A YEAR IN REVIEW
2015 ANNUAL REPORT
This year flew by almost as fast as the over 22,000 video-recorded United Through Reading stories traveling over land and sea to reach military children across America. Our more than 500 volunteers eagerly facilitated United Through Reading for U.S. service members at more than 260 recording locations around the globe. In all, nearly 100,000 military family members stayed connected with each other during challenging times through stories read with love by faraway military parents.

Many service members told us that their United Through Reading videos have simply worn out as their children played them again and again during long separations. We ask this question in our participant survey: How often did your child watch the recording during this deployment?

The answers thrilled us. Eighty percent of recorded stories are enjoyed by children nearly every day until mom or dad returns home. That’s a mega-dose of reading together to build listening skills, vocabulary, curiosity, and passion for reading. And it’s one reason that United Through Reading received the 2015 American Prize from the Library of Congress Literacy Program for outstanding contribution to children’s literacy and parents’ involvement in literacy.
The year culminated with United Through Reading being awarded the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program 2015 American Prize, but there were many other highpoints:

- United Through Reading welcomed four new board members who have added to our remarkable team of passionate and talented leaders who pour their hearts into our organization for the benefit of military families.

- In an initiative to engage service members with unique missions that make communication during deployment difficult, our staff set up a “pop up” recording studio for Naval Special Warfare (NSW) before their imminent departure. They read Punk Farm by Jarrett J. Krosoczka and sang one-of-a-kind renditions of “Old McDonald Had a Farm.” We were pleased to provide the opportunity for these special operators to leave recorded stories with children they love.

- Our strategy to offer internet-based recording options reached a new milestone. From January to July 2015 as part of Booz Allen Hamilton’s Leadership Excellence Program and Compass’ Community Leadership Project, we worked with a team of eight senior associates from Booz Allen Hamilton. The result of this six-month project, valued at $112,000, was a complete set of design requirements for a mobile application which would improve United Through Reading’s reach and scalability. Development of this application will enable us to reach more service members in more locations around the globe with greater efficiency and effectiveness.

- Events are becoming vital to funding our mission. In May, we hosted our second annual Tribute to Military Families in Washington, D.C., with BAE Systems, Inc. as our Title Sponsor and celebrated our work with 300 supporters. During the evening we heard from families from each branch of service, honored the men and women of the GEORGE H. W. BUSH Carrier Strike Group, and recognized Birdies for the Brave for their support of military families and of United Through Reading with contributions of $630,000 since 2010.

- The seventh Annual Storybook Ball held in November in Coronado, California was a smashing success! The event raised nearly $200,000 to unite military families. We welcomed 230 guests and heard inspiring stories from keynote speaker Sergeant Major Bryan Battaglia, USMC, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and from Rear Admiral Joe Campbell, USN (Ret), Vice President and General Manager of Ship Repair, a division of BAE Systems, the Title Sponsor of the event.

As we look back on the success of 2015, we’re filled with respect and gratitude for our generous donors, hard-working volunteers, and amazing partners. YOU make it possible for countless bedtime stories to travel the globe. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
I am married to my wonderful wife Angelina and together we have a beautiful daughter named Izel. An active duty Sailor, I’m currently assigned to the mighty USS Makin Island (LHD 8). My first experience with United Through Reading (UTR) was on my 2015 western pacific deployment aboard USS Makin Island, recording a video for my daughter in preparation of the upcoming holidays; I made approximately five videos during the deployment. UTR is a wonderful tool to communicate and stay in contact with loved ones to create lasting memories. I believe it’s never too early to introduce children to the wonderful world of literature and UTR filled in the separation gap created by deployments and helped me stay relevant in my child’s mind during the absence. FaceTime and Skype are a luxury that we Sailors do not have due to bandwidth limitations and OPSEC restrictions.

“Our family reads and utilizes sign language books on a daily basis due to my daughter being hard of hearing. UTR has definitely positively impacted my daughter; her desire to read is evident by the simple effort of her grabbing books off the shelf and bringing them to me to read to her. In my UTR recordings I used the books provided by the program. Now that she is a bit older and her likes and dislikes have become more solid, I plan to take some of her favorite butterfly and sign language books with me for our next deployment.

