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N E W S R E L E A S E

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Prime Time program returns to Washington Branch Library

Prime Time Family Reading Time, a Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC) family literacy program designed to help strengthen participants' interest and skills in reading, will return to Omaha this spring.

The Charles B. Washington Branch Library will host Prime Time on six consecutive Saturday mornings from April 19 through May 24. Each program begins with a light breakfast and continues with storytelling and discussion based on award-winning children's literature. The program is free and open to the public.

The six-week series is offered to families with children ages six to 10. It includes sessions on fairness, greed, courage, dreams, and ingenuity.

Storytellers Karen Mallory and Janice Collins-Brooks will introduce parents to the benefits and pleasures of reading and discussing stories with their children. Families will also learn about library resources and services. Separate pre-reading activities will be available for younger siblings.

Prime Time reinforces the role of family in society, encourages parents and children to bond over reading and learning together, and teaches parents and children to read and discuss humanities topics. The program also encourages parents to enter or continue their own educational programs to improve their employment opportunities.

"It is so important for children to learn the joys of reading early in life, especially when it involves reading and discussing books with their families," said NHC Senior Program Officer Erika Hamilton, state coordinator of Prime Time. "A love for learning through reading has a positive impact on how well a child does in school."

Initially developed by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, bilingual and English-only Prime Time sessions have been held in Lincoln, Crete, Grand Island, South Sioux City, Norfolk, Scottsbluff, and other Nebraska communities over the last five years. This will be the Washington Branch's seventh Prime Time, having held their first in the spring of 2005.

Prime Time programs are sponsored in Nebraska by the NHC, the State of Nebraska, Nebraska Library Commission, and Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Sponsors and funders for Prime Time in Omaha include the Omaha Public Library Foundation, Friends of the Omaha Public Library, and the H. Lee and Carol Gendler Charitable Fund. The NHC is a private, statewide, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

For more information or to register to participate, contact John Bernardi, Branch Manager, at (402) 444-4849.

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