JetBlue's Soar with Reading Initiative Lands in Newark, NJ with Free Digital Book Vending Machines in Five Locations Throughout the City This Summer

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Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, New Jersey Congressman Donald Payne Jr. Join JetBlue to Kick-Off This Year's Program at The Historic Newark Public Library Main Branch

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- JetBlue (Nasdaq: JBLU), New York's Hometown Airline•, today launched its twelfth annual Soar with Reading initiative in Newark, NJ with a kick-off event at Newark's historic Public Library Main Branch. Newark Mayor Ras Baraka and New Jersey Congressman Donald Payne Jr. joined the airline to celebrate its award-winning literacy initiative that tackles the issue of book availability in underserved communities where access to age-appropriate books for children is often limited. Since 2015, JetBlue has taken a creative approach to this issue through its free book vending machine program which previously visited New York City, Detroit, San Francisco, Oakland, Washington, DC, and Fort Lauderdale.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220628005979/en/



Photo courtesy of JetBlue.

Beginning today, JetBlue's five free digital book vending machines are available to visitors throughout the wards of Newark. Each time someone visits a machine, they will have the opportunity to order an assortment of brand new books that will be distributed to them throughout July and August, completely free of charge. The vending machines hold a diverse selection of titles and allows visitors the opportunity to search by various categories including title and author, as well as suggested reading level. To date, JetBlue, through its Soar with Reading initiative, has donated more than $4 million worth of books to children in need.

"For more than a decade, JetBlue has been dedicated to eradicating book inequality through our Soar with Reading Program," said Icema Gibbs, vice president CSR and DEI, JetBlue. "We're proud to return the popular program to the tristate area this year, landing in Newark, with five digital book vending machines to open more pathways for youth to connect with joys of reading and imagination. We're passionate about giving back to our crewmembers, customers and communities we serve, and look forward to an enriching summer of reading in Newark."

"JetBlue is partnering with Newark to create an innovative program that will give our youth in every ward free access to books all summer long. It is important for our children to find themselves, in stories and pictures, in books. First we learn to read, then we read to learn. I want to thank our partners for providing our children with access to literature. This is a holistic approach to defining the future of our youth and in turn the future of our city," Mayor Baraka said.

The digital vending machines, powered by Ricoh, will feature titles with a diverse cast of characters as well as options in both English and Spanish. Titles will be updated periodically throughout the summer. Publishing partners include HarperCollins Publishers, Little Bee Books, Lil' Libros, Lee & Low Books, Candlewick Press, Penguin Random House, TOKYO POP, and Simon & Schuster. Additionally, the vending machines will include select books for adults as research shows that parents displaying behaviors like reading can improve educational outcomes for children.

Vending machines are located at:

- **La Casa de Don Pedro**: 23 Broadway
- **The Leaguers:** 200 W. South Orange Ave
- **Newark Ironbound Recreation Center:** 226Rome Street
- **Springfield Branch Library:** 50 Hayes Street
- **Van Buren Branch Library:** 140 Van Buren Street

"For kids from under-resourced communities, summer often marks the beginning of the infamous summer slide," says Dr. Susan B. Neuman, professor of childhood and literacy education at NYU Steinhardt. "Studies have shown that owning 25 books or more has a sizable effect on achievement, with each additional increment of books, such as 10 or more, improving achievement. This program allows children to own books and combat the knowledge loss that

so often accompanies summer."

JetBlue For Good - Soar with Reading is a signature program of JetBlue For Good•, the airline's platform for social impact and corporate responsibility. 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, check for regular updates and get involved.

About JetBlue

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 to more than 110 cities throughout the United States, Latin America, Caribbean, Canada, and United Kingdom. For more information and the best fares, visit jetblue.com.

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