

NEWS RELEASE

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National Read for the Record Campaign Comes to Salinas

The Very hungry caterpillar could BITE 5,000 Children

September 30, 2009 – Salinas Public Library Literacy Center will celebrate Jumpstart’s Read for the Record®, a national campaign designed to break the world record for the largest shared reading experience ever, while also working to break the cycle of illiteracy.

Salinas Public Library Literacy Staff will distribute free copies of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to parents, school teachers and volunteers in the community that have signed up to read this book to a child on October 8th. A “Read-a-Thon” event will be held the same day at all three Salinas libraries. Over 700 books will be given away at the event. The goal is to involve 5,000 preschool and elementary school children in the Read for the Record campaign.

“Current research overwhelmingly supports the importance of facilitating early and emerging literacy skills in preschool-age children as a critical foundation for literacy development,” said Elizabeth Martinez, Library Director. “We are happy to be able to bring this program to Salinas as an outreach of our children services, and family literacy programming.”

“It’s just a great way to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood literacy skills,” says Mary Ellison, Literacy Program Manager. Readers of all ages are encouraged to visit www.readfortherecord.org and register to read the campaign’s official book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, on October 8, or call the Salinas Public Library Literacy Center at 831-758-7916.

Jumpstart – through their Read for the Record Campaign and intensive early education programs – puts books in the homes of children who need them most and focuses on helping them make gains in crucial language and literacy skills. The Pearson Foundation, Sponsor and Founding Partner of the campaign, is

once again underwriting the cost of the campaign book, which this year is *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* from Philomel Books. The Pearson Foundation is also helping to organize events nationwide with governors, mayors, school districts, and other community organizations.

The 2009 campaign is designed to encourage young people, their families, and educators everywhere to set another world record by creating the largest shared reading experience ever on Thursday, October 8, 2009. The day's activities are designed to generate public awareness about the importance of early childhood education. Shared reading experiences can range from an adult and child reading in their home to large group events with hundreds of people gathering at public facilities for community reading sessions. Last year, Read for the Record raised almost \$2 million to directly support and expand the organization's early education work in low-income communities.

In partnership with Jumpstart and the Pearson Foundation, Salinas Public Library supports early education and literacy development and encourages the entire community to learn more about this important campaign by visiting www.readfortherecord.org.

John Steinbeck Public Library

350 Lincoln Ave.

758-7311

El Gabilan Public Library

1400 N. Main St.

758-7302

Cesar Chavez Public Library

615 Williams Rd.

758-7345

About the Salinas Public Library The Salinas Public Library (SPL) serves the City of Salinas and surrounding region with a mission to contribute to a community in which people enjoy continuing opportunities to broaden their knowledge, heighten their imagination, expand their global awareness and enrich their cultural values. Services are provided through three library facilities as well as an online catalog and a variety of databases available on the website. Besides providing the traditional services, SPL also offers a Digital Arts Lab, Teen Lounge, Chicano Cultural Resource collection, free Internet access, wi-fi, multiple audio and video formats, Spanish language materials, and literacy programs. For more information, call (831) 758-7311 or visit salinaspubliclibrary.org

About Jumpstart

Jumpstart's mission is to ensure that all children in America enter school prepared to succeed. Year-round, Jumpstart recruits and trains thousands of people to work one-to-one with children in low-income communities, helping preschoolers develop the language, literacy, and social skills they need to succeed in school and in life. Since 1993, thousands of Jumpstart mentors have helped more than 75,000 children from low-income communities around the country enter school ready to learn at grade level. To find out more, visit <http://www.jstart.org>.

About the Pearson Foundation

The Pearson Foundation extends Pearson's commitment to education by partnering with leading nonprofit, civic, and business organizations to provide financial, organizational, and publishing assistance across the globe. The Pearson Foundation aims to make a difference by sponsoring innovative educational programs and extending Pearson's educational expertise to help in classrooms and in local communities.

About the Pearson Foundation and Jumpstart Partnership

Jumpstart's Read for the Record Campaign is one component of the Pearson Jumpstart partnership. Jumpstart and the Pearson Foundation share a passion for education and inspiring people to reach their full potential. These shared goals and values led Jumpstart and the Pearson Foundation to create the Pearson Teacher Fellowship in 2001. In 2006, Pearson and its businesses The Financial Times Group, The Penguin Group, and Pearson Education became the Sponsor and Founding Partner of Jumpstart's Read for the Record, which to date has raised \$4.5 million for Jumpstart's work to help preschoolers from low-income communities with their language and literacy skills.