Any separation from loved ones is hard; deployments are especially hard for the service member due to communication limitations and mission assignment. During my deployment in 2015 I made a UTR video in preparation for the Christmas holiday. My entire family visited my wife and daughter while I was away, and they received my video just in time for the 25th. They sent me an email to express their gratitude; one that was very difficult for me to read while holding back tears. After receiving her UTR recording, Izel had the biggest smile when she saw me on the TV and she continues to wear that smile every time she reads a book.

AO1 Karim Hernandez
G-3 LPO, USS Makin Island (LHD-8)
United Through Reading Participant
Reading has always been an important nightly ritual with our girls. From the moment our oldest daughter Mayling was born we began reading together as a family. It helped us bond with each other and our children as we read and discussed the many themes of the books we read. Reading brought us together. When the Navy deployed Ian again after our oldest daughter was born, we were resolute in making sure that our family bonds and our tradition of reading stayed strong. We knew that a key aspect was to maintain a sense of Daddy’s presence in our everyday lives. Around that time Ian was introduced to United Through Reading (UTR) and so began our journey.

Our daughter Mayling was under 2 years old when we started using UTR and she would sit and marvel at her Dad on the screen. She would hilariously look behind the screen for him when the story was over. For me, it was endearing to see her enthralled by her Dad reading and it made us feel that we were a bit closer together. It was nice to hear his voice reading while I cooked dinner and it gave us a glimpse of the passing of time, reminding us that he would be home soon.

Our middle daughter Allegra has Phelan McDermid Syndrome, a very rare genetic condition. She was diagnosed when she was 2 years old, while Ian was on shore duty. When he went back to sea duty, we worried how the separation would impact their relationship. Children with her condition can easily forget parents even after just a few days of absence. She was nonverbal which made it harder for us to know exactly how she felt. We made a point of playing the UTR recordings as often as possible, keeping his voice and face fresh in her mind.

“We made a point of playing the UTR recordings as often as possible, keeping his voice and face fresh in her mind.”

When I picked up Ian and brought him home, we waited tentatively for her reaction. She stood at the top of the stairs watching him, then she simply bounded into his arms — pure joy on her face. She would not let him out of her sight for days. We feel strongly that the UTR videos helped both her and her sisters maintain their close ties to their Dad. We still play the videos often, especially when Ian is gone. We will continue to use UTR to bring our family closer until we move on from Navy life. When we play our recordings, for a short little while, it’s like Daddy is home with us.

Mayling Garrison
United Through Reading U.S. Navy Mom
STORIES FROM VOLUNTEERS

W atching the toughest guys you know showing their soft side when reading to their children was great. Seeing the light on everyone’s face and knowing how much they miss home made my work as a UTR volunteer a great experience.

A UTR Active Duty Coordinator

S taff Sergeant Thomas Duval served as an enthusiastic active duty coordinator for United Through Reading while deployed to Sinai Peninsula, Egypt in 2015. “UTR is beneficial to everyone; the program allows Soldiers to feel like they are there with their children even if only for a few minutes. I never had anyone tell me their kids didn’t enjoy the video. In the Sinai Peninsula, we had Soldiers come back again and again because of how much their kids valued that few minutes of reading. It has truly been a great experience, and the feedback we have received has been phenomenal.”

Staff Sergeant Thomas Duval, U.S. Army
UTR Active Duty Coordinator
Sinai Peninsula Egypt, United States Army

I am an Active Duty Air Force Technical Sergeant and Readiness NCOIC at the Military & Family Support Center on Joint Base Andrews, Home of Air Force One. I have been deployed several times around the world and supported OIF and OEF. United Through Reading has not only helped me as a single mother but also many of our deployed members who have trouble staying connected. UTR is convenient, allows service members to remain on schedule, and offers them an opportunity to leave a unique gift behind. I first found out about UTR when I was a single parent in 2002 and have continued to use it through my last deployment in 2014. Because of UTR, I was able to communicate leaving for a deployment to my 3-year-old son who didn’t understand. When I returned, he told me that I was just reading to him and he wanted to know how I got home from work so quickly!

One of the many benefits of the UTR program is academics. Many of the books we have in stock at Joint Base Andrews are a part of a campaign to STEM the Summer Slide with science, technology, engineering, and math themed books. Deployed service members are not only establishing a smoother reintegration by maintaining a visual and audio connection, they are also aiding in their loved ones reading capabilities.

