

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: North Star Imagination Library****Federal Tax ID: 27-4560964****Project Title:****Project Type: Equipment and Materials****North Star Imagination Library - Literacy Initiative Project****State Funding Requested: \$10,000****House District: Fairbanks Areawide (7-11)**

Future Funding May Be Requested

Brief Project Description:

Through a unique partnership the literacy initiative project encourages parents and young child to read together.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$110,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$0)
FY2012 State Funding Request:	(\$10,000)
Project Deficit:	\$100,000

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

Too many children presently arrive at school unprepared to be successful. North Star Imagination Library, affiliated with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, is designed to encourage parents and young children to read together, as research shows a strong correlation between early reading and later academic success. It is a cost effective way to improve outcomes for young children.

Program Highlights:

- The North Star Imagination Library began in March 2008
- Any child between birth and age five who lives in the Fairbanks North Star Borough is eligible to enroll;
- The program mails each child a free book every month;
- Over 3,380 children in the Fairbanks area are now receiving books;
- The cost is only \$30 per year for each child;
- Children can register online at www.imaginationlibrary.com or by filling out a simple registration form;
- Efforts have been made to reach out to all children through HeadStart, preschools, child care, community events and newspaper and radio publicity.
- Volunteers manage the program, so there are no administrative costs.

The program has relied upon fundraising events and contributions from individuals, service groups and businesses, totaling over \$73,000 to date. Major donors include Auto Service Company, the Fairbanks Rotary Clubs, Fairbanks Memorial Hospital and Best Beginnings. Events included a Riverboat Cruise Kick-off, Run for Reading, FNSBSD Read-a-thon, and McTeacher Night at local McDonalds Restaurants. The program also received \$40,000 in state funds for FY11.

The program growing to over 3,000 youngsters in 2010 outgrowing the anticipated growth. Additional fundraising could be needed if the program continues to outpace the Dollywood growth projections—a much desired gain for children, but a challenge financially. Imagination Library is a wise investment for Alaska. It is much less expensive than

Total Project Snapshot Report

2011 Legislature

TPS Report 55785v1

other early childhood interventions and strengthens family connections that are crucial to life success for children. At only \$15 per child for a matching grant, what a cost effective way to get kids off to a good start! So much good, for so little money.

Project Timeline:

The program runs year round. A payment of \$2.50 per child is sent monthly to the Dollywood Foundation. Currently, the payment is approximately \$8,250 per month. It is anticipated there will be at least 3,300 children receiving books each month in FY12 for a total of \$110,000, though the need may be greater, as described above.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

North Star Imagination Library

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name: Emily Vockeroth
Title: Board President
Address: P.O. Box 82657
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708
Phone Number: (907)378-7663
Email: syd@gci.net

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No

North Star Imagination Library

P.O. Box 82657, Fairbanks, AK 99708



January 12, 2011

The Honorable Representative Scott Kawasaki
State Capitol, Room 430
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Kawasaki:

As you know, the *North Star Imagination Library*, entering its third year of existence, is getting books into the hands of young children in the Fairbanks area with high praise from the community. Here's a quick overview of our program:

- **For only \$30 per year, each child receives a book every month in the mail;**
- **Since March 2008, over 1,400 children have graduated and over 3,300 are receiving books;**
- **There are no administrative costs**, as the support work is done by volunteers;
- **To date, the program has been funded with local donations** from various groups and individuals, **along with a grant from Best Beginnings** and a sizable state contribution thanks to **our own interior delegation.**
- Received the **2008 Arctic Alliance Volunteer Group of the Year** award.

This project is part of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, launched in 1996 for the children in Tennessee. **It has been shown to improve student performance and better prepare youngsters for kindergarten**, in a study conducted by the Tennessee Board of Regents.

We are asking for your continued financial support. For only \$15 per child, the legislature could provide a 50/50 match for our local contributions that would ensure the viability of our program. **The total for 2011-12 would be \$50,000 or \$10,000 per Interior House District.** None of the dollars are spent for administration. Your investment will be matched with private dollars. And best of all, it helps get 3,300+ youngsters ready for success in school. What a smart investment!

Thank you for considering our request. How often do you get a chance to do **so much good for so little money—and with volunteer labor?** Please contact me any time if you need more information or have any questions at 378-7663.

Dream more, learn more, care more, be more...

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emily Vockeroth".

Emily Vockeroth
Board President

North Star Imagination Library Annual Report 2010



It's been a good year for our organization. We've grown in many ways: enrolling more children, securing more funding, and expanding our board of directors, just to name a few. We appreciate the support of our program in the community of Fairbanks as well as statewide, through our partnership with Best Beginnings. Please enjoy this annual report of the goings on of our little engine that could!

Enrollment

- In 2010, our enrollment numbers increased by 1,796; now 3,380 children receive a book every month.
- We graduated 102 children from the program.
- Brochures are available throughout the community at child care centers, medical offices, retail stores, etc.
- Resource Center for Parents and Children and the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital collect registration forms for pick up each month.

In 2011, our goal is to enroll 3,500 children and continue to build partnerships in the early childhood community.

Fundraising

- Our second annual Read-a-Thon in February was another success. Co-sponsored by the PTAs, the message was 'kids reading for kids' as local elementary children raised money for books.
- McSuess Night at four McDonald's locations honored Dr. Suess and spread the word that Imagination Library was in town.
- Our Champions for Children of 2010, Maida Buckley, Luke Balash, and Greg Hill, were honored at Pike's Waterfront Lodge where the community came out in huge support of our free book program.

These events are planned bigger and better for 2011!



Outreach

- In November, we had our first Family Fun Night, with funding from Best Beginnings and partnering with the Literacy Council of Alaska and the Noel Wien Library. It was a huge success promoting family engagement with *two more events planned in 2011*.
- The post offices collect non-deliverable books and return them to us to distribute in the community at enrollment events, waiting rooms, child care programs, Red Cross packages, classrooms, and more.

Public health nurses will begin taking books out to interior villages not yet served by Imagination Library.

Invaluable Supporters

- We are grateful for a grant from Best Beginnings including money for operating expenses and family events as well as for books. In addition, Best Beginnings provides statewide cooperation and logistical support, including trainings to share knowledge with other Imagination Libraries.
- \$40,000 from the state legislature goes a long way to pay for books (~\$2.50 per book).
- Auto Service Company and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital continue to support our program at the highest levels.

The board voted to pursue our own 501.c.3 designation, in the works for 2011.