FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 15, 2019

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Awards given to schools championing books & breakfast

LITTLE ROCK, AR (May 15, 2019) – The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance’s No Kid Hungry campaign is pleased to announce three winners of the Books & Breakfast Challenge, an annual contest coinciding with Governor Asa Hutchinson’s Breakfast Month proclamation during March, which encourages schools to go the extra mile in promoting school breakfast. Joined this year by fellow school breakfast supporters with the Arkansas Department of Education’s RISE Reading Initiative, Arkansas Humanities Council, Arkansas Campaign for Grade-level Reading, AETN, and Midwest Dairy, the Alliance celebrated throughout the month the importance of school breakfast in assuring all students start their days focused and ready to learn.

To participate in the 2019 Books & Breakfast Challenge, schools already offering a Breakfast After the Bell model like Breakfast in the Classroom, Grab and Go or Second Chance Breakfast were challenged to increase school breakfast participation over the previous year and encourage students and teachers to incorporate reading time into breakfast time. School districts were asked to:

• submit a photo of students eating breakfast while reading,
• explain in 50 words or less how they promoted reading and breakfast during School Breakfast Month, and;
• submit their total number of breakfast meals served and the number of days served in March 2018 and March 2019.

We are pleased to announce these winners of the 2019 Books and Breakfast Challenge*:

First Place: Marion School District – Marion Junior High School increased its March breakfast participation by a whopping 155.5% over last year, and the district as a whole increased its participation by an impressive 74%.
• $1,500 cash prize for the child nutrition department and three boxes of books for their students
Second Place: Lake Hamilton School District – Lake Hamilton High School increased March breakfast participation by 85.6%  
• $1,000 cash prize for the child nutrition department and 2 boxes of books for their students

Third Place: Van Buren School District – Izard Center for Learning increased March breakfast participation by 50.4%  
• $500 cash prize for the child nutrition department and one box of books for their students

Honorable Mention: El Dorado School District – Northwest Elementary increased breakfast participation by 25.1%  
• Two boxes of books for their elementary students

* Cash prizes were provided by Midwest Dairy and the Arkansas No Kid Hungry campaign; Books donated by the Arkansas Humanities Council.

“We have been thrilled to see more students eating breakfast in the morning! With the help of No Kid Hungry grants, we were able to offer Breakfast in the Classroom for our elementary students and Grab and Go breakfast in secondary schools. Because of these changes, we saw a significant increase in students choosing to eat breakfast,” said Marion School District child nutrition director, Victoria Phillips. The district also recently adopted the Community Eligibility Provision, a USDA rule that allows schools to serve both breakfast and lunch free of charge to all students, thereby reducing the stigma associated with income-based meal service which is often a barrier to participation.

The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and our No Kid Hungry campaign partners congratulate these hardworking school districts for creating innovative solutions in their cafeterias, school grounds and classrooms to increase the number of students accessing a nutritious school breakfast as part of the school day so they can get that fuel they need to succeed each day and to thrive throughout the school year.

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About Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, lead partner in Arkansas for the No Kid Hungry campaign, is a non-profit collaborative network of more than 520 hunger relief organizations across Arkansas. Our founding members include the Arkansas Foodbank in Little Rock, the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas in Jonesboro, Harvest Regional Food Bank in Texarkana, Food Bank of North Central Arkansas in Norfork, Northwest Arkansas Food Bank in Bethel Heights and River Valley Regional Food Bank in Fort Smith. The Alliance mission is to reduce hunger and improve access to nutritious food by providing tools and resources, empowerment, advocacy, education and research. We invite you to visit www.ARhungeralliance.org for details on hunger relief programs, donor and volunteer opportunities.

About Arkansas No Kid Hungry campaign
Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry campaign connects kids in need with effective nutrition programs like school breakfast, summer and afterschool meals and teaches their families how to cook healthy, affordable meals on a budget. The campaign works across the nation and in Arkansas to surround children with healthy food where they live, learn and play. The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance is the lead partner for the No Kid Hungry campaign in Arkansas. Visit http://www.arhungeralliance.org/programs/no-kid-hungry/ for more information.

About Arkansas Campaign for Grade Level Reading
The Arkansas Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (AR-GLR) was launched in 2011 to move the needle on education outcomes in Arkansas by focusing on third-grade reading proficiency. AR-GLR and its partners have been recognized nationally as an effective model to enhance early literacy outcomes. AR-GLR is a collaborative effort that includes over 30 organizations that believe the only way to make measurable progress on grade-level reading is to work collectively with families, educators, policymakers, and business leaders around the state.

About Arkansas Humanities Council
The purpose of the Arkansas Humanities Council is to promote understanding, appreciation, and use of the humanities in Arkansas. To achieve its purpose, the council awards through a competitive process to nonprofit groups and organizations that allow them to plan and conduct projects in the humanities for Arkansas audiences. arkansashumanitiescouncil.org/

About R.I.S.E. Arkansas
R.I.S.E. (Reading Initiative for Student Excellence) Arkansas encourages a culture of reading by coordinating a statewide reading campaign with community partners, parents, and teachers to establish the importance of reading in homes, schools, and communities. It offers a variety of resources to assist parents with reading at home and to increase the depth of knowledge for teachers. Goal 1: Sharpen the focus and strengthen instruction. Goal 2: Create community collaboration. Goal 3: Build a culture of reading!
About Midwest Dairy
Midwest Dairy Council represents 7,000 dairy farm families and works on their behalf to build dairy demand by inspiring consumer confidence in our products and production practices. We are committed to Bringing Dairy to Life! by Giving Consumers an Excellent Dairy Experience and are funded by farmers across a 10-state region, including Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas and eastern Oklahoma. Midwest Dairy is dedicated to dairy nutrition research and education, and is committed to child health and wellness through our collaborative program, Fuel Up to Play 60.

About AETN
The Arkansas Educational Television Network is Arkansas’s only statewide public media network, which enhances lives by providing lifelong learning opportunities for people from all walks of life. AETN delivers local, award-winning productions and classic, trusted PBS programs aimed at sharing Arkansas and the world with viewers through the distinct channels AETN PBS, AETN Create, AETN PBS KIDS, AETN World and AETN AIRS on SAP. Audiences can also watch on several digital platforms, and members with AETN Passport have extended on-demand access to a rich library of public television programming. AETN depends on the generosity of Arkansans and the State of Arkansas to continue offering quality programming. Additional information is available at aetn.org. AETN is broadcast on KETS (Little Rock), KEMV (Mountain View), KETG (Arkadelphia), KAF (Fayetteville), KTEJ (Jonesboro) and KETZ (El Dorado).