Not only do we use the UTR program here at the Military & Family Support Center but we also reach out to all our Child Development Centers (CDC) on base. We relaunched our UTR program with the Read for the Record Campaign. Linking the UTR program with the CDCs helps families include the program in their daily routine so when members leave, their children are already familiar.

The program gives service members a platform to discuss difficult conversations about separation, using books to explain what is happening within the family. It brings the information down to a child’s level often needed to explain that the military member will be gone for an extended period of time. UTR truly creates and supports a bond that will last forever.

**Technical Sergeant Janell R Kersh, USAF**
UTR Active Duty Coordinator
Joint Base Andrews, United States Air Force
For 27 years United Through Reading has been committed to **accountability**, **efficiency**, and **transparency**, with a **dedication** to good stewardship of the funds entrusted to us by our extremely generous donors. The organization manages funds with great care, prudent annual budgeting, and analysis of current trends and projections in today’s world.

Our organization is audited by an external auditor on an annual basis and has consistently received unqualified reporting noting that financials fairly state the affairs in all material aspects. Our board-appointed Finance Committee meets twice yearly at a minimum and is made up of national financial experts. This committee ensures the organization has a sound and prudent financial management system that results in the efficient and effective management of resources.

In 2015, we provided opportunities for individuals, companies, and organizations to participate in the life-changing work of our mission. These opportunities included the options for gifts to be given with an array of tax-wise and beneficial charitable gift options as well as national employee giving initiatives to leverage the impact of individual donations through employer gift match programs. These gifts positively impacted thousands of children and adult beneficiaries.

As UTR continues to grow, we will remain fiscally responsible and accountable to our donors, supporters, and the thousands of military families we serve.
### Statement of Activities  
Year ended December 31, 2015

#### SUPPORT & OTHER REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Corporations</td>
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<td>Individuals</td>
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<td>($687)</td>
<td>($341)</td>
<td>($103)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER REVENUE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE</strong></td>
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#### EXPENSES

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Program services</td>
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<td>$1,176,883</td>
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<td>Management and general</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL PROGRAM AND SUPPORTING SERVICES</strong></td>
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#### Change in Net Assets

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<th>Description</th>
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#### Net Assets

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR</strong></td>
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<td>$68,710</td>
<td>$45,311</td>
<td>$553,401</td>
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</table>

### Statement of Financial Position  
Year ended December 31, 2015

#### ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>Contribution receivable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture and equipment, net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beneficial interests in endowment funds</td>
<td>$51,955</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$632,699</td>
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</tbody>
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#### LIABILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable &amp; accrued expenses</td>
<td>$79,298</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td>$79,298</td>
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#### NET ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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#### TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

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<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</strong></td>
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The Callahans wanted to use Liam’s first birthday to teach him to be generous and learn to give to others. They didn’t see a need for an abundance of toys so they searched for an organization that served military families and children. They chose to support UTR because they believe in the importance of reading to children and encouraging literacy at an early age. In the Callahan family they get really excited about reading to Liam; they know what a difference it will make in his language development and literacy skills as he grows up. They enthusiastically shared the mission of UTR with family and friends and celebrated Liam’s first year by giving back to the military families that serve us all.

Booz Allen Hamilton is proud of our long-standing relationship with United Through Reading (UTR) and its important mission, and we jumped at the chance to invest in UTR’s long term success. To that end, a team of our high potential leaders joined in a pro bono effort to assess the implications of emerging technologies on the UTR program support model. It was exciting to watch the team’s growing passion for the UTR mission as they witnessed the positive effects on family continuity. That passion fueled their analysis and final recommendations, some of which are being acted upon now as UTR works to evolve its mission support model.

My daughter is 2 years old and gets a bedtime story every night. I love that you promote reading to children even from afar. It’s such a great bonding experience that parents should not miss out on simply because they are overseas.

Jennifer Taylor
BAE Systems, Inc. Employee
UTR Donor

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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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RBH GLOBAL WEALTH PARTNERS
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Sally Ann Zoll, Ed.D.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
UNITED THROUGH READING

VADM Jim Zortman, USN (Ret)
SECTOR VP
GLOBAL LOGISTICS & OPERATIONAL SUPPORT
NORTHROP GRUMMAN CORP.

