

Volunteers needed for national campaign



Literacy campaign: Brian O'Hara, director of the board of the Bermuda Community Foundation, Myra Virgil, CEO of the Bermuda Community Foundation, Kalmar Richards, Principal of CedarBridge Academy, Candace Seymour, head of the Library Resource Centre at CedarBridge Academy, Joanne Brangman, head librarian of the Bermuda National Library, Julie Dunstan, executive director of The Reading Clinic, and Minister of Community and Cultural Development Wayne Scott (Photo by Mark Tatem)

This includes two CedarBridge Academy pupils who shared one of their poems at the campaign's launch, held at their school's library.

Hannah Smith and Dascha Choudry, both S2 honour students, captivated those in attendance with their powerful message of how "we have to personify the change we want in the world".

The girls' poem touched on how people were "bound by chains" of skin colour or the past.

Dr Julie Dunstan, executive director of the Reading Clinic, said: "We would encourage everyone to contact CedarBridge to volunteer with them, or to assist the Reading Clinic."

Candace Seymour, head librarian at CedarBridge, added: "It's our hope that the more students read, the more they learn and develop critical thinking skills."

Read Write Bermuda, which also aims to support and celebrate the Island's literary community, was unveiled at CedarBridge Academy by Wayne Scott, Minister of Community, Culture and Sports, and Wayne Carey, the Ministry's Permanent Secretary.

Mr Scott praised the Beuchner Society of Bermuda — formed by Reverend Frederick Buechner and dedicated to enhancing family literacy — for its "tremendous gift" to Bermuda National Library and the campaign.

"The Read Write Bermuda campaign was created with the central support of Rev Buechner and will have a long-term impact in three major areas of focus — building readers, supporting writers, and expanding libraries.

"Funding will be used by the Bermuda National Library to expand the Bermuda National Library Collection, through a combination of physical books and e-books. The donation of iPads and Kindles will provide access to the expanded electronic collection as well as to worldwide magazines and newspapers."

By Leanne McGrath

Islanders willing to give up their time to help youngsters improve their literacy skills are being urged to step forward.

Pleas for volunteers were made yesterday at the launch of a national campaign to promote reading and writing.

Read Write Bermuda is a partnership between Bermuda National Library, CedarBridge Academy, the Reading Clinic and the Beuchner Society of Bermuda.

As well as helping youngsters to improve their basic literacy skills, the campaign also hopes to encourage those with a special flair for writing.

Funding will also go towards expanding the national library's summer and winter reading programmes, and for writing workshops.

Joanne Brangman, head librarian at Bermuda National Library, said: "Theologian Frederick Beuchner shared both a love of literature and a reverence for Bermuda. It is our privilege to be part of his legacy."

CedarBridge Academy will also benefit from an e-book Centre equipped with iPads and Kindle e-readers.

Principal Kalmar Richards said: "CedarBridge students will benefit greatly from the new technology and the partnership with both the library and the Reading Clinic."

The Beuchner Society would not reveal how substantial a donation they had awarded the campaign, with a spokesman saying credit should be awarded to the volunteers, organisations and youngsters taking part, not the society.

To volunteer, call CedarBridge Academy library on 296-5665 or the Reading Clinic on 292-3938.

For more information about Read Write Bermuda, visit www.readwritebermuda.org