

First Book and Celebrated Children’s Author Pat Mora Honor Texas Library with Estela and Raúl Mora Award

Three schools serving students in need receive special recognition for promoting literacy

WASHINGTON (October 4, 2018) – Johnson City Library in Johnson City, Texas, will receive the 2018 Estela and Raúl Mora Award, an honor given by award-winning children’s author Pat Mora and her sister, Stella Mora Henry, in partnership with First Book, the nonprofit social enterprise that has distributed more than 175 million books to children in need. The annual award recognizes schools, libraries, and educational programs that held literacy celebrations in honor of Children’s Day, Book Day; also known as El Día de los Niños, El Día de los Libros; or Día. Founded by Mora in 1996, Día is a nationally recognized initiative that emphasizes the importance of literacy for all children, from all backgrounds, and creatively links them to reading to spark a lifelong love of reading, or, as Mora calls it, “bookjoy.”

Johnson City Library hosted dual celebrations, one for young children, families, and the local Head Start program; and another for the general public and the library’s own after school science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program. A total of 90 people attended the events, which included dancing, singing, reading, and food.

The library will receive \$1,000 in credits to the First Book Marketplace, First Book’s award-winning eCommerce site that offers brand new books and educational resources at deeply reduced prices—or free—to schools and programs serving children in need.

“Literacy is inherently linked to a love of reading,” said Kyle Zimmer, president and CEO of First Book. “We know that children who excel at reading, no matter where they are from, aren’t motivated by a desire to achieve literacy, but by the sheer joy they find on the pages of a book. That’s why we love Pat Mora’s books so much, and why we are so pleased to partner with her to distribute this award. All children deserve access to brand new books and the opportunity to fall in love with reading.”

Watsonville Public Library in Watson, Calif., and the Communities In Schools of Marietta/Cobb County Parents as Teachers program in Marietta, Ga., were also recognized for innovative Children’s Day, Book Day celebrations. Both programs will receive \$500 in credit to the First Book Marketplace.

“We celebrate Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. We need kids’ day too,” Mora said. “By celebrating all our children and connecting them with bookjoy, the pleasure of reading, we enrich their lives and strengthen our communities.”

Book ownership and a print-rich environment are leading indicators of a child’s educational success, but for the 32 million children growing up in low-income families in the U.S. alone, books are scarce. Studies have found that in low-income neighborhoods there is only one book for every 300 children; whereas in more moderate-income neighborhoods, there are 13 books for every one child.

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About First Book

First Book transforms the lives of children in need. Through a sustainable, market-driven model, First Book is creating equal access to quality education — making everything from brand-new, high-quality books and educational resources, to sports equipment, winter coats, snacks, and more – affordable to its member network of more than 375,000 educators who exclusively serve kids in need. Since 1992, First Book has distributed more than 175 million books and educational resources to programs and schools serving children from low-income families in more than 30 countries. First Book currently reaches an average of 5 million children every year and supports more than one in four of the estimated 1.3 million classrooms and programs serving children in need. With an additional 1,000 educators joining each week, First Book is the largest and fastest-growing network of educators in the United States exclusively serving kids in need.

Eligible educators, librarians, providers, and others serving children in need can sign up at firstbook.org/register. For more information, please visit firstbook.org or follow the latest news on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Pat Mora

Pat Mora is an award-winning author of *Book Fiesta*, *I Pledge Allegiance*, and *Water Rolls, Water Rises*, among others. A literacy advocate excited about sharing what she calls “bookjoy,” Pat founded Children’s Day, Book Day, El Día de los Niños, El Día de los Libros often known as Día. A former teacher, university administrator, museum director, and consultant, Pat is a popular national speaker at conferences, campuses, libraries and schools. She has three adult children and a sweet Austin granddaughter. Pat is married to anthropology professor Vern Scarborough and lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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