



**LIVE UNITED**



**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

**March 27, 2018**

## **Katahdin Trust and United Way of Aroostook Partner to Bring Summer Slide Summer Reading Program**

United Way of Aroostook is excited to announce it will once again partner with Katahdin Trust Company to offer every first grader throughout Aroostook County a backpack with free books to read over the summer. Known as “The Summer Slide”, the program encourages early readers to continue reading throughout the summer to keep their reading skills sharp and to strengthen their reading fluency.

“We are excited to be working with Katahdin Trust again this year to bring this literacy program to all Aroostook County first graders,” said Sherry Locke, Executive Director at United Way. “Our partnership makes it possible to share quality literature with so many children.”

This is the third year United Way of Aroostook has coordinated the program, which is a natural extension of their Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library early literacy program. That program provides a free book each month to Aroostook County preschoolers who are enrolled in the program until the child turns five. Summer Slide works with schools to provide first graders with some tools to prevent the loss of reading skills over the summer months.

“Early last summer, in cooperation with Katahdin Trust, we were able to visit all 25 public and private Aroostook County schools, delivering books and backpacks to 650 students,” explained Athena Hallowell, Program and Volunteer Coordinator at United Way. “Having books in the hands of that many children only improved the chances of summer reading in the homes of our first graders.”

School administrators throughout Aroostook will soon receive a letter of invitation to participate in the program. Once the total number of students has been determined, Katahdin Trust volunteers will help United Way to deliver the books to each participating school in early June. Backpacks will be provided to the children at no cost to them or their family. Each pack will contain three books, some activities, and other goodies. Activities enclosed in the backpack will help children to engage with the books they were given. Children will be given an opportunity to win one of several prizes such as a bike, puzzles, and games if they return the completed activity sheets.

“We are very pleased to continue our partnership with United Way on Summer Slide,” says Krista Putnam, Katahdin Trust Vice President, Marketing. “Our employees throughout The County are looking forward to volunteering their time in preparing the backpacks, visiting the schools and helping at the

summer parties. We are honored to be part of an effort that helps ensure that the literacy gains made by children during the school year continue into the summer months.”

At the end of the summer, United Way and Katahdin Trust will hold Summer Reading Celebration events in all three regions of the County so children can come celebrate the end of summer and the start of a new school year. The goals of the Summer Slide Program and Reading Celebrations are for the children to learn the love of reading, enjoy some fun activities geared around the books they have received, and maintain skills learned throughout the school year.

If you'd like more information about Summer Slide or the United Way, please contact their office at 764-5197.

### **About United Way of Aroostook**

United Way of Aroostook is a 510 (3) (c) organization established in the county in 1957. United Way works in every Aroostook County community to offer solutions to today's problems. We actively seek donations to be distributed to health and human service agencies and their programs so that they may provide the services needed in our community.

### **About Katahdin Trust**

Katahdin Trust Company, established in 1918 with over \$754 million in assets, provides banking services to individuals and businesses from sixteen offices throughout Maine and online at [KatahdinTrust.com](http://KatahdinTrust.com). Katahdin Bankshares Corp., parent company of Katahdin Trust Company, stock is quoted on the OTC Markets quote board OTCQX under the symbol KTHN. Current stock information can be found at [otcm Markets.com/stock/KTHN/quote](http://otcm Markets.com/stock/KTHN/quote).



**PHOTO: Volunteers from Katahdin Trust spent time labeling books which will be given to all first graders later this year. Pictured from L-R are Kelly Jo Cole, Melissa Dahlgren, Ashley Andrews, and Shelly McHatten**