

LAURA MILLER
MAYOR



CITY OF DALLAS

MEDIA RELEASE

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As Summer Break Nears, Mayor Miller Encourages Children to Break Open the Books

Comcast presents The 2006 Mayor's Summer Reading Program

DALLAS- Surrounded by children from N.W. Harlee Elementary and the Caesar Chavez and Billy Earl Dade Learning Centers, Mayor Laura Miller officially kicked-off the 2006 *Mayor's Summer Reading Program* Tuesday during a news conference at the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library.

Mayor Miller was joined by DISD General Superintendent Dr. Michael Hinojosa, Laurie Evans-Director of Libraries for the City of Dallas, Theresa Flores-Director of Franchising and Government Affairs for Comcast Cable, Baron James-Author for FOX4 KDFW, "Champ" from the Dallas Mavericks and numerous other program sponsors.

This annual program, themed "Readers Are Leaders", is designed to encourage young people to read during the summer months and to strengthen the reading skills learned during the school year.

"When I was eight years old, I used to hide under the bed covers way past my bedtime and read books with a flashlight. I just couldn't get enough of reading - it always transported me to a wonderful new place, filled with extraordinary people, at a time when I rarely ever traveled more than a few miles from my house in suburban Massachusetts," the Mayor said. "Children have so many choices for summer entertainment and my goal is to inspire children to make reading part of their summer fun! My hope is that summer reading will lead to a generation of children who love to read and continue reading as adults," Miller continued.

Mayor Miller also spent time reading to the children who attended the news conference. She read the book *Keep Climbing, Girls* by Beah E. Richards. Also on-hand to read to the students were Ms. Flores of Comcast Cable—her selection: *Fox Makes Friends* by Adam Relf; and FOX4's Baron James—his selection: *My Lucky Day* by Keiko Kasza. All of the books are available in the Dallas Public Library system.

((more))

Children interested in participating in the 2006 *Mayor's Summer Reading Program* can register at their local Dallas Public Library branch beginning Saturday, May 20, 2006. Throughout the summer, they will be asked to log the time they spend reading. Children will be classified according to their grade level, but even children too young to read can participate if someone reads to them.

The Dallas Public Library has offered a special summer reading program for more than 40 years. In 1997, it became known as the *Mayor's Summer Reading Program* because of the support of the Mayor's office. Since that time, nearly 145,000 kids have participated in the program. Each year, the Mayor's Summer Reading Program enrolls more than 15,000 children who, in turn, read almost 400,000 hours!

The City's Director of Libraries—Laurie Evans said "As a former Children's Librarian, I know how important it is to excite young minds and engage children who will then become life-long readers. Thanks to the Mayor's commitment each year, we are able to attract more Dallas businesses and organizations as partners in support of our goal."

Mayor Miller thanks the many area companies and organizations that have donated or funded prizes for participants. Those prizes will be distributed at the conclusion of the program on August 19th at the "End-of-Summer Party" at City Hall. All program participants are invited to attend. For more info on the program: 214.670.1671

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