

Contacts
Douglas H. Palmer
dpalmer19@gmail.com
or
Edward W. Bullock
Ellock200@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 22, 2020

The Trenton Literacy Movement Inc. presents
Read Aloud,
a Free Resource during COVID 19

Celebrating Black stories and Black voices, men read their favorite picture books to improve reading outcomes for youth in Trenton

A partnership between The Trenton Literacy Movement, Trenton Kappa Foundation and C.I.E.E. Productions and filmed at the historic Trenton Public Library, Children's Room in Trenton, NJ



[The Trenton Literacy Movement, Inc. \(TTLM\)](#), a nonprofit working to improve reading outcomes for children in Trenton, NJ, has launched *Read Aloud*. This unique online reading initiative seeks to expose early readers to children's books and inspire a lifelong love of reading.

Importance of Reading Aloud to Children

Studies on toddlers' cognitive development and reading aloud find that when an adult reads to a young child, in a matter of seconds, thousands of cells in these children's growing brains respond. Some brain cells are 'turned on,' triggered by this particular experience. Many existing connections among brain cells are strengthened. At the same time, new brain cells are formed, adding a bit more definition and complexity to the intricate circuitry that will remain largely in

place for the rest of these children's lives. Therefore, the more adults read aloud to their children, the larger their vocabularies will grow and the more they will know and understand about the world and their place in it, assisting their cognitive development and perception. Source.

Read Aloud is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for children, parents, caregivers and educators to access on the organization's [Website](#) and [YouTube Channel](#). The videos feature colorful and informative children's books written primarily by black authors and about black lives. [View it here!](#)

TTLM invited members of the [Trenton Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.](#) and the [Trenton Kappa Foundation](#) (TKF) to read some of their favorite books online. The result is a series of informative and touching videos of books read on location in the Children's Room of the historic Trenton Public Library. The series was produced courtesy of [C.I.E.E.](#) production. The picture books were provided by Jerri Morrison executive director of Young Scholars Institute and Gloria Gene Tunstall, TTLM board member and retired educator.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEZlWs4RzjM>

“With this new *Read Aloud* project, we hope that seeing men in our community reading their favorite picture books will encourage a lifelong love of reading in our children,” said **Edward Bullock, President of TTLM**. This is just the beginning. TTLM will be reaching out to other prominent community leaders to partner with us for future series.”

The Trenton Literacy Movement has been an influential force in the Trenton public schools serving children in all 14 elementary schools in grades 1-3. Over 75% of Trenton public school children read below grade level. TTLM is working to end the literacy crisis in the City. Since its founding in 2016, 57% of students who started below grade level in their [LEXIA](#) after school reading intervention program caught up to or exceeded grade level while 67% of students advanced at least one grade level.



Why you should support The Trenton Literacy Movement, Inc.

<https://youtu.be/Ait7IBSjoZ4>

According to **TTLM Chairman and Former Mayor of Trenton, The Honorable Doug Palmer**, “We recognize that literacy is the foundation for all future learning, yet a quality education remains out of reach for millions of children, especially in the inner city. The love of reading starts at home. My mother read to me and my sister at a very early age and I know the important role that reading and literacy have played in my life.”



Grandfather and I, read by Shawn Copeland for TTLM "Read About"

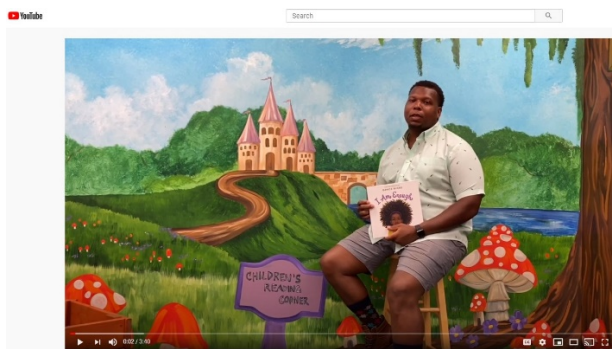
<https://youtu.be/J7xOUtYdsi4>

Shawn Copeland, Chairman of the Trenton Kappa Foundation and Vice President in Merrill Lynch Capital Markets Finance read, *Grandfather and I* by **Helen E. Buckley**. He remarked, “Both of my parents are retired educators, my father was the superintendent of Trenton public schools and my mother was an elementary teacher. They both believed strongly in education and always said that reading was the foundation. My success in every stage of my life is due in large part to my early introduction to and love for reading, TKF supports this critical initiative and partnership with TTLM.”



<https://youtu.be/oDy05PIF9NA>

Carl Gibbs, Jr., Polemarch of the Trenton Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., read [*A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr.*](#), by [*Robert Casilla*](#). Gibbs added, “As President and CEO of Sturdivant & Co., my duties require me, on a daily basis, to read investment journals, research reports and view financial statements. I would not be successful if not for my love for reading. Furthermore, our fraternity’s national “Room to Read“ effort and this partnership with TTLM *Read Aloud* provides a tremendous opportunity to strengthen and inspire global citizens of all ages who believe books have the power to change the world.”



https://youtu.be/rBY_xRHsFL8

Eric G. Bullock, member of the Trenton Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and CEO of C.I.E.E. production read [*I am Enough*](#) by [*Grace Byers*](#). He commented, “When I was just a baby my dad would read to me and my brothers. Now as Pop-Pop, he reads to my two daughters *I am Enough* and *I Love My Hair*. As an educator and entrepreneur, my wife Ka ’Neda and I continue the legacy of reading to our girls and supporting the tremendous work of TTLM.”

About The Trenton Literacy Movement, Inc. (TTLM)

The mission of TTLM is to enable students in Trenton public elementary schools to read at grade level by 3rd grade. TTLM partners with schools, parents, the community, and funders to support after-school remedial interventions for elementary students in all Trenton public schools.

TTLM’s [Board of Trustees](#) is made up of members of the Trenton and surrounding community. With the support of [Partners](#) representing individuals, foundations and corporations, TTLM is able to provide literacy instruction at no cost to students in grades 1-3. TTLM is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

About the Trenton Kappa Foundation

The Trenton Kappa Foundation is the fundraising arm of Trenton Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. The Foundation raises funds for scholarships and book award initiatives, local not-for-profits and other organizations that focus on the development of young males. The Trenton Kappa Foundation supports and promotes the emotional, spiritual, physical, academic, economic development and wellness of young males.

About CIEE Introduction to Culture in Educational Excellence

The mission of our organization is to equip educational leaders and teachers in urban communities and inner cities with practical tools that they can use in their everyday classroom setting to bridge cultural gaps and achieve educational excellence.