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## **‘THE WORLD IS JUST A BOOK AWAY’ AND ‘JUDITH’S READING ROOM’ COLLABORATE TO BRING CHILDREN’S BOOKS, AND HOPE, TO INDONESIA**

Organizations are working together to provide English and local language books to 27,000 children across Indonesia. Judith’s Reading Room will send nearly 10,000 English children’s books to Indonesia.

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Los Angeles, CA, USA (February 15, 2012) – Los Angeles based non-profit organization The World Is Just A Book Away (WIJABA) and Judith’s Reading Room, located in Bethlehem, PA announced today that they are partnering to bring English and local language books to 27,000 children across Indonesia.

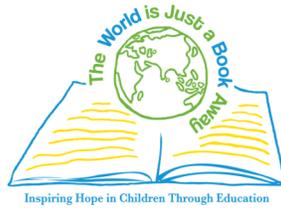
The World is Just a Book Away, founded by University of Southern California Professor James J. Owens, has launched projects leading to 49 physical libraries, 26 adult libraries, and two mobile libraries reaching 27,000 children across Indonesia with more than 50,000 books. WIJABA has worked with Indonesian publishers to provide local language books for schools.

WIJABA reached out to Judith’s Reading Room to provide children’s books in English. Judith’s Reading Room will donate a minimum of 100 children’s books to each of the 49 permanent children’s libraries and 1,700 books for each of the two mobile libraries serving 17,000 children for an expected total of nearly 10,000 books.

Judith’s Reading Room dedicated its first “library-within-a-library” of The World is Just a Book Away in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia with 125 hand-picked pre-school English-language books, valued at \$1,033. The inaugural Judith’s Reading Room library is located inside the existing Miep Gies Library at the Candipari II school in Sidoarjo, East Java, located nearly 600 miles from Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. The library was named in honor of Miep Gies’ 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and in honor of her participation in *The World is Just a Book Away* Anthology edited by Professor Owens. Miep Gies is loved around the world for her bravery in hiding Anne Frank and her family from the Nazis. She saved Anne Frank’s Diary, which has become one of the most widely read books in the world, and she served as an ambassador and symbol of peace and human rights worldwide for the rest of her life. Today would have been her 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

The Collection donated by Judith’s Reading Room includes picture dictionaries, Dr. Seuss’ ABC, poetry, classics, fables, Caldecott and Newbery Award winners and books by award-winning authors.

“I am thrilled about this partnership with Judith’s Reading Room. Each time I go to Indonesia, the students ask, when will we be able to send books in English, since their desire to learn English,



which has strong implications for their future educational and career opportunities, is so strong” said Professor Owens.

Judith’s Reading Room promotes “Freedom Through Literature” by providing custom libraries to nonprofit organizations that serve people who, for any reason, have limited or no access to literature. Including today’s donation, Judith’s Reading Room has donated 27,870 books valued at \$302,735 here in the United States and abroad.

Judith’s Reading Room was established in 2010 to honor the memory of Judith F. Krug, first cousin to the founders of Judith’s Reading Room. Judy was the director of the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom and was a champion of the First Amendment’s guarantee of free speech. “Judith’s Reading Room is our interpretation of spreading the word of freedom through literacy, by delivering custom libraries – free of cost with the goal to enrich lives through the simple act of reading,” said Scott Leiber.

The World is Just a Book Away was established in 2008 to empower children and their communities to change their own lives and the world at large. WIJABA promotes literacy and education by developing libraries and programs that plant the seeds of leadership, environmental consciousness and community connection.

“Both organizations agree that the only way human beings ultimately win in improving their overall well-being is through education,” said Leiber.

For more information on Judith’s Reading Room, please visit [www.judithsreadingroom.org](http://www.judithsreadingroom.org)

#### **About *The World Is Just A Book Away (WIJABA)***

The World Is Just A Book Away (WIJABA) is a 501c3 founded on the core belief that education breaks the cycle of poverty and promotes peace around the world. We provide children with hope through books and education in our libraries and reading rooms, empowering them to change their own lives and the world at large. We work in developing counties where we can make a major impact and where children can also leverage their knowledge by partnering with local communities to better the lives of their fellow citizens.

WIJABA launched in 2008 with a building program in Sidoarjo, Indonesia, site of the mudflow disaster that displaced more than 60,000 people and destroyed many schools. Strategically, WIJABA is intended to make a deep impact in a specific community, by building sustainable libraries and programs, rather than trying to assist children in many countries simultaneously. To date, expanding into other regions and surpassing all initial expectations, the organization has initiated programs to serve 25,000+ Children with 45,000+ Books, through 53 Libraries and 2 Mobile Libraries at 100+ Schools.

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