*Served in 2015

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Thank you to our donors. Donors who have contributed $25,000 or more in their lifetimes are listed with their lifetime giving.

$1 MILLION AND ABOVE

BAE Systems
Target

Birdies for the Brave,
PGA TOUR Charities, Inc.
Iraq Afghanistan Deployment
Impact Fund

$500,000–999,999

Mr. and Mrs. Clifford W. Colwell, Jr.
The Donald C. and Elizabeth M.
Dickinson Foundation

$250,000–499,999

The Colwell Family Fund
at The San Diego Foundation

$250,000–499,999

The Colwell Family Fund
at The San Diego Foundation

$100,000–249,999

Boys and Girls Foundation
Carter’s Charitable Foundation
Carter’s OshKosh B’Gosh
Conrad and Christa Burke Fund
at The San Diego Foundation

Ms. Christa Burke-Dittmer
Downing Family Foundation

Mr. and Mrs. John C. Downing

Helmstetter Family Foundation
The Kellogg Company
The Kenneth T. and Eileen L.
Norris Foundation
Lockheed Martin Corporation
Martha S. Cole Trust
Navy Federal Credit Union
Reuben H. Fleet Fund at
The San Diego Foundation
Ms. Amy Sabbatini
Mr. Rory Sabbatini
Special Operations
Warrior Foundation
TriWest Healthcare Alliance
USAA Federal Savings Bank
The Viterbi Family Fund of the
Jewish Community Foundation
$100,000–249,999
Dr. and Mrs. Andrew Viterbi
Wells Fargo Foundation

$50,000–99,999
AT&T
Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.
Century Club of San Diego
County of San Diego
Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation
General Dynamics Corporation
The Hamilton-White Foundation
Hilton Hotels Corporation
Insperity
Dr. and Mrs. Michael Kelley
The Legler Benbough Foundation
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Maurice J. Masserini Charitable Trust
and the French Fund
May and Stanley Smith
Charitable Trust
NBCUniversal Foundation
The Parker Foundation
Price Charities
San Diego Gas & Electric
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Mr. and Mrs. Gregg Steinhafel
TRW Foundation
United Healthcare
Weingart Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

$25,000-49,999
American Freedom Foundation, Inc.
American Honda Foundation
The Arthur and Jeanette Pratt
Memorial Fund
Bob Woodruff Foundation
Callaway Golf Company
The City of San Diego
County of San Diego
Probation Department
CW Cares for Kids Fund
The De Falco Family Foundation
The Deer Run Fund at The San Diego Foundation
Google
The Heller Foundation of San Diego
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Mr. Bruce Twickler
Hugh Stuart Center Charitable Trust
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hunter
The J.M. Long Foundation
Mr. John Langan and
Ms. Judith Nadell
Las Patronas
Macy’s
Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Mader
CAPT and Mrs. Terry Magee
Marie A. Le Doux Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Le Doux
The Meyer Charitable Foundation
Motorola Solutions Foundation
Nordstrom, Inc.
Pacific Life Foundation
Peter F. Drucker & Masatoshi Ito.
Graduate School of Mgmt.
Rice Family Foundation
S. Mark Taper Foundation
SAIC
Samuel I. and John Henry Fox
Foundation at Union Bank of CA
Sempra Energy
Sidney Stern Memorial Trust
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Stewart
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen P. Swinton
Union Bank of California
Drs. James G. and Sally Ann Zoll

2015 Annual Giving

$10,000-24,999
Chris Kyle Frog Foundation
Cobham Management Services, Inc.
Cracker Barrel Foundation
GE Aviation
Huntington Ingalls Industries, Inc.
Kimberly-Clark Foundation
Monster Worldwide Inc.

