

Two Dynamic “Prescribe A Book” Advocates Join the Reach Out and Read Board

The Reach Out and Read Board of Directors is very pleased to welcome two new members, Dipesh Navsaria and Susan Hildreth, who both bring their extraordinary talent and vision to the organization. Dipesh and Susan are both strong Reach Out and Read advocates, and are characterized by their ability to think across boundaries, using their respective specialties in pediatric medicine and librarianship to influence the field of early childhood literacy.



Dipesh Navsaria is a one-of-a-kind primary-care pediatrician, with degrees in public health and children’s librarianship, along with his work in child health advocacy. He is an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Wisconsin, Founder and Director of Pediatric Early Literacy Projects at the University of Wisconsin, and founding medical director of Reach Out and Read Wisconsin.

According to his [website](#), Dipesh is a “siruclast” – his own term for someone who thinks broadly and makes connections via different schools of thought and approaches to problems. His website also explains why he’s often seen wearing a bowtie – six reasons starting with “They’re refreshingly distinctive...”

Earlier this month, Dipesh was selected to join the 2015 class of Aspen Institute Ascend Fellows in recognition of his work building “economic security, educational success, and health and well-being for low-income families in the US.”

“As an undergraduate research assistant, I worked down the hall from the location where Reach Out and Read first began at Boston City Hospital,” says Dipesh. “As both the program and I have ‘grown up’, it’s a delight to have remained involved and to now serve the national organization in this capacity.”

Susan Hildreth has had a more than 30-year-long distinguished career in the leadership of public libraries. After positions as the City Librarian of San Francisco Public Library, State Librarian of California and the City Librarian of Seattle Public Library, in 2011 President Obama swore her into a four-year term as Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

At IMLS, Susan developed grant programs and initiatives to provide \$857,241,000 for museum and library



programs that supported lifelong learning, with a strong emphasis on early learning, STEM-related projects and connectivity.

A firm believer in collective impact – “what we can accomplish when we partner effectively with each other to address society’s needs,” – Susan is interested in continuing to promote connections between early learning and libraries. She led efforts to integrate Reach Out and Read with California public libraries, and has helped Reach Out and Read negotiate a grant that will improve collaboration with libraries and museums to better serve local communities.

“Reach Out and Read is making a big difference in the lives of children across America,” said Susan. “Reach Out and Read and libraries are natural partners to enrich reading opportunities for families and I hope to strengthen those connections.”

We are thrilled to have such uniquely qualified and passionate advocates join our board!