

Circulating money in local economies and promoting literacy at the heart of a new fundraising initiative launched by **Northern Credit Union**

For Immediate Release

(September 2023) Northern Credit Union is proud to launch *Read Local*, a fundraising initiative in five of its branches that will promote literacy and economic prosperity in the community.

Read Local will launch in five Northern Credit Union branches in Ontario as a pilot project. Initially, this will include Thunder Bay (Arthur Street), Thunder Bay (Red River Road), Wawa (Mission Road), Sault Ste. Marie (McNabb Street), and Pembroke (Boundary Road). If successful, the initiative will expand to additional branches in the future.

Beginning Tuesday, October 3, residents in participating communities can visit their local branch to purchase *Jurzy's Town Tour* and *Meesh's Marvelous Market*, written and illustrated by Kerr Smith and Michelle Christmann. In this children's series readers will learn about the impact of co-operative businesses in their community, and the values of sustainability, equality, and kindness. New books and authors will be featured every three months.

Northern Credit Union branches will sell the books as a pair for \$30.00. 75% of proceeds will be donated to local high schools and the remaining 25% will be reinvested into the program to fund future book purchases from local authors. The initiative is estimated to raise \$5,000 for local high schools in just the first three months of the program.

According to [The Conference Board of Canada](#), 48% of Canadians have inadequate literacy skills to participate fully in society¹. "By encouraging the purchase of books by local authors using an incentive of putting money back into the community, Northern Credit Union is simultaneously circulating money in local economies, promoting literacy proficiency, and improving educational and extra-curricular resources for students," says Liisa Woolley, SVP of Member Experience at Northern Credit Union. "It's a combination of outcomes that truly represents the heart of our business."

¹ *Adults With Inadequate Literacy Skills (2012) Conference Board of Canada.*

The *Read Local* initiative is championed by Northern's Advisory Committee, a member-led group of volunteers from across its footprint. With a mandate to support local economic prosperity and build more resilient and equitable communities, *Read Local* will be added to the Advisory Committee's efforts which have raised over \$10,000 for local food banks, schools, and other charitable causes through their fundraising efforts.

Information about the authors and books can be found on [Northern Credit Union's Facebook page](#), [website](#), and at participating branches. Suggestions for additional local authors to add to the initiative can be sent to communities@northerncu.com.

About Northern Credit Union

Northern Credit Union is dedicated to making a difference in people's lives. Through economic development, financial stewardship, and local investment, Northern contributes to thriving, healthy and equitable communities where members (people) can prosper, grow and stay in the communities they love. Each of our members has equal voting rights, ensuring decisions fairly reflect owner-shareholders' interests. Northern offers personal and business banking products, services, and financial planning expertise to over 75,000 member shareholders across 24 communities as a full-service, locally operated financial institution.

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