



News From

Maggie Brooks

Monroe County Executive

For Immediate Release

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BROOKS ANNOUNCES \$50,000 GRANT FOR LOCAL LITERACY PROGRAM

Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks today joined Mercier Literacy Program founder George Mercier to announce that Monroe County will award funding to the non-profit to be used to expand its literacy program to additional Rochester City Schools. County Executive Brooks presented a check to children who participate in the summer program at Rochester City School #45.

Monroe County is contributing \$50,000 to the Mercier Literacy Program through a grant from the County's Department of Human Services. George Mercier will partially match the County's grant by donating \$25,000.

"The Mercier Literacy Program delivers high-quality reading and writing instruction to our community's youth," said **County Executive Brooks**. *"The money we present to this program today represents the culmination of a unique public-private partnership. Together with George Mercier and our other community partners, we are ensuring a bright future for these young people and I couldn't be more proud of our spirit of cooperation. A strong education is the key to success for our children, and this support will bring them one step closer to achieving their dreams."*

Currently, the literacy program is offered to students at Rochester City School #9 through the "Camp Read-a-Lot" initiative and summer reading program. County grant money will enable the Mercier Literacy Program to include another Rochester City School in their intensive reading program.

"We are so pleased to receive this contribution from Monroe County and can't wait to enroll more children in the program," said **George Mercier**, founder of the Mercier Literacy Program. *"The need in this community is great when it comes to ensuring that our kids know how to read. There are all sorts of funding streams out there for college scholarships, but if these kids don't know how to read, they'll never get that opportunity"*.

The Mercier Literacy Program was founded in 2002, and is the only community-based nonprofit focused exclusively on child literacy. The program is operated through a partnership between Rochester City School #9 and Nazareth College. All teachers in the program hold master's degrees and New York State teaching certifications, and many also have experience in special education, literacy, and early childhood development.

For more information on the Mercier Literacy Program, contact Katie Paxton-Johnson at (585) 424-3333.

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