$5000-9999
3M
AirBoss Defense
American Defense International
Calibre
Covington & Burling, LLP
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Ellison
Epsilon Systems Solutions
ESET
Mr. Richard A. Harrison
Mr. and Mrs. Dwayne Junker
Kelley Living Trust at
Fidelity Charitable
The San Diego Padres

$2500-4999
Dr. Gary Smith and Ms. Deborah Bell
CAPT and Mrs. Steven Busch
Cisco Systems, Inc.
Corvias Military Living
Cubic Corporation
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Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Cerqueira
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Thank you to our generous donors.
2015 BY THE NUMBERS

In 2015, with the help of more than 500 volunteers, United Through Reading served nearly 100,000 beneficiaries at more than 260 recording locations around the world, distributing more than 10,000 children’s books to military children.

Military families stayed connected using United Through Reading from:

19
U.S. AIR FORCE AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDS

14
U.S. ARMY AND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDS

26
U.S. COAST GUARD CUTTERS AND COMMANDS

17
JOINT COMMANDS TO INCLUDE BAHRAIN, HORN OF AFRICA, GUANTANAMO BAY

44
U.S. MARINE CORPS COMMANDS AND LIBRARIES

4
MEDICAL COMMANDS TO INCLUDE USNS COMFORT, FORT BELVOIR WARRIOR TRANSITION BATTALION

68
U.S. NAVY COMMANDS INCLUDING NAVY SPECIAL WARFARE

70
USO HOST-SITES

ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY

At United Through Reading we see Technology as a tool which enables us to serve more military families, more efficiently and with greater geographical reach. Through in-kind support from Google and SalesForce, technology continues to support every facet of our mission.

PROGRAM DELIVERY

In 2015, we used our cloud-based platform to serve Sailors deployed to Afghanistan as well as Marines on the ground in Al Taqaddum Airbase (TQ) which is in the central part of Iraq. To add a bit of color to the success in TQ, here’s the story:

In early December, the Chaplains from the TQ unit requested a camera kit from UTR that was funded by a Marine Corps spouse club donation. Due to the lengthy time for mail delivery to Southwest Asia, the kit wasn’t received until the 23rd of December. No issue though. The Marines were video-recorded reading their favorite storybooks to their children on Christmas Eve and, with the greatest of ease, the Chaplains uploaded the files to the Marine’s individual, private UTR account so that storytime could be delivered to their families instantaneously. This made for a very happy holiday for the deployed parents who were able to be “home” to read a story to their eager children even though
they were thousands of miles away. Although limited bandwidth prevents many units from using the cloud-based solution, the units that do have adequate internet access are able to provide reliable, repeatable, and accessible video-recordings to their children without having to rely on mail pouches or postal service.

In areas where cloud-based delivery is not an option, UTR continues to look at innovative ways to ensure the highest quality product is delivered to families at home. The most common method is for the active duty volunteer to use a video camera with an SD card, record the video, and transfer the video to a laptop with DVD-burning software. Having a tangible video along with the book continues to be a huge comfort to our military children.

**DEVELOPMENT**

Our Development team has achieved greater efficiency through the expansion of virtual services. In 2015, the development team moved from a locally maintained database and joined our program delivery team on a Salesforce platform. Moving to Salesforce has provided increased access and efficiency in tracking donations and has enabled greater engagement with donors and supporters while greatly reducing maintenance and support costs.

**MOBILE APP**

Our strategy to offer internet-based recording options grew leaps and bounds in 2015. United Through Reading staff worked with a team of eight senior associates from Booz Allen Hamilton as part of their Leadership Excellence Program and Compass’ Community Leadership Project to complete design requirements for a project to develop and define a mobile app. The app could greatly enhance and improve the reach and scalability to provide United Through Reading access to all service members regardless of location.

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS LITERACY AWARD**

In 2015, United Through Reading was selected to receive the American Prize of the Library of Congress Literacy Awards Program, awarding us $50,000 for our significant and measurable contribution to increasing literacy levels and the national awareness of the importance of literacy. Through the generosity of David M. Rubenstein, the program honors organizations that have made outstanding contributions in the United States or abroad.

Promoting literacy awareness through the act of reading aloud is at the core of United Through Reading's mission. Eighty percent of United Through Reading participants assert that the program has increased their children's interest in reading and in books. Recognition from the Library of Congress for this effort is an incredible honor. The award will also serve as a catalyst for us to continue raising awareness with the general public about the challenges military children face. For example, a strong association has been found between children who have endured separations from a parent due to deployment and lower achievement in reading and math. The UTR team was truly humbled to have received this recognition from the Library of Congress.