JetBlue's Soar with Reading Free Book Vending Machine Initiative Goes Virtual to Get Books into the Hands of Kids Who Need Them Most

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-- JetBlue Invites Customers, Crewmembers and the Community to Nominate Their Favorite Youth-Focused Nonprofit for a Chance to Receive a Free Book Donation --

-- Kids Can Select up to Six Brand New Books Free of Charge with #BookDrop Events Taking Place in August and September --

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- JetBlue (Nasdaq: JBLU) today announced its eleventh annual Soar with Reading initiative, which tackles the issue of literacy in areas known as book deserts, where access to age-appropriate books for children is often very limited. This summer, JetBlue is taking its free book vending machine initiative online due to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. However, this will not stop the airline from continuing its work to help get books into the hands of kids who need them most. Throughout August, children in select locations and youth programs will be able to access JetBlue's virtual vending machine online and pick up to six books. JetBlue will drop off these free books with the respective organizations throughout August and September to distribute to the kids.

Books open children's imaginations and empower them to envision new places. Soar with Reading provides children the opportunity to start to build their home libraries and encourages a life-long love of reading. Customers, crewmembers and local communities are encouraged to nominate their favorite youth-focused nonprofit for a chance to receive access to JetBlue's digital book vending machine. For more information or to nominate an organization, visit soarwithreading.com (a.).

JetBlue is collaborating with several of its longstanding youth-focused non-profit partners in Boston, Fort Lauderdale, Los Angeles and New York City. Local partners include Big Brothers Big Sisters of Broward County, Boys & Girls Club of Broward County, Boston Centers for Youth & Families, City of New York Parks & Recreation and the Westchester Family YMCA in Los Angeles through a partnership with Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA). Additionally, JetBlue will provide new books directly to local organizations in Orlando, Salt Lake City and San Juan. The available books feature diverse characters and themes, with options in both English and Spanish.

"It's important for us to continue to find ways to give back and support the communities that support us," said Icema Gibbs, vice president corporate social responsibility and diversity, equity and inclusion, JetBlue. "Soar with Reading was originally developed to help defeat the loss of knowledge that students experience over the summer months, known as the 'summer slide.' It's more relevant now than ever. Many children have attended school virtually for more than a year. This means countless students haven't had a chance to experience books during this time, nor have they traveled to the places that imaginations soar to through reading.

Recent report show that, students' reading scores are behind where they would be after a normal year, with the most vulnerable students showing the steepest drops. JetBlue is continuing to work with childhood literacy expert Dr. Susan Neuman, professor and chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning at New York University (NYU), to measure the program's impact. Dr. Neuman's research shows that owning 25 physical books or more has a sizable effect on achievement, with each additional increment of books improving literacy rates. Based on Dr. Neuman's research, through Soar with Reading, JetBlue is also encouraging a cross-generational love of reading as it's been proven that children are more interested in reading when they see their parents also engaging with books.

Soar with Reading previously visited Detroit; San Francisco; Washington, DC; Fort Lauderdale; and New York City where JetBlue distributed 40,000 books in its own backyard of Queens. In 2020, as JetBlue worked to meet immediate pandemic needs, the airline distributed 15,000 books in Boston directly to families through food distribution programs. To date, JetBlue has donated more than $3.7 million worth of books to kids in need.

JetBlue For Good - Soar with Reading is a signature program of JetBlue For Good®, the airline's platform for social impact and corporate responsibility. As the program continues to grow, JetBlue is working to ensure that the books provided represent the diverse perspectives of the various communities that JetBlue serves.

Giving back is part of JetBlue's DNA and is core to its mission of inspiring humanity. Centered on volunteerism and service, JetBlue For Good focuses on the areas that are most important to the airline's customers and crewmembers - community, youth/education and the environment. Combining JetBlue's corporate efforts with its customers' and crewmembers' passions, the common theme is Good – JetBlue For Good. Join the #JetBlueForGood conversation on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, and check for regular updates to get involved.

About JetBlue Airways

JetBlue is New York's Hometown Airline®, and a leading carrier in Boston, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood, Los Angeles, Orlando, and San Juan. JetBlue carries customers across the U.S, Caribbean, and Latin America. For more information, visit jetblue.com.

(a.) NO PURCHASE, DONATION OR PAYMENT NECESSARY. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Program ends 11:59:59 PM ET on 8/31/21. Participants must be legal residents of the 50 U.S. including DC and PR, 18 or older. Nomination must be a registered 501(c)(3) charity with Corporate Offices located in Domestic JetBlue cities within the 50 U.S. including DC and PR (or outside the U.S. only in the event the charity sponsors an office in an International JetBlue city) and not politically connected nor discriminatory. For a complete list of JetBlue Domestic and International cities, visit www.jetblue.com/destinations. THERE IS NO AWARD FOR THE NOMINATOR. For complete Terms and Conditions including eligibility requirements, judging criteria and award details, click here.

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