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City of Albuquerque Partners with Little Free Library on Community Volunteerism

Hudson, WI (June 30, 2020) – The Little Free Library (LFL) nonprofit organization and the City of Albuquerque are delighted to announce a new initiative that encourages volunteers to establish Little Free Library book-sharing boxes in the community.

The partnership is part of the Office of Civic Engagement's [One ABQ Volunteers](#) program, which helps match volunteers with service projects that align with their skill sets and interests. Establishing a Little Free Library is now one of the projects One ABQ endorses to help make Albuquerque a more inclusive and innovative city. LFL joins the AmeriCorps VISTA program as one of the first national organizations to partner with the Office of Civic Engagement.

"We are honored to engage with the city in this way, and we are excited to see how the landscape of this community changes with a focused effort around building community and creating greater book access," said LFL Director of Programs Shelby King. "One book-sharing box at a time—that's all it takes to have an impact."

The partnership between LFL and the City of Albuquerque was first prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to support literacy and provide access to books while public libraries, schools and bookstores were closed. But what began as an emergency measure quickly became an opportunity to expand equitable book access far beyond the pandemic.

"We are excited to partner with the Little Free Library organization to support community collaboration and expanded access to books and literacy resources," said Albuquerque First Lady, Elizabeth Kistin Keller. "For years we've been fortunate to have community members build their own Little Free Libraries. Over the last few months, in particular, we've seen how they can maintain a love of reading in kids when schools and libraries are closed and serve as a powerful way for communities to connect and share with each other from a distance during the coronavirus pandemic. We are thrilled to share this program with volunteers in Albuquerque and look forward to expanded access to books and literacy resources as the number of Little Free Libraries grows in our community."

Albuquerque currently has more than 60 Little Free Libraries, but that number is expected to rise thanks to this new initiative. LFL hopes it motivates other cities to start book-sharing programs as well.

"We are passionate about improving book access and building community using Little Free Library book-sharing boxes as the vehicle to do so," says King. "And we are eager for the work we're doing with

the City of Albuquerque to serve as a model for other communities across the country that may have similar goals. We know there are cities all over looking for ways to bring people together and hope this partnership inspires action elsewhere.”

Read more about the initiative [here](#).



Little Free Library steward Paula F. of Albuquerque, pictured with her friend Ken O., who built the library. (Photo by Mike Cox, courtesy of Little Free Library.)

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About Little Free Library: Little Free Library® (LFL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community and improves book access by fostering neighborhood book-exchange boxes around the world. LFL received the 2020 World Literacy Award and has been recognized by the Library of Congress, the National Book Foundation and others for its dedication to expanding book access for all. There are more than 100,000 registered Little Free Library book-sharing boxes worldwide in all 50 states and in 108 countries; through them more than 165 million books have been shared. To learn more, visit LittleFreeLibrary.org.

About One ABQ Volunteers: One ABQ Volunteers is the flagship initiative for the City of Albuquerque’s Office of Civic Engagement. Established in June 2019, the Office of Civic Engagement is committed to creating unique, inclusive and sustainable ways for community members to engage with local government. The One ABQ Volunteers initiative has mobilized over 10,000 volunteers across 450 opportunities, generating over \$700,000 in economic impact. In addition to deploying local volunteers, the Office of Civic Engagement works closely with the Corporation for National and Community Service to deploy AmeriCorps VISTAs in a variety of capacity-building projects.

