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The Campaign for  
**GRADE-LEVEL  
READING**

Ernestine Benedict  
202-491-3950  
[ebenedict@gradelevelreading.net](mailto:ebenedict@gradelevelreading.net)

## 2017 All-America City Award Recipients Announced

15 COMMUNITIES AWARDED TOP HONORS IN CIVIC ACTION, COMMUNITY  
PROBLEM SOLVING AND PROGRESS IN ADVANCING EARLY LITERACY

DENVER, Colo., June 16, 2017 – Fifteen communities across the country were honored today with the 2017 All-America City Award (AAC) for their civic engagement to help more young children from low-income families achieve grade-level reading proficiency and early school success. Research has long shown that when children read at proficient levels by third grade they are more likely to complete high school prepared for college, a career and active citizenship.

The AAC Awards were presented this year during Grade-Level Reading Week in Denver, Colorado, at the All-America City Awards Gathering hosted by the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, along with the National Civic League, which created the prestigious program 68 years ago.

### 2017 All-America City Award Communities:

- Springdale, AR
- Avondale, AZ
- Stockton-San Joaquin County, CA
- New Britain, CT
- Delray Beach, FL
- Suncoast (Sarasota & Manatee Counties), FL
- Council Bluffs, IA
- Des Moines, IA
- Dubuque, IA
- Springfield, MA
- Kansas City, MO
- Montgomery County-Dayton, OH
- Lane County, OR
- San Antonio, TX
- Roanoke, VA

"We applaud the 'big tent' coalitions in these award-winning communities. They put a stake in the ground around third-grade reading and made some 'big bets' to improve the odds for early school success," said Ralph Smith, managing director of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. "Those big bets are paying off in more hopeful futures for so many vulnerable children in these communities."

"So many communities are doing a great job in using collaborative efforts to improve grade-level reading that it was hard to select this year's award winners," said Doug Linkhart, president of the National Civic League. "This year's All-America Cities are engaging a diverse cross-section of residents, businesses, nonprofits and other stakeholders in the grade-level reading effort, which will help sustain their achievements over time."

To select the 15 Award recipients, a panel of judges examined the progress reports from the 27 communities that were nominated as finalists. The 2017 AAC Award recipients are communities that:

- Demonstrated they have moved the needle on outcomes for children from low-income families in at least two of the following community solutions areas: school readiness, school attendance, summer learning and/or grade-level reading.
- Addressed the National Civic League's key process criteria of civic engagement, cross-sector collaboration and inclusiveness.
- Created a plan for sustainability and for aligning, linking, stacking and bundling proven and the most promising programs, practices and strategies.

Data collected by the U.S. Department of Education on fourth-grade students taking reading tests has shown that a wide gap exists for children from low-income families, especially among black and Hispanic children, compared with children from more affluent, white and Asian families. The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading now has more than 300 communities nationwide that have formed local coalitions to work together with parents, schools and other groups to close this reading gap and help more children succeed in school.

To learn more about the AAC Award criteria and to view profiles for each AAC Award recipient, visit [gradelevelreading.net/aacaward](http://gradelevelreading.net/aacaward).

## Sponsors of Grade-Level Reading Week and the All-America City Awards include:

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### **About the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading**

Launched in 2010, the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a collaborative effort of funders, nonprofit partners, business leaders, government agencies, states and communities across the nation to ensure that many more children from low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career and active citizenship. Since its launch, the GLR Campaign has grown to include more than 300 communities, representing 42 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands with 3,800 local organizations and 250 state and local funders (including 168 United Ways). To learn more, visit [gradelevelreading.net](http://gradelevelreading.net) and follow the movement on Twitter [@readingby3rd](https://twitter.com/readingby3rd).

### **About the National Civic League**

For more than 120 years, the [National Civic League](http://NationalCivicLeague.org) has worked to advance good governance and civic engagement to create inclusive, thriving communities. We achieve this by inspiring, supporting and recognizing equitable approaches to community decision-making. Through its signature effort, the All-America City Award and its work on racial healing, sustainability, health equity and fiscal sustainability, NCL supports cities to create a better, more equitable and inclusive future.

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