



State of New York County of Broome Government Offices

Office of the Broome County Executive
Jason T. Garnar, Executive

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Launch of Baby's First Book Program

All New Babies Born in Broome County to Receive Book from County Executive

(ENDICOTT, NY) It is with great excitement today that Broome County Executive Jason Garnar and SUNY Broome Community College's Literacy Legacy Project announce the launch of the Baby's First Book program.

Garnar made the announcement at the George F. Johnson Memorial Library in Endicott alongside Lisa Strahley from SUNY Broome, Edward Dunscombe, Library Director, representatives from the United Way, UHS, Lourdes and the Four County Library System.\

County Executive Garnar designated funding in his 2018 budget for the Baby's First Book Program. This funding will provide for the book, *Baby Cakes*, to be gifted to every child born in Broome County.

"I will always step up to the plate when it comes to investing in our kids in Broome County," said County Executive Garnar, "As a father of three boys, I know the importance of reading. Literacy development begins at birth and I want to make sure all children in Broome County have the opportunity to succeed."

This program launched March 1, 2018. Mothers who have a baby born in UHS Wilson Hospital and Lourdes Hospital receive a copy of the book along with a letter from the County Executive, a list of Broome County libraries and other materials.

Baby Cakes, written by Karma Wilson, delivers the message to families that early language experiences, in the arms of loved ones, are how children's brains are nourished. The book exemplifies interactions often shared between a baby and loving adults.

"The Literacy Legacy Project is committed to ensuring that every family knows to talk, sing, read and play with their children every day, beginning at birth. With the generous support from County Executive Garnar this vision is becoming a reality," said Lisa Strahley, Civic Engagement Coordinator, SUNY Broome.

The Baby's First Book program is made possible by the support of County Executive Garnar and in partnership with the Children's Reading Connection, SUNY Broome's Center for Civic Engagement, UHS, Lourdes Hospital, Staples, and the Susquehanna River Region of 2-1-1.

For more information about the Literacy Legacy Project, visit www.sunybroome.edu/literacylegacy. If you'd like to get involved contact Lisa Strahley at strahleyla@sunybroome.edu.