



## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Adults with disabilities hit the books at the Lebanon Public Library**

(Lebanon, OH) – This year, a group of eight enrolled individuals with Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities (WCBDD) began their literary journey through the Next Chapter Book Club (NCBC), a nationwide program that offers adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities a fun and engaging way to actively participate in their communities through reading.

In partnership with the Lebanon Public Library, NCBC provides its members the opportunity to read, learn, and make friends in a relaxed community setting. Members, along with trained facilitators, meet weekly at a local establishment to read aloud and discuss a book. As a group, the members determine all aspects of their participation in meetings, including the book selection.

Anyone can participate, no matter their reading ability. However, it is not designed as a traditional reading class or tutoring program. The focus is on “reading-to-learn”, not “learning-to-read”. Additionally, fundamentals of social interaction and community inclusion are equally emphasized.

Lebanon Public Library’s IT Coordinator, Jan Berger learned of the program through her director, Julie McClellan, who regularly seeks out ways to serve the community. Once exposed to the NCBC mission and model, Berger was compelled to step up. Acting as host, facilitator, and supplier of books, Berger is cognizant of the benefits a book club has to offer.

“Reading together creates opportunities to discuss topics with peers that might not come up otherwise,” Berger comments. “Creating social ties through a book club, creates more of a connection to others and to one’s community. It can help fight off depression and reduce feelings of isolation.”

Through reading, learning, and building relationships, this year’s Next Chapter Book Club members may experience some feelings, such as: curiosity, empowerment and companionship, but isolation will not be one of them.

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