

WordSmith Writing Olympics 2016

Book Drive for Porter-Leath!

As people who are passionate about the written word, most members of the WordSmith community—students, teachers, coaches, and judges—likely cannot remember a time when reading and writing have not been an essential and beloved part of our lives. We know that early, consistent, and easy access to reading material is essential for nurturing the literacy skills necessary not only for stimulating the imagination but also for navigating the complexities of life in the twenty-first century. However, for many Memphis families, such access to books is almost impossible. In an effort to support the growth of literacy among low-income Memphis families (and recruit new WS participants for the decades to come!), WordSmith is pleased to use this year's competition as a way of putting as many books as possible into little hands in Memphis with the help of Porter-Leath, an agency that has served our community for over one hundred and sixty years.

Want to participate? Here are a few suggestions:

- Bring new or gently used books (appropriate for children up to age five) and place them in the collection bin we will have near the registration table on Tournament Day.
- Have your team members sponsor a book drive at your school.
- Encourage your team members to put their social media expertise to good use by sharing the Porter-Leath/WordSmith Amazon wish list on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and whatever other newfangled platforms are out there! Donors can click on the desired title from the list and have a book sent directly to Porter-Leath offices. In addition to books, the list also features toys encouraging early literacy development. The wish list link: http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/3K09ZCYL9VV0X/ref=topnav_lists_1.
- Encourage older students to share their time and passion for reading at Porter-Leath centers across the city.

For more information on Porter-Leath, check out their website at www.porterleath.org.

