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CHA Receives Donation of 4000 Children's Books
Books, Toothbrushes for Children Donated By First Book National Book Bank

CHICAGO (May 16, 2006) – In an effort to encourage children to make the most of their free time, especially as the school year ends, the Chicago Housing Authority has accepted 4,000 books from the First Book National Book Bank for families living in CHA housing.

In addition to the large number of books, First Book is also distributing 1,000 children's toothbrushes, with toothpaste to residents.

"This generous donation from First Book helps us strengthen two of our main messages to residents – the importance of literacy and health awareness," said Terry Peterson, CEO of the CHA. "I continue to communicate this to residents as strong mental and physical health can help achieve one's future goals."

Reading throughout childhood and adult years can translate into advancement in school along with the job market. The titles distributed to the CHA are: *The Bully*, *A Matter of Trust*, *Blood is Thicker* and *The Narrative of the Life and Times of Frederick Douglas*. These books fit a wide-range of age brackets and help tell positive, intriguing stories to readers in an easy-to-follow format.

The First Book National Book Bank provides access to books for low-income children throughout the United States. Over 60 percent of low-income families across the country do not have any books in their homes. In addition, over 80 percent of childcare centers serving children in low-income neighborhoods do not have enough age-appropriate reading materials for their clients. For every \$1 donated to First Book, \$10 in books is donated to children in need.

"First Book is thrilled to work with such a heroic group as the Chicago Housing Authority," said Kyle Zimmer, president of First Book. "We are honored to be able serve the children of Chicago and to play a role in some of the amazing work that CHA does for the local community. Thanks to the generosity of our corporate partners and publishing heroes, children across the country will be given the opportunity to read and own their first new books."

After registering with First Book, organizations may apply for books that are distributed to groups on a first-come, first-served basis. The titles available serve a wide-range of ages and interests.

Groups can select one, two or three books per child.

In addition to First Book, the donation was made possible through support from the Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana Ronald McDonald House Charities and Townsend Press, the publishing house of the four donated titles.

“As the younger residents in CHA developments continue to read – and most importantly get hooked on reading – they will continue to understand that knowledge is power,” Peterson continued.

For more information on the First Book National Book Bank, please visit www.firstbook.org or call (202) 393-1222.

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Note for Editors: Photos are available at the following web addresses.

Photo #1: <http://www.mkcpr.com/filebin/ResidentReading.JPG>

Suggested Caption: “A CHA resident selects her free book donated by the First Book National Book Bank at the fourth of four ‘Spring Into Summer’ service fairs held at Olive-Harvey College on May 6th.

Photo #2: <http://www.mkcpr.com/filebin/BooksDonation.JPG>

Suggested Caption: “Thanks to a generous donation from the First Book National Book Bank, 4,000 free books will be available to Chicago Housing Authority residents and their families.”