



The Orange Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) recently awarded a \$1000 grant to the Head Start Program at North Early Learning Center to buy books for the students to keep. The AAUW program is called "A Book of Their Own," and is intended to help young students develop a love of reading and learning early in their lives. Each child receives a free book each month to take home. Books are also distributed through charities and soup kitchens, when available. The program began in 1998 and has given away over 185,000 books to children in Orange.

The partnership with Head Start has been a big success, according to committee chair Mary Ann Fetchin. "The staff members who buy books with our grant use the funds very effectively. They are able to buy great quality books like Scholastic books at a deep discount by using special promotions. It's amazing how far they stretch the funds," she said.

The North Early Learning Center staff is very thankful and excited to have received a donation from AAUW. The money will be used to support our goal of providing every student with a new book each month to help families build home libraries and foster an appreciation and love for reading and learning. In addition, we are continuing to partner with AAUW to provide literacy training to our parents that will include storytelling, a total book experience, and other early literacy skills. Our partnership with AAUW continues to help build the home-to-school-bridge and provides our students with a strong literacy foundation.

In addition to the book program, AAUW also awards scholarships to young women from WO-S and LC-M high schools each year.

Voting membership in AAUW is open to anyone with a two-year or higher college degree, men included. There is also a Friend of AAUW membership available to others interested parties who don't have a college degree. For more information, call Mary Ann Fetchin at 779-0203.