

News

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New York Edge Kicks Off Summer for NYC Students with Virtual Read-A-Thon Featuring Top Authors

Read-A-Thon marks the launch of New York Edge's fundraising initiative to create a new student book publishing program

New York, NY – June 11, 2021 – [New York Edge](#) – New York City's largest provider of school-based afterschool and summer programs – held a special Read-A-Thon for K-12 students across the five boroughs on Wednesday, June 9. Top authors and illustrators joined students virtually to read and discuss their stories, while inspiring them to continue learning throughout the summer.

The event marked the beginning of New York Edge's summer reading campaign – which will serve 10,000 summer camp students across the five boroughs – and also kicked off the organization's [fundraising initiative](#) to support the launch of a new student book publishing program. Through this program, local students will have the unique opportunity to work directly with leading authors and illustrators to write and publish their own stories.

“New York Edge is proud to partner with these fantastic authors and illustrators who are empowering young people to remain curious and engaged throughout the summer months,” said **Rachael Gazdick, CEO of New York Edge**. “I know our authors will inspire students to write their own amazing stories and we are so excited to support them on that journey. We encourage New Yorkers to support our new student book publishing initiative this summer and help provide a truly life-changing experience for thousands of students across our city.”

Fidelis Care, a locally based health plan with more than 2.3 million members across New York State, is the lead sponsor of the Summer Read-a-thon. Other individual and corporate supporters include Time Equities, Worldwide Holdings Inc., M&T Bank, BankUnited, and WABC-TV New York.

“New York Edge's summer camp and Read-a-thon will encourage thousands of young New Yorkers to build strong minds and bodies and prepare for a return to classrooms in September,” said Pam Hassen, chief member engagement officer for Fidelis Care. “Fidelis Care is proud to support New York Edge as we work together to create opportunities for students and families.”

Throughout New York Edge's summer programming, which will begin in-person on Tuesday, July 6, students will be encouraged to read as many books as possible over the course of the summer. In addition to literacy, the organization's summer camps will feature art, sports, STEM, leadership and other initiatives.

Participating authors and illustrators include:

- **Edwidge Danticat**, *Eight Days: A Story of Haiti*
- **Julie Abe**, *Eva Evergreen Semi Magical Witch*
- **Loryn Brantz**, *Blanket*
- **Jesse Byrd**, *Sunny Days*
- **Jen Calonita**, *Misfits*
- **Trevor D.**, *I Am Me*
- **Molly Dillon**, *Yes She Can*
- **Shane Evans**, *My Friend!*
- **Rukhsanna Guidroz**, *Leila in Saffron*
- **Dwayne Reed**, *Simon B. Rhymin'*
- **Colleen AF Venable & Stephanie Yue**, *Katie The Catsitter*
- **Jennifer L. Holm**, *The Lion of Mars*
- **Dusti Bowling**, *The Canyon's Edge*
- **David Levithan**, *The Mysterious Disappearance of Aidan S.*
- **Matthew Swanson & Robbi Behr**, *Ben Yokoyama and the Cookie of Doom*
- **Judd Winick**, *Hilo: The Boy Who Crashed to Earth*
- **Jacqueline Walkes & Vincent Spencer**, *Wala Kee Kee's School for Young Scientists*
- **Holly Kowitt**, *This Dance is Doomed*
- **Areli Morales & Luisa Uribe**, *Areli Is A Dreamer*
- **Erin Frankel & Paula Heaphy**, *Dare!*
- **Paul Johnson Jr.**, *The Backboard Is A Rectangle*
- **Erika J. Kendrick**, *Squad Goals*
- **Laura Brown and Elly Kramer**, *Trillium Sisters: The Triplets Get Charmed*
- **London Ladd**, *Frederick's Journey: The Life of Frederick Douglass*
- **Jarrett Lerner**, *Enginerds*
- **Tara Lynn Masih**, *My Real Name Is Hanna*
- **Raakhee Mirchandani**, *Hair Twins*
- **Uzo Unobagha**, *Off to the Sweet Shores of Africa*
- **Justin Michael Williams**, *Stay Woke*
- **Theanne Griffith**, *The Magnificent Makers*
- **Russell Ginns**, *Samantha Spinner and the Super-Secret Plans*
- **Scott Reintgen**, *Saving Fable*
- **Zetta Elliott**, *Dragons in a Bag*
- **Patricia Elam Walker & April Harrison**, *Nana Akua Goes To School*
- **Kelly Baptist**, *Isaiah Dunn is My Hero*

For more information on the authors, illustrators, and New York Edge's fundraising initiative, please visit: <https://newyorkedge.org/nyereadathon/>.

New York Edge provides thousands of students from more than 100 schools in grades K-12 across the five boroughs with engaging programs that will enhance their learning, enable them to grow academically and personally, and help them develop the passion and perseverance to meet their goals. From robotics classes, to leadership programs, to chess club, fencing, step club and beyond, New York Edge's groundbreaking initiatives are customized to integrate the school day curriculum and lead to improved academic performance at every level. For more information, please visit <https://newyorkedge.org/>.

About New York Edge

New York Edge, formerly known as the Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation (SASF), is a non-profit organization and the largest provider of afterschool programs in all five boroughs of New York City and the metropolitan region. With thousands of students from more than 100 schools in grades K-12, the organization provides under-resourced students with year-round programs to give them the edge needed to succeed. www.newyorkedge.org

About Fidelis Care:

Fidelis Care is a mission-driven health plan offering quality, affordable coverage for children and adults of all ages and at all stages of life. With more than 2.3 million members statewide, Fidelis Care believes that all New Yorkers should have access to affordable, quality health insurance. Follow us on Twitter at [@fideliscare](https://twitter.com/fideliscare), Instagram at [@fideliscare](https://www.instagram.com/fideliscare), and on Facebook at facebook.com/fideliscare. For more information, call Fidelis Care at 1-888-FIDELIS (1-888-343-3547) or visit fideliscare.org.

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