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## **Literacy week declared for Monterey County**

Staff report

People around the world will recognize the importance of literacy on Sept. 8, the United Nations' International Literacy Day.

Recognizing the importance of literacy and that the ability to read and write is key to one's own education and advancement/success, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution on Tuesday not only supporting the local Literacy Campaign, but also declaring the week of Sept. 8-14 as Monterey County Literacy Week.

Last year, the Literacy Campaign for Monterey County, coordinated by the Community Foundation for Monterey County, began convening business leaders, government officials, educators and literacy service providers to make literacy programs more available to the people who need and want them. The Literacy Campaign is a five-year, multi-million dollar civic engagement initiative to improve local literacy levels with a focus on young adults ages 18 to 35, especially parents with young children.

In 2006, the Literacy Campaign, with support from local foundations and donors, awarded \$300,000 to adult literacy programs in Monterey County. The following 7 grants were made: Alisal Community Healthy Start: \$100,000 for basic literacy programs in East Salinas and Soledad communities; Monterey County Free Libraries: \$45,000 to expand tutoring programs at Seaside and Soledad libraries; Community Housing Improvement Systems and Planning Association Inc. (CHISPA): \$45,000 for basic literacy programs in Greenfield; North Monterey County Unified School District: \$40,000 for an adult literacy program in Castroville; Chartwell School: \$30,000 for literacy educator and tutor training countywide; Central Coast Citizenship Project: \$20,000 for workplace literacy programs in King City and Greenfield, and; the Volunteer Center of Monterey County: \$20,000 to recruit literacy volunteers countywide. This year the Literacy Campaign will award approximately \$600,000 in grants to local literacy programs.