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Oakland Housing Authority Gives Away 30,000th Children's Book

Free Books Available for Children of Residents

OAKLAND, Calif., January 31, 2008 – This month, the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) gave away its 30,000th children's book as part of the OHA's Children's Book Giveaway Program, initiated by the Oakland Housing Authority Police Department (OHAPD) in 2002.

The book, *Blackie the Horse Who Stood Still*, written by Christopher Cerf and illustrated by Paige Peterson, was given to Jacquelynn Chancellor-Dawson by OHA Commission Chair Moses L. Mayne Jr. The book, a true story about a local equine hero, was signed by both the author and the illustrator.

"We hope to build a literacy program by putting books into the hands of children who may not have any books of their own," said Moses L. Mayne Jr., Oakland Housing Authority Commission Chair. "By learning to read, and by practicing their reading skills daily, these children may also boost their academic achievements, and be on the right path to achieve their life goals."

This reading program encourages the children of OHA clients and residents to peruse books while their parents receive housing services at OHA offices. OHA staff also encourages the children to take the books home, in an effort to support the development of reading skills. To further promote literacy, the love of reading and the value of libraries, OHA staff distributes applications to join the Oakland Public Library.

"Children who have little to call their own now can have their own little libraries," added Mayne.

The Authority's Book Giveaway Program is run entirely by OHA employees, and all books are donated by staff members and other organizations including Children's Book Project East Bay, PG&E, Strategic Energy Innovations, and the Women's Board of the Oakland Museum.

Books can be donated by contacting Judy Monnier of the Oakland Housing Authority at (510) 874-1617, or by sending an e-mail to donatekidsbooks@oakha.org.

The Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) is the City of Oakland's state-chartered and federally funded agency to promote the availability of quality housing for low-income persons. OHA works to promote the civic involvement and economic self-sufficiency of its residents and to further the expansion of affordable housing within Oakland. The Authority is currently helping to house 14,000 of the city's lowest income families. (www.oakha.org)

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OHA Commission Chair Moses L. Mayne Jr. presents the 30,000 children's book to Jacquelynn Chancellor-Dawson