiF partnered with three Vermont parent child centers to bring families together around books and storytelling. CLiF presenters visited the Rutland County Parent Child Center, the Orange County Parent Child Center, and the Family Center of Washington County to give interactive storytelling presentations to children and families and give away hundreds of free books to eager young kids. All three centers are part of the Vermont Parent Child Center Network, a group of service hubs for families with young children that provide strength-based, collaborative family services across Vermont. Particularly in rural parts of the state, parent child centers offer important access to services and build connections that strengthen families.

Over the last few years, family engagement events have been challenging due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic. Fortunately, this spring these partners were excited to have their CLiF grant serve as an important opportunity for families to come together in-person for storytelling and book sharing. Hannah Nadeau, a program coordinator at the Orange County Parent Child Center, commented, *"It was our first family event since Covid so it was a milestone event."* CLiF is thrilled to inspire children and families to find community and connection through stories.



A very young reader picks out books at the Orange County Parent Child Center in Tunbridge, VT.



Participants select new books for special young people in their lives and write notes inside.

A Day in a Correctional Facility

A few days into my new role as a program manager at CLiF, Duncan asked me, "Would you like to join me at an upcoming Children of Incarcerated Adults program?" Eager to learn more about CLiF's programs, I responded, "Absolutely!"

And with that, I signed myself up for a roadtrip with the boss to the Northern New Hampshire Correctional Facility, a men's prison in Berlin, NH. Rolling along Route 2, we had a few hours to talk and I found out that Duncan had taught at a prison when he was in his early 20s. This experience later inspired him to develop CLiF's Children of Incarcerated Adults (COIA) program that offers incarcerated parents and their children an opportunity to share a love of reading and stories and helps bridge the distance that separates these parents from their families.

After arriving and checking in, we were shown to a classroom in the education wing by Sadie Glover, who works with the correctional facility's Family Connections Center and helped to coordinate our visit. At the literacy seminar, which correctional facility inmates attend by choice, Duncan and I started by sharing our love of children's literature and highlighted some of our favorites from the book giveaway display. Duncan read *Bear Snores On* to demonstrate effective reading techniques, such as "Get into the voices and characters!" as well to emphasize the importance of reading to babies and children.

"CLiF helped play an instrument [sic] part in me re-building my relationship and trust with [my daughter] and for that I will be forever in

their debt. This foundation can do and has done amazing things for incarcerated adults and their children and it is my hope that this program continues for many years to come."

— Note from a COIA participant

Then it's the fun part: picking out the free books. Participants selected new books for special young people in their lives and wrote a personal note to send with the books. The books came back with us to our office, where they were packaged up (thank you beloved volunteers!) and mailed out.

Many participants had attended Duncan's presentations before and made a point to follow-up with him about how books they had selected at a previous visit were received with the kids, as well as express gratitude for the opportunity. I, too, am grateful for the opportunity and came away with a deeper appreciation of how books spark conversation and connection for everyone.



Carefully considering the many options on the giveaway table.



Waterville Town Library trustee Chrissy Wade presents the new CLiF books to the town's young readers.

Another Chapter in Waterville, VT

We're fortunate here at CLiF to have a committed and wide-ranging collection of partners, many of whom we've known for many years. The Waterville Town Library, which received a Rural Libraries grant for 2022-23, is one of these sites. Grant coordinator and volunteer trustee Chrissy Wade wrote and received a CLiF Rural Libraries grant twenty years ago when she first moved to Waterville, Vermont.

Rural libraries are often run on a shoestring. The Waterville Town Library is no exception, with an annual budget of \$1875 approved by the Town of Waterville taxpayers. The little library, housed in a historical old schoolhouse, serves around 700 people and is run by elected trustees who volunteer their time.

"It takes a village to run a library, especially without paid staff, but maybe that's part of the charm of our library," reflects Chrissy. *"Pure grassroots power!"*

Chrissy has been a volunteer since she moved with her young family from Alaska in 2002, seeking out the local town library *"as my lifeline to literature and community."* Upon discovering the library in a dusty, dormant state with limited hours only by appointment, Chrissy applied for a CLiF grant to revive the library and see it reopen with fresh books and programs.

"I had no idea how great of an impact it would have on the library. We basically got back on the map as a reactivated library in Vermont. The grant activities garnered more community support and the trustees became more involved in the regular operation of the library, which continues to this day," explains Chrissy.

