



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Portage Lake District Library Awarded a Grant for Market Bucks Programming**

HANCOCK, Mich., Feb. 21, 2017 – The Portage Lake District Library (PLDL) received \$3,555 from the Portage Health Foundation (PHF) to offer an expanded Market Bucks program for 2017's Summer Reading Program participants.

PLDL applied for funding under PHF's food initiative RFP late last year. The grant funding was a result of proceeds raised at PHF's Stop the Roar of Hunger Spring Gala. Under this RFP, PHF sought applications focused on programs that addressed food insecurities, hunger, or undernutrition in Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties.

With this grant, PLDL will collaborate with the Downtown Houghton Farmer's Market to expand their Market Bucks program for area residents. Dillon Geshel, Director of PLDL, said, "The PHF grant allows us to expand our Market Bucks program, which encourages reading, health literacy, and healthy eating for our Summer Reading Program participants. The program awards \$5 farmer's market food certificates to readers of all ages who complete the program. It is a unique opportunity for both library patrons and market attendees to learn about healthy, local produce in a hands-on environment." The Summer Reading Program is free of charge and is open to non-library members.

PHF's objectives with the food initiative are to (1) create greater awareness throughout the community to the role food plays in overall population health and (2) to develop and execute the first steps to help provide nutritious food to people who may be food insecure. PLDL's Market Bucks program will specifically increase participants' awareness toward and access to healthy foods in our community while simultaneously supporting local food growers, which meets this RFP's objectives.

#### About the Portage Lake District Library

The Portage Lake District Library provides materials and services to help district residents obtain information meeting their personal, educational, and professional needs. Special emphasis is placed on providing popular material in a variety of formats for all ages, and on stimulating children's interests and appreciation for reading and learning. The library serves as a reference and community information center.

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## About the Portage Health Foundation

The Portage Health Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that receives and contributes charitable donations, which support the health needs of the community through enhanced philanthropy and community collaboration throughout Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties.

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