



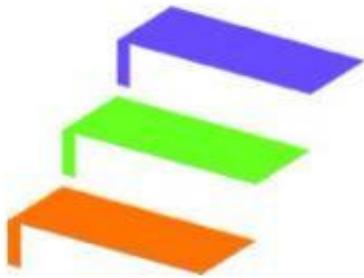
## **Cradle to Career boosts summer reading**

By [Evanston Now](#) on August 22, 2016 - 3:27pm

The Evanston Cradle to Career initiative says its partner organizations more than doubled participation in free summer literacy programs and reached more than 5,000 youngsters this summer.

The effort is intended to increase literacy and reduce summer learning loss.

The programs included ABC Boosters, a partnership among the Evanston Public Library, the Youth Job Center, the Evanston Community Foundation and school Districts 65 and 202.



# EVANSTON CRADLE TO CAREER

The program engages teachers and librarians to train high school students to tutor incoming kindergarten students. It partnership provides employment opportunities for high school students while increasing the number of children prepared for kindergarten success this fall.

District 65 also partnered with the YMCA to expand Y Readers and with Family Focus to bring new theatre and STEM programs to the community.

Districts 65 and 202 committed to a shared summer learning experience, providing the graphic novel MARCH to all incoming freshmen and their teachers, while D202 created a new summer program to ensure students are ready for the challenge of high school.

Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary partnered with Evanston Own It (a coalition of ministers from the 5 th Ward) to create Evanston's own Freedom School at Friendship Baptist Church. Supported with training and culturally relevant books through the national Children's Defense Fund, the Freedom School built excitement about reading, civic responsibility, and cultural pride and support.

Y.O.U. partnered with the Dajae Coleman Foundation to explore the works of author Rita Williams-Garcia through Y.O.U.'s reading and writing workshops and to share an inspiring visit from the author.

In addition to literacy-specific programming, traditional summer camps in Evanston, including ones run by the Evanston and Ridgeville Park Districts, the YMCA, and Family Focus, incorporated reading time into their daily schedules.

An Everybody Reads book drive, along with the installation of Little Free Libraries in local parks across the city, enhanced and expanded access to diverse, high quality reading materials for children and youth throughout Evanston.