Fast forward years later—after taking time away to grow her family, run a full-time child care business, and see the library sustain its position in the community, Chrissy has returned to the library as an elected trustee. She applied for another CLiF grant to reinvigorate their collection with new books as well as partner with the local elementary school.

For this year with the Rural Libraries grant, Chrissy writes that they are super excited to potentially have the entire school come to the library for the Spring 2023 CLiF grant finale with a famous author/storyteller! A fitting celebration for 20 years of working to lift literacy and build community through a little local library.

With Change Comes Opportunity

As the Children's Literacy Foundation prepares to celebrate 25 years of service, we are simultaneously preparing for a period of unprecedented change. 2022 marks our final full year under the leadership of founding Executive Director Duncan McDougall, and the tail end of operations out of Duncan's garage, the site of CLiF HQ since 1998.

Come spring, a new executive director will step into Duncan's role, and the team will relocate to our brand-new, purpose-built office space currently under construction in Waterbury Center, VT.

Though change is rarely easy, it often provides opportunities for growth, which is certainly the case for CLiF.

Our new headquarters will provide space for expansion and enable us to give away many thousands more books each year. Construction is proceeding on, if not ahead of schedule, thanks to the efficient firms behind our building's design and construction: Black River Design, Naylor & Breen, and TCE.

Meanwhile, an executive director search is currently being conducted by EOS Transition Partners, and numerous promising candidates have already been identified. CLiF is confident in the abilities of our transition team, our Board of Directors, and our partners at EOS to determine the best possible individual to take the reins from Duncan.

While CLiF embraces the changes our next chapter holds, our mission to inspire a love of literacy among the children of Vermont and New Hampshire will remain the same. We will continue to provide equitable access to inspiring literacy resources such as author presentations and book giveaways, with a focus on serving the children and families who need us most.



A sea of eager, small hands in the air at a Year of the Book event.

News from CLiF's Presenters

Lindsey Stoddard's fifth middle grade novel, *The Real Deal*, was released in October 2022. It's a story about the many ways you can stand up, with your friends and for your friends, for what you know is right.

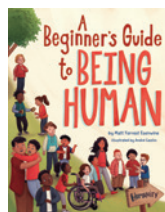


NH cartoonist **Marek Bennett's** newest graphic novel is *The Civil War Diary of Freeman Colby, Vol. 3*. Set in the early months of 1864, this volume chronicles the adventures of several historical people in the hospitals, classrooms, and battlefields of the Civil War. Marek's *Freeman Colby* series was featured as New Hampshire's "Great Reads from Great Places" title at the 2022 National Book Festival in Washington, DC.

John Steven Gurney is currently writing and illustrating *Fuzzy BaseBALLoween*, the fifth book in his *Fuzzy Baseball* graphic novel series, due out in Fall 2023.

Christy Mihaly participated in CLiF's summer program at VT and NH libraries, sharing her book *WATER: A Deep Dive of Discovery*—perfect for the "Oceans of Possibilities" theme! Christy looks forward to bringing her new picture books, *Patience*, *Patches!* and *The Supreme Court and Us* to schools this year.

Matt Forrest Esenwine's first creative nonfiction picture book, *A Beginner's Guide to Being Human*—which introduces concepts/emotions like compassion, empathy, and self-control—came out in October 2022.



CLiF presenter Ted Scheu leads a poetry workshop at Valley View Community School in Farmington, NH.

Jan Reynolds left for Indonesia in November to search for the Bajau in the Celebes Sea, and gather material for her next book. Follow her adventures on Instagram at @janreynoldsphotos.

Eric Pinder's picture book *Counting Dinos*, published in the U.S. by



Albert Whitman & Company, has also now been published in Turkey. The Turkish translation is titled *Dinolar Saymayi Ogreniyor*.

At last count, **Natalie Kinsey Warnock** was working on 68 different books! One is historical fiction about a Vermont Civil War nurse whom she found out grew up on the very same farm as she did.

Layne Case's publishing company recently released *My Horse with a Pink Bow* by Barbara Burgess. "Nana B is sick and has lost her hair. Where will her grandchildren put the pink bow when they ride on her back?" The story, told from a child's point of view, is based on the author's own journey with breast cancer.

Karen Gross is doing lots of work with students on stress relief, including through "trauma art," the creation and recognition of transitional objects and developing an understanding how the body keeps the score. This ties into her newest children's book, *My Pocketbook*, which allows for incorporation of all these strategies.

