**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 14, 2020

**Read Better Be Better Awarded $33,000 for After-School Literacy Programming in Multiple School Districts**

*PHOENIX, AZ.* – A Phoenix-based 501(c)(3), Read Better Be Better (RBBB), was awarded $33,000 by The Kathy and Jerry Wood Foundation, The Kinder Morgan Foundation, The Literary Society of the Southwest, and The West Valley Mavericks Foundation for the nonprofit’s innovative work in after-school literacy programming for 3rd and 6-8th grade students.

The West Valley Mavericks Foundation has awarded RBBB with $11,000 to be used to serve students at Wildflower Accelerated Academy and Michael Anderson School in the Avondale Elementary School District during the 2020-2021 school year. The Kinder Morgan Foundation has awarded RBBB with $10,000 to be used for multiple schools in the Alhambra School District during the 2020-2021 school year. The funds from The Kathy and Jerry Wood Foundation and The Literary Society of the Southwest will be used for critical core support of RBBB general programming across many districts and schools during the 2020-2021 school year.

RBBB was founded as a response to Arizona’s literacy crisis; the state is ranked 45th in the nation for childhood literacy and 48th for PreK-12 education. Currently, 69% of 3rd graders from low-income families in Arizona do not read at grade level, and students who do not read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade are four times less likely to graduate from high school.  With proper reading intervention, there is an 89% chance that students who can read at grade level by the end of 3rd grade will graduate from high school, irrespective of socio-economic status.

RBBB’s mission is to help children improve their literacy skills and become better learners and leaders. Together, the middle-school Leaders and 3rd grade Readers work to improve concentration, reading comprehension, and the enjoyment of reading. This coming fall, RBBB is partnering with 62 schools in 10 districts, serving a total of 1,984 Readers and Leaders across the Maricopa and Pinal counties.

The Kathy and Jerry Wood Foundation awards scholarships and grants to organizations, colleges, and universities with programs that aid and assist in the moral, mental, intellectual, and physical development of young men and women in the United States. The Kathy and Jerry Wood Foundation has provided educational and developmental opportunities for motivated and deserving students looking to position themselves for a successful future.

The Kinder Morgan Foundation believes that today's youth are tomorrow's leaders, and their mission is to provide these children with opportunities to learn and grow. Kinder Morgan funds programs that promote the academic and artistic interests of young people in the cities and towns across North America where Kinder Morgan operates. The Kinder Morgan Foundation donates more than $1 million each year to youth programs.

The West Valley Mavericks Foundation is a non-profit organization formed to distribute monies raised by the Mavericks and their events. The mission of The West Valley Mavericks Foundation is to assist children and families, help people in need, and improve the quality of life in the West Valley communities.

The Literary Society of the Southwest supports the appreciation of contemporary literature by providing a forum where members can interact with authors to better understand the authors’ works and their creative process, as well as runs a grant program providing grants to various organizations that promote literacy.

For more information about Read Better Be Better, visit [www.readbetterbebetter.org](http://www.readbetterbebetter.org/).

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