



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Media Contact:**

Tessa Kurman Ali

[tessa@montagnecom.com](mailto:tessa@montagnecom.com)

603-644-3200 ext. 16

## **Merrimack Valley Credit Union Pledges \$50,000 to Support Literacy Program at Lawrence Public Library**

*Grant will enable library to hire part-time literacy coordinator to lead program*

**Lawrence, Mass.** (February 24, 2020) – With thousands of residents waiting for spots in English as a Second Language and adult education classes, [Merrimack Valley Credit Union](#) has pledged \$50,000 to support the Lawrence Public Library to develop a comprehensive literacy program for all ages. With these funds, the Lawrence Public Library plans to hire a part-time Literacy Coordinator to build on its existing literacy programs and to develop specific classes that meet the community’s needs from elementary school through adult education.

“We are committed to supporting the communities we serve in every way possible, and this grant allows us to help address a growing need in Lawrence,” said John Howard, President & CEO, Merrimack Valley Credit Union. “We are proud to partner with the Lawrence Public Library, a trusted community resource that thousands of residents turn to for further education and knowledge. Our team members look forward to growing our partnership and to supporting the development and growth of the new programs.”

In 2015, the City convened more than 12 adult education community organizations and determined more than 2,000 residents were waiting for spots in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses or adult education classes. Despite advocating for additional funding, community organizations continue to report long waiting lists. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, more than 30 percent of Lawrence residents have not graduated from high school; of that portion, 20 percent achieved less than a ninth-grade education level.



**Caption:** Merrimack Valley Credit Union, one of the 10 largest credit unions in Massachusetts, has pledged \$50,000 to support the Lawrence Public Library to develop a comprehensive literacy program for all ages. Pictured above, John Howard, President & CEO, Merrimack Valley Credit Union, presents a check to staff from the Lawrence Public Library (L-R): Charles Allen, Library Assistant; Jacqueline De La Cruz, Children's Coordinator; Jessica Vilas Novas, Director; Cassandra Abou-Farah, Assistant Director; and Jay Dowd, Library Trustee.

### **About Merrimack Valley Credit Union**

Merrimack Valley Credit Union is a state-chartered community credit union with more than \$1 billion in assets. Merrimack Valley Credit Union serves anyone who lives, works, volunteers, or attends school in the Merrimack Valley region, and through its Bridgewater Credit Union division, Barnstable, Bristol, Norfolk or Plymouth counties. Merrimack Valley Credit Union offers a wide range of savings and loan products to meet the financial needs of its members, and has 10 branch locations in Bridgewater, Fairhaven, Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover, Plymouth, and Quincy, Mass., and Plaistow and Seabrook, N.H.

###