



MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

400 Main Street, Suite 615, Knoxville, TN 37902

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Contact: Mary Pom Claiborne
Knox County Public Library
(865) 640-4146

Mayor Glenn Jacobs to launch 2025 Read City challenge on February 1

"Library Laboratory" is a FREE hands-on science fair at Bridgewater Place

Knoxville, Tenn — Knox County Public Library and Mayor Glenn Jacobs are set to launch the 2025 Read City challenge from 10:00 - 2:00 on Saturday, February 1 at Bridgewater Place (205 Bridgewater Road) with a hands-on science fair. [Library Laboratory](#) features demonstrations, experiments, crafts, and more. Participants will be invited to operate a robotic arm, excavate fossils, and explore the galaxy in a planetarium among other activities. The event is free and open to the public.

A dozen organizations including The Muse, American Museum of Science and Energy, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, Oak Ridge National Lab, University of Tennessee Knoxville, and Zoo Knoxville, will be on hand with booths and activities for kids of all ages. Mayor Jacobs will kick off the day with a story time on the main stage followed by presentations by Dr. Al Hazari, the Owl Raptor Center, and Hands-on Discovery Center.

In its seventh year, Mayor Jacobs started the Read City challenge to encourage families, businesses, and organizations to support Knox County Schools and early literacy. The program began in 2019 with a community goal of reading 250,000 hours. Every year since then, the community has met the challenge, which expanded to a million hours. Last year, the challenge was to complete literary activities in more of a game-like format.

"The Read City challenge is a tangible way to encourage the entire community to be a part of the effort to help our children learn to read, and more over learn to love reading. The Schools do a great job, but they can't do it alone. It takes all of us," commented Mayor Jacobs.

Knox County Public Library has worked with area partners to create a year-round program with reading goals, activities, and incentives. This year's theme is "Curious Minds" with the first leg of the challenge set for February 1 - March 16. Participants can pick up a "Scientists Among Us" game board at the event or at any Knox County library location.

Library Laboratory is made possible by a grant from the Jane L. Pettway Foundation.

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