

DREAM BOOK FAIRS EXPAND



The Historic Collaboration between My Very Own Library and DREAM Expands Its Reach To New North Coast Communities

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Cabarete, Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic- On March 4th, **The Dominican Republic Education and Mentoring (DREAM) Project** celebrated World Read Aloud Day <http://www.litworld.org/wrad/> by continuing its partnership with **My Very Own Library** and promoting reading in DREAM communities. This was the second of three Scholastic Book Fairs hosted by these two organizations, where over 2,000 students selected 4 FREE, NEW books each to take home to add to their very own home libraries. This particular book fair focused on Dominican Children's Literature by author Geraldine de Santis and illustrator Kilia Llano. The book distribution was paired with motivational literacy activities and talks by both authors and reading specialists.

The event took place at The DREAM Education Center in Cabarete, Puerto Plata, which has gained recent recognition for its work through the HBO Latin America Documentary "Seeds of Optimism: The DREAM Project". The event highlights the importance of reading and its role in providing high quality education to the children of the Dominican Republic, which DREAM also provides through public libraries, literacy programs and their innovative mobile library program **DREAM Con Libros**. These books will provide countless hours of reading, critical thinking and positive enriching activities in the houses of the underserved communities.

My Very Own Library has already changed the lives of more than 15,000 students who have participated in this innovative project in Newark, New Jersey and Richmond, California. This international expansion and partnership has provided even more books to youth and continued to promote our shared culture of reading <http://www.myveryownlibrary.org> .

Ana Castillo, mother of a young reader, has gained a great appreciation for literacy through the program:

"My little Julia can now read, thanks to the first Book Fair at DREAM, she can actually read! Before, she could not read a word and knew nothing about books, but now I sit and listen to her read her books out loud and even teach her older sister, who cannot read. I hear her teaching and I can see how much good this has done for her. Now, when we walk down the street, she always stops to read the signs. She loves to read and especially loves books with beautiful illustrations."

DREAM strives to support and partner with the Dominican Ministry of Education, reversing the trend of low performing academic results and creating a shared culture of reading and high quality education. The goal of the DREAM Book Fairs is to improve literacy rates and ensure that all youth in the country have access to books and a brighter tomorrow, free from the cycle of poverty.

To learn more about the DREAM Project and to support this memorable event, please visit: www.dominicandream.org, or <http://www.myveryownlibrary.org> .

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