



Jack and Jill of America, Inc. - Charlotte Chapter
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For Immediate Release
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Jack & Jill Charlotte Chapter Donates Nearly 400 Children's Books to Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's "Read to Me" Program

PHOTO CAPTION

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Reading Together is FUNDamental ... **Huntersville** resident **Amy Kukla** (center), Family Literacy Coordinator for the **Charlotte Mecklenburg Library**, is all smiles as she receives **nearly 400 children's books** from (from left) **University area** resident **Karen Mikell** and **Ballantyne** resident **Natalie Allen**, representatives of the **Charlotte Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc.**

Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated, founded in 1938, is an African-American organization of mothers who nurture future leaders by strengthening children ages 2-19 through chapter programming, community service, legislative advocacy, and philanthropic giving. The organization believes every child, with proper guidance and opportunity, can be a leader. The Charlotte Chapter is a 54-year-old organization that is well known for the service it provides to the Charlotte community.

Jack and Jill Charlotte Chapter members donated the children's books to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's "**Read to Me**" **Community Bookshelves** program, which distributes gently used books to organizations and businesses that serve low-income populations for use in their waiting areas. The program hopes to encourage parents and children to read together. As part of the effort, parents can borrow donated books to read to their child while waiting for an appointment at a participating organization. Families can also take donated books home with them for free.

"While the public library is an invaluable community resource for books," said Kukla, "research indicates that children who have home libraries are more likely to succeed in reading. Every book donated through this program is given to a child or adult who cannot afford to purchase these books for themselves."

Pediatrician **Dr. Karen Breach Washington**, Jack and Jill Charlotte Chapter President added: "When parents read to their children they are not only teaching them the fundamental skills, they are also creating special memories while planting a seed for a lifetime love of reading. We are so excited to be a part of this important effort to bring books into the homes of families who may not have been able to get them."

Current bookshelf locations include: Department of Social Services; Women, Infants, and Children; Stratford Richardson YMCA; Soap Suds Coin Laundry; Carolinas Rehabilitation Hospital Speech Therapy; CMC Pineville Emergency Room; Solomon House; and CMC Steele Creek.

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