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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

BOOK BUDDIES ONLINE RECEIVED HUMAN NEEDS AWARD FROM JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER NAPLES

Naples, FL – Emerson Academy’s Book Buddies Online (BBOL) Program at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greater Naples (UUCGN) received the 2021 Jewish Federation of Greater Naples’ Human Needs Award in a small ceremony on Thursday, Feb. 4. BBOL Co-founders Lindsey Adellard and Brittany Nguyen were present to accept the award and a \$2,500 grant check presented by Jewish Federation President and CEO Jeffrey Feld. The Human Needs Award is presented annually to nonprofits offering innovative projects that serve worthy needs of the Southwest Florida community.

Lindsey and Brittany are both seniors at Golden Gate High School in Naples and helped develop the program due to COVID-19 and the challenges of tutoring students in person. “We worked with teachers at Shadowlawn Elementary School to ensure tutoring sessions were fun and interactive to keep students interested in learning,” said Brittany. “This program is important because children who read below their grade level are more likely to drop out of school later on than children who read at or above their grade level,” said Lindsey.

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“Emerson Academy is a summer academic program for academically outstanding public high school students from educationally underserved minority populations from Collier and Lee Counties. BBOL was developed by five students who attended Emerson Academy in 2019 and 2020 ” said Director Dr. William McCormick. He further stated, “In this program, academically strong high school students work one-on-one online with elementary age children in collaboration with their parents to keep the children reading at or above grade level in proficiency and comprehension.”

BBOL’s mission is “To provide reading instruction for students by students to inspire a love of reading for the children of Collier and Lee counties.” BBOL tutors are selected from a pool of academically strong local high school students who serve as role models for the children. In each case, the BBOL tutor, the child, and the parents work as a team to provide reading instruction in a fun learning environment. Tutors and children are matched according to ethnic and language backgrounds as much as possible. The program currently operates at Shadowlawn Elementary School in Naples in collaboration with its faculty and has plans to expand in other local area schools in the near future.

Lindsey and Brittany plan to start their own chapters of BBOL when they go off to college. Lindsey plans to study public health in college and Brittany plans to study art therapy and psychology.

To get involved with BBOL or Emerson Academy, contact Dr. McCormick at 978-828-2041 or email him at emersonacademy@uunaples.org.

Images attached:

Image 2339 – L to R: Jeffrey Feld, Brittany Nguyen, and Lindsey Adellard

Image 2340 – L to R: Dr. William McCormick, Jeffrey Feld, Brittany Nguyen, Lindsey Adellard, and Vincent Keays