

# NEWS RELEASE

United Way  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Energizing Education Powers Up With \$50,000 Foundation Grant

*Jackson Community Foundation Matches Gifts to Early Grade Reading Program*

JACKSON, Michigan [Dec. 1, 2014] – A grant of \$50,000 from the Jackson Community Foundation will power greater success in literacy for young students in Jackson County.

The grant matched community support for Energizing Education, a reading initiative currently operating in six elementary schools. Energizing Education operates as part of United Way of Jackson County.

“The Jackson Community Foundation’s Board of Trustees is pleased to award a \$50,000 matching grant to the Energizing Education program,” said Monica Moser, President & CEO of the Foundation. “This grant was initiated by a challenge from the Dorothy Levy Literacy Endowment Fund, a component fund of the Foundation, to raise \$50,000 from the community, and the Foundation would match the gift. The Levy family is very passionate about providing literacy support to our youth in Jackson County. This grant will provide a lot of momentum toward this initiative.”

Energizing Education is an early grade reading program that relies on volunteer mentors to help children improve literacy skills. It trains mentors, provides after-school programs and engages parents in activities to support reading improvement by students through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Energizing Education is a product of Cradle2Career, a network of community leaders and organizations improving educational opportunities and achievement for all Jackson County residents.

Studies show that students who read at or above grade level by 4<sup>th</sup> grade are much more likely to graduate from high school. According to the American Educational Research Association, students who don’t read well by then are four times more likely to drop out of school; if they come from low-income families, they are 13 times more likely to drop out.

"The generous support of the Jackson Community Foundation and the Levy family means more kids will read better, learn better and have a better chance to succeed in school," said Ken Toll, President & CEO of United Way of Jackson County.

Currently, Energizing Education has initiatives in place at Arnold, Bennett, Frost, Northeast, George Long and Parnall elementary schools.

#### **About United Way of Jackson County**

United Way of Jackson County mobilizes the caring power of the community to provide opportunities for a better life for all Jackson County residents by focusing on helping children succeed in school, making sure families are financially stable, and helping people achieve and maintain good health.

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