After nearly 25 years working with traditional publishers, **Marty Kelley** is trying something radically new with a self-publishing project. "It's a collection of short stories for young readers, similar in tone and feel to the *Frog and Toad* books, which I adore."

Simon Brooks is busy traveling across the country sharing the love of words and stories from New Hampshire to Tennessee and Nebraska between now and February!

Carolyn Scoppettone had two more early readers released in June: *Maggie and Pie* and *the Cookie Contest* and *Maggie and Pie and the Perfect Picnic*.



CLiF Goes Public

This September, CLiF was invited to partner with Vermont Public (Vermont's public broadcasting organization) during their fall membership drive—an offer we enthusiastically accepted! Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor from the Upper Valley, each pledge made to Vermont Public during the drive was matched with the gift of a brand-new book to CLiF. In all, we collected over 1,100 books to distribute to the children we serve. A great result!

Our collaboration with Vermont Public included several radio and TV spots featuring Duncan, CLiF presenter and award-winning author/illustrator Jason Chin, Lindy Johnson, a past CLiF grant recipient, and Heather Duhamel, Vermont Public's Manager of Education Engagement.

"When you shared the words of Lindy, the educator who spoke about CLiF in her classroom and about not taking books for granted, it gave me goosebumps — she really made me reflect on how much I prize access to information, new perspectives, and 'stories from every corner.' Thanks for providing that, and thanks to CLiF for passing it on to our kids."

— Vermont Public donor

Our thanks to all who participated on our behalf and helped to spread awareness of CLiF's mission, as well as to all who donated! CLiF is always open to exploring new partnerships that provide opportunities for us to share our organization's work with a broader audience. If you have an idea for a future collaboration, please email us at clif@clifonline.org.

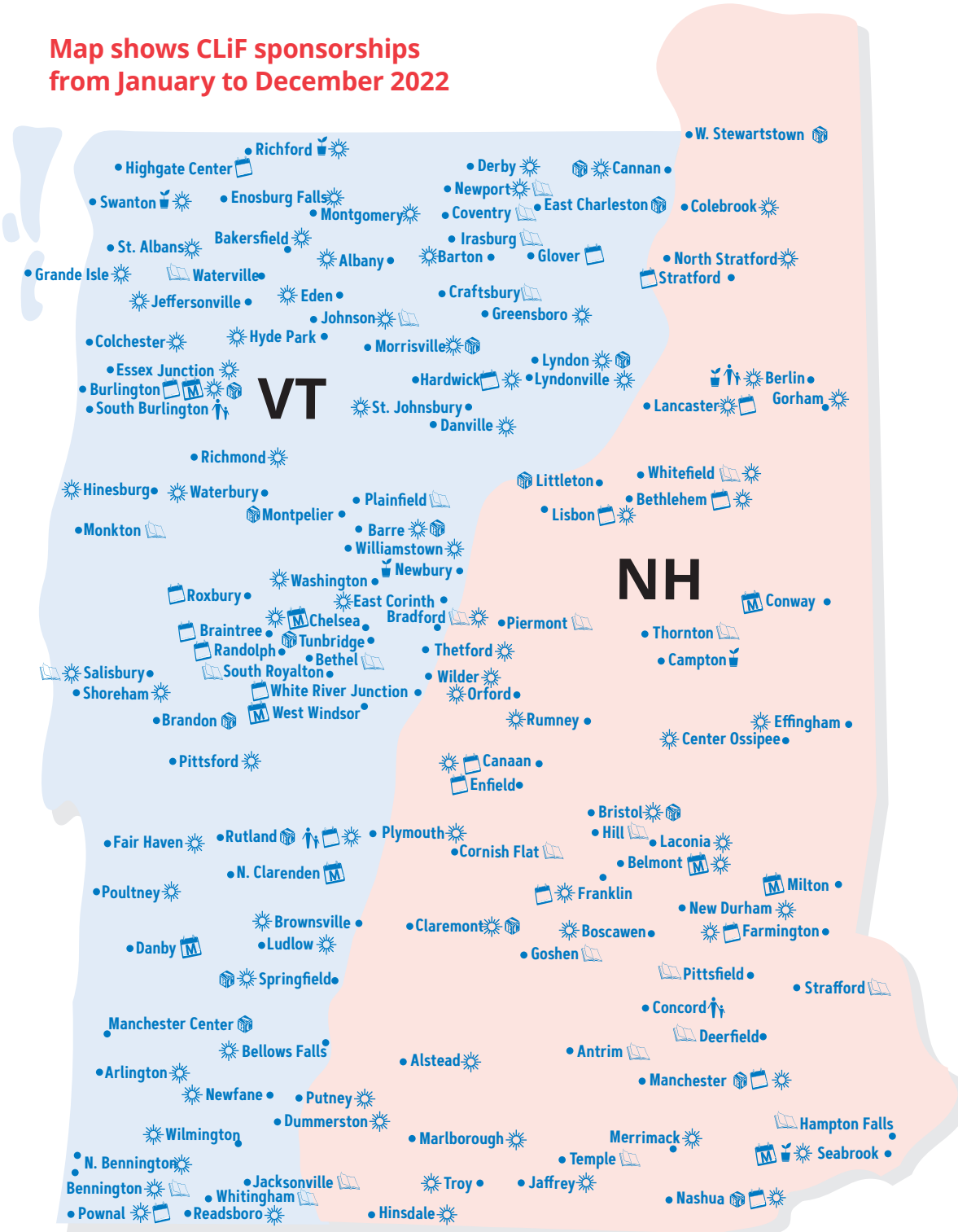
CLiF Sponsorships

Since 1998, CLiF has served 350,000 children in more than 430 towns across New Hampshire and Vermont, and given away \$10 million in new, high-quality books.

Through nine programs—and with the partnership of more than 60 professional authors, illustrators, poets, storytellers, and graphic novelists—CLiF inspires children at higher risk of growing up with low literacy skills to love reading and writing.

CLiF provides free, inspiring literacy programs and new books to: children of incarcerated parents; refugee, migrant and foster children; children who live in shelters and affordable housing; and children served by bookmobiles, Head Start, Boys & Girls Clubs, and other social service organizations. CLiF sponsors rural libraries, elementary schools, prisons, and provides programs to dozens of other sites that serve children.

Map shows CLiF sponsorships from January to December 2022



At-Risk Children



Storytelling presentations and new on-site library for partnering organizations serving at-risk children, a parent seminar, and two new books for each child.

Children of Incarcerated Adults



Family literacy seminars for incarcerated parents and new books to send home to their kids, grandkids, or nieces and nephews, plus new on-site children's libraries, storytelling, family events, and the storybook program.

Community Building



Training with CLiF's professional presenters, new books, and program support for community-based programs.

Literacy Training



Early educator literacy training using CLiF's videos.

Year of the Book



\$25,000 in literacy programming, including author visits, workshops, and fun family events, plus new books for ten selected elementary schools in NH and VT, and ten new books for each child.

Momentum



Additional literacy support following the Year of the Book.

Revive



Additional literacy support, such as author visits and funding for special literacy initiatives for past CLiF partners.

Rural Libraries



Two storytelling presentations and new books for rural public libraries and local elementary schools, plus two new books for each child and a program grant.

Summer Readers



Inspiring storytelling presentations and two new books for each child during the summer.



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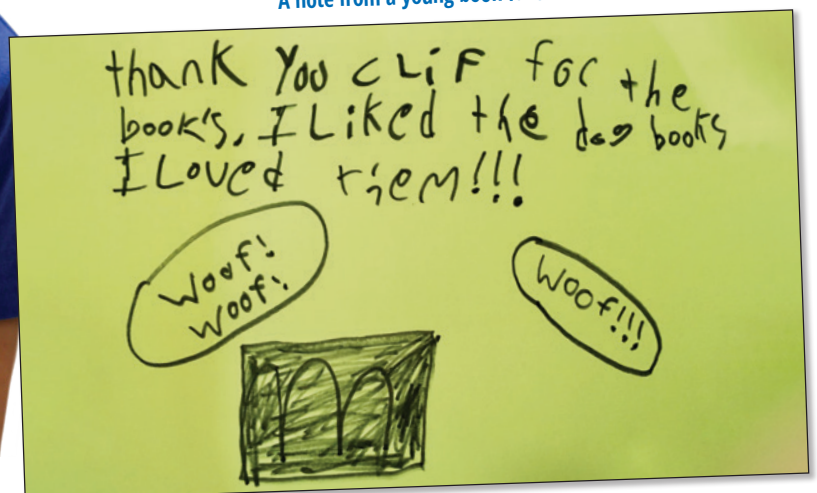
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A note from a young book-lover



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