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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OHIO GOVERNOR'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY PROMOTES LITERACY

Butler County, OH – Advocates for the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library initiative for Butler County recently met at the MidPointe Library in Middletown, Ohio. Representatives from numerous organizations including Butler County United Way, Middletown Community Foundation, MidPointe Library System, The Lane Libraries, and the Women Enriching Lives (WEL) Committee were in attendance to discuss the program and its impact across Butler County. Rita Kolp and Frances Sack, Co-Chairs of WEL, facilitated the meeting where representatives shared their role in this initiative and the program's status.

The Ohio Governor's Imagination Library program was formed in conjunction with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and Butler County United Way is pleased to act as the fiscal agent in offering this program across Butler County. Registered children, ages birth to the age of five, receive a new book each month at no cost to them. The program is supported through generous community donations and all donations are matched dollar for dollar by the Ohio Governor's Office. Early childhood education is so important to a solid foundation for future learning and putting more books in the hands of Butler County children will better prepare them to enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Prior to the launching of the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library program throughout Butler County in March 2020, the WEL Committee, formed in 2008, was the driving force behind the fundraising efforts for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program and is credited with having raised nearly \$400,000 in support of the program. This predecessor program, affiliated with the Middletown Community Foundation, primarily served the Edgewood, Franklin, Madison, Middletown, and Monroe school districts. Now that the program has gone countywide, the program has grown from 316 children in its original mailing, to nearly 10,000 children served monthly.

Uniting our community and maximizing resources to build a stronger Butler County

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In addition to financial support from the Middletown Community Foundation, MidPointe Library System, The Lane Libraries, schools and other corporate entities, the WEL Committee continues to fundraise for the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library program. As part of their fundraising efforts, **The Women Enriching Lives "Let Imagination Bloom" Imagination Library Luncheon XII** will be held **September 25, 2021 at the Crown Palaza Banquet Center in Middletown**. For additional details and information on how to purchase tickets, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/WomenEnrichingLives>.

Anyone interested in donating to the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library can do so by visiting <https://bc-unitedway.org/ohiogovernorsimaginationlibrary>. Your donation will be matched by the Ohio Governor's office for twice the impact!

Butler County United Way fights for the education, financial stability, and health of every person in every Butler County community. We strive to unite our community and maximize resources to build a stronger county for us all. We invite you to join us by giving, advocating, or volunteering. For additional information, contact Butler County United Way at 513.863.0800 or visit www.bc-unitedway.org.

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