



December, 2016

Dear Friends,

Imagine.

You are a bright kid who loves to learn. You want to grow up to be someone who makes a difference.

A Firefighter. A Teacher. A Doctor. Someone your mother would be proud of.

But, it's a struggle for your family to afford everyday needs. You depend on your local public library for "extras" like access to books and computers - things that you know will make all the difference in how far you go in life.

When you were four, your Mom brought you to the library to use the special computers with reading programs just for kids. They helped you learn to read. Now that you are in high school you are still coming to the library to do your homework. Without access to the books and the internet at the library, you would fall behind your classwork. You might not advance to the next grade with your friends. You might be too embarrassed and drop out of school. You might never qualify for that job where you can make a difference.

Think this story is an exception? Unfortunately, it's all too common. Even in Mount Dora.

The number of families living in Mount Dora with income below the poverty level is growing. Over half the families with kids under age 5 are living at the poverty level. Over a third of the families with kids under age 18 are at the poverty level.

Imagine how you could rewrite the life stories of kids from Mount Dora. How would it feel to know that a donation you made to the local public library helped Mount Dora's kids succeed so they could grow up to be people who can support themselves, and make a difference in our community?

Pretty awesome, right?

This is how magic happens. Through your generous donation, you will transform lives. You will help Mount Dora's W.T. Bland Public Library pay for a variety of needs such as furniture, computers, equipment, books, DVDs and special children's programs like the summer reading program, reading to therapy dogs and the special sensory story time program for children on the autism spectrum. You will give kids confidence, knowledge, a smile. A chance.

Keeping up with the times is key. It's essential that the library continues to modernize so it can help kids keep up with the digital information age. We all know that public libraries play an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed. This is even more true for those families who can least afford access to the information age. But it takes ongoing public support from generous people like you to make sure our library continues to offer vibrant and relevant resources.

That's why we are turning to you for help. We really *can't* do it without you.

Although the library gets a budget from the city each year, the budget doesn't pay for all the programs the library offers. Your caring donation will make an important difference to the future of Mount Dora's children. Please make a tax-deductible donation today to the *Friends of the Library* and return it in the enclosed remittance envelope. **Every single dollar helps. Really.**

With gratitude,

Friends of the